

**HERBERT VERRETH**

**THE NORTHERN SINAI**  
**FROM THE 7TH CENTURY BC TILL THE 7TH CENTURY AD.**  
**A GUIDE TO THE SOURCES**

**VOLUME I**

Leuven  
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*Je crois qu'il n'y a pas de région,  
dans le monde, qui ait été soumise  
à autant de caprices de la part des  
savants.*

Jean Clédat (1924)

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## **PREFACE**

On 16 December 1998 I promoted to Doctor in Ancient History at the Katholieke Universiteit Leuven with the thesis *Historical topography of the northern Sinai from the 7th century BC till the 7th century AD. A guide to the sources*. Due to several reasons the publication of my thesis never took place, but I did not stop gathering and incorporating new information about the northern Sinai in my notes. I also added some new chapters, especially for the region between Raphia and Rinokoloura, and I started working on the region round the city of Pelousion. I realized, however, that my other professional activities would not allow the completion of this plan within the next few years, so I turned to the Internet for a provisional solution. The PDF-file that one can find here, contains a full discussion of the region between Rafah and the Suez Canal, with the exception of the Pelousion area, so that scholars can use and quote my work already in a sufficient way. I plan to keep on gathering new information and adding new chapters, and to present an extended and up-to-date version of my gazetteer every so many years.

I had the opportunity to make my doctoral thesis thanks to an assistantship offered by the Section of Ancient History of the Katholieke Universiteit Leuven, which after all these years is still my scientific base. I would like to thank all my colleagues there, who always showed a warm interest in my activities and created a pleasant atmosphere to work in.

Invaluable help for my thesis was offered by my promotor Prof. Dr. Willy Clarysse, who also afterwards kept me informed on every item about the northern Sinai that he came across. Also Prof. Dr. Jean-Yves Carrez-Maratray, one of the few specialists in the history of the northern Sinai, kindly let me share in his experience and knowledge. I hope that Prof. Dr. Eliezer Oren, who kindly invited me for a short stay at the Beer-Sheva University, one day will have the time to finish his opus magnum on the northern Sinai and present the long-awaited results of his archaeological survey in the area.

## *Preface*

This study is partially based upon a master's thesis made under the guidance of the late Prof. Dr. Jan Quaegebeur, who introduced me into the field of Egyptology. I dedicate this work to his memory.

Herbert Verreth

Leuven, 10 October 2006

## **INTRODUCTION**

This historical topography of the northern Sinai offers a survey of the places mentioned in ancient sources from the 7th century BC till the 7th century AD, of the places attested in the itineraries of the 7th-17th centuries AD, of the archaeological sites known in the area, and of other northern Sinai toponyms mentioned in scholarly works and on maps of the 18th-20th centuries AD. For every ancient place all available sources are collected and analysed, and a synthesis of its topographical and administrative situation is attempted. For every archaeological site a summary is given of the findings. This work is therefore not conceived as a running text, but more as an encyclopaedia, in which every lemma can be read separately. Thanks to the systematic structure that is more or less identical for every place, different users have a rapid access to the material they are looking for. A disadvantage is the repetition that occurs when several similar chapters are read one after the other, but this is inherent to the encyclopaedic concept. The work is meant to be accessible to ancient historians, archaeologists, Egyptologists, biblical and other scholars interested in the northern Sinai. All sources are paraphrased and translated, so the reader does not need to be familiar with Greek, Latin, Egyptian or other oriental languages; in most cases the text in the original language is added for the specialist's sake.

A lot of attention has been paid to the localization of ancient places and their identification with present-day toponyms or archaeological sites. Too many identifications have been made too hastily, creating for almost every site a cascade of contradictory interpretations, which might lead the unwary scholar in numerous pitfalls. For every site the suggested identifications have been fully discussed, but in fact only a handful of the sites can be located or identified. Identifications based upon epigraphic evidence are scarce. Some ostraka found in el-Felusiyyat mention the toponym Ostrakine, but they remain unpublished. One of the deceased buried at the cemetery near Tell Abu Seifa had an official function in Tcharou, but the two other inscribed sarcophagi found at the spot do not mention this place. Tcharou is also referred to in some inscriptions found in Tell Abu Seifa, but these monuments seem to have been transported from elsewhere. Except for Pelousion / Pr-i.ir-Imn - el-Farama and Kasion - el-Qass, there are no certain examples of onomastic continuity for ancient sites into the Arab period. Even most of the road stations mentioned in the Arab itineraries of the 9th to 17th century AD have since disappeared from the maps.

## *Introduction*

The names el-Farama, Habwa and el-Ghurabi have survived, but only Qatia and el-Arish are still inhabited. Hardly any archaeological site in the area has been fully excavated, so one usually has only limited information on the occupational history of a site. The most important documents for the identification of a site are the Byzantine and Arab itineraries that provide absolute distances, but mistakes in the manuscript tradition and other problems often hamper the interpretation of the data. Therefore most of the identifications suggested in this work are indeed only tentative.

The expression 'northern Sinai' is here used for the northern part of the Sinai peninsula between the present-day Suez Canal in the west and the city of Rafah in the east. The area within the triangle Port Said - el-Qantara - Tell el-Farama was part of the Delta in the Roman period, and is now in fact rather artificially detached from its former natural continuation west of the Suez Canal. The track between el-Qantara and Bir el-Hoda, immediately west of the same canal and of lake Ballah, probably follows the ancient road across the isthmus from Pelousion to the northern end of the Red Sea.

The northern borderline of the area studied is the Mediterranean, but it has to be stressed that the coastline at the end of the New Kingdom was fairly different from the present one. It probably crossed the Suez Canal some 6 km north of el-Qantara and continued northeast till Mahammediya. In the course of the 1st millennium BC the coastline crept north, till it ran immediately north of Tell el-Farama in the early Roman period. In the 1st century AD the hydrography of the area apparently changed, and the silting continued in northwestern direction, till the coastline reached its present position between Port Said and Tell el-Farama. East of Mahammediya modern maps show Sabkhat Bardawil, a large lake only separated from the Mediterranean by a narrow strip of land. This strip was not inhabited before the 6th century BC and the lake is mentioned for the first time by Herodotos in the 5th century BC. One gets the impression that both the lake and the strip of land were a recent creation then. Lake Serbonis, as it was called, probably covered only the eastern half of the present-day Sabkhat Bardawil, and in the course of the Ptolemaic period apparently kept on shrinking, until it was an insignificant swamp in the 1st century AD. It is probably only in the 12th century AD that the lake came into being again, and afterwards it kept on expanding. Its present shape, however, is not fixed, but varies from year to year due to changes in the ground water level or to an occasional flooding by the Mediterranean.

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The western end of the area studied is the region between Rafah / Raphia and el-Arish / Rinokoloura, where the border between Egypt and Syria ran. From the Late till the early Roman period the position of this border often varied, but from the late 1st century AD on it probably ran some 20 km southwest of Raphia, making Rinokoloura the first Egyptian town west of the border; this position was passed on to its successor el-Arish throughout most of the Arab period.

The ancient and the modern roads from Egypt to Israel across the northern Sinai follow more or less the same track south of Sabkhat Bardawil, and that track is used as the southern delineation of this study. In the last centuries the northern Sinai used to be extremely inhospitable, with at its western end a large swampy plain with hardly any vegetation and in the central and eastern part a constant alternation of marshy pools and large dunes, which constantly move and are extremely difficult to cross. Recent irrigation projects, however, and the construction of a major road between Egypt and Palestine / Israel created a new increase of the population of the area.

All the toponyms known in this rectangle of some 200 on 50 km are discussed, except for Pelousion and the sites in its immediate neighbourhood. Pelousion is often mentioned in the course of this work, but for the specific history of the place I refer to the study of Jean-Yves Carrez-Maratray (1999), while the nearby Arab site of Qal'at el-Tina has been discussed in detail by Shmuel Tamari (1978). Some ancient toponyms such as the 'brook of Egypt', the cities of Arza, Ariza and Senos, the military settlements of Stratopeda and Laura, the biblical Sin, the Assyrian Sha-amile, Si'nu / Sa'nu and the 'sealed harbour of Egypt', the wine region Senou / Sounou, and the Aphthites nome have often been linked with the northern Sinai and are therefore studied in detail, but their location in this area has to be rejected or cannot be confirmed by any positive evidence.

This work covers a period of more than 1300 years from the first Assyrian attack on Egypt in 673 BC till the Arab invasion of the country in 639 AD. For the preceding Third Intermediate period and the following early Arab period hardly anything is known about the northern Sinai. Material from earlier and later periods has partially been included. Earlier information is referred to in two contexts. First, a lot of New Kingdom or earlier toponyms have been identified with Graeco-Roman sites and the alleged relation had to be discussed. Secondly, within the framework of

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the archaeological survey, also sites with older material are listed. The Israeli northern Sinai survey yielded some 1300 sites, for which only the Early Bronze Age / Pre- and Early Dynastic sites and the Late Bronze Age / New Kingdom sites have been fully mapped. Only those sites are included in this work that are specifically discussed in the publications of the Israeli team or that can be linked with known places, the others for the moment being only a number on a map. There are only two toponyms in the northwestern Sinai - Tcharou and Migdol - that show a certain onomastic continuity from the 2nd to the 1st millennium. The New Kingdom Migdols are briefly discussed, but for the New Kingdom Tcharou I refer to the article of Gun Björkman (1974) and the book of Morris (2005). Toponyms mentioned in sources of the Arab period are worked out in greater detail, especially with regard to their topographical situation, mainly because they are so often identified - without real arguments - with earlier places. It is probably due to the ever changing micro-environmental conditions that only el-Arish, replacing the ancient Rinokoloura, and Qatia, known from the 11th century AD on, are still inhabited nowadays, apparently because the oases in which they are situated, were large enough to survive the devastating movement of the dunes. The numerous itineraries from the 9th to the 17th century AD give the approximate position of more than twenty-five road stations, of which only a few can be located with any certainty. No doubt the full publication of the Israeli survey will allow further identifications.

Unfortunately there is no general term to cover the period 673 BC - 639 AD as a whole, and I will refer to it as the Late and Graeco-Roman periods, the latter expression referring to the whole of the Ptolemaic, Roman and Byzantine periods. With regard to the chronological division, I will use the expressions Late period (673 - 323 BC), Ptolemaic period (323-30 BC), Roman period (30 BC - 284 AD) and Byzantine period (284-639 AD). The Late period consists of the Assyrian period (673-664 BC), the Saite period or 26th dynasty (664-525 BC), the Persian period (525-404 BC), the 28th-30th dynasties (404-342 BC), the second Persian domination (342-332 BC) and the Macedonian rule (332-323 BC). Regrettably there is among scholars and archaeologists little consistency in the use of the indication Persian period, which often refers to the 5th and 4th centuries BC in general. A similar ambiguity exists for the term Roman period, which often includes the Byzantine period till the Arab invasion. When quoting archaeological reports I tried to specify the exact period meant, but in some cases the ambiguity remains.



## *Introduction*

The early study of the eastern Delta usually had a biblical orientation. The land of Goshen mentioned in *Genesis* was situated in that region, the exodus started there, and in the 6th century BC Jewish refugees were living in the area. Numerous studies were written on the itinerary of the exodus, and every new inscription or archaeological find was meticulously examined in search of traces of the places mentioned in the exodus story. Hundreds of books and articles were and still are being written on this subject, creating contradictory hypotheses that involve the whole isthmus between the Mediterranean and the Red Sea. Schleiden (1858) and Brugsch (1875) were apparently the first to lead the exodus through the northern Sinai, and this view is still followed by a lot of scholars. There are, however, few arguments in favour of this itinerary and more recently Bietak (1975) and Hoffmeier (1997) prefer an itinerary near the southern end of lake Ballah or near lake Timsah. The whole exodus problem is further complicated by the controversy about the date of the events and the redactional history of the passages involved. As long as it is not clear whether the toponyms mentioned refer to the 16th, the 13th or the 6th century BC, it is impossible to look for adequate archaeological or textual parallels, and to refute or confirm the many hypotheses about the exodus itinerary.

Since the start of the construction of the Suez Canal in 1859 the area of the isthmus and the northern Sinai were often visited by scholars. Thus in 1880 Greville J. Chester described the region in great detail. Francis Llewellyn Griffith carried out excavations in Tell Abu Seifa and made a survey between Tell el-Farama and el-Qantara in 1886; two years later he visited the el-Arish area. The first major archaeological work has been done by Jean Clédat, who surveyed and excavated in the isthmus region between 1900 and 1914. In the northern Sinai he worked in el-Qels (1904), Tell el-Heir (1905), Mahammediya (1905, 1909-1911), el-Farama (1909-1911), the area of Sabkhat Bardawil (1910), el-Beda (1910-1911), Qasr Ghet (1911) Tell el-Sheikh (1913), el-Felusiyat (1914) and el-Qantara (1914). While the archaeological reports of Clédat contain valuable information, the articles he published between 1919 and 1926 are disappointing. He tried to make a comprehensive study on the isthmus and the northern Sinai, but I quote Cazelles' review<sup>1</sup>: 'Ces notes sont diffuses, difficiles à lire, pleines de répétitions, mais elles

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<sup>1</sup> Cazelles, 1987 [= 1955], p. 194.

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constituent une mine de renseignements recueillis par quelqu'un qui s'est rendu la région familière. Cependant la synthèse échappe, peut-être parce que Clédat n'était pas aussi bon égyptologue qu'il était bon fouilleur, peut-être aussi parce qu'il n'avait pas le maniement de la critique littéraire biblique'. Of the numerous identifications suggested by Clédat between Egyptian, biblical, Greek and Arab toponyms, only few are based on solid grounds, while unfortunately most of them are listed in Gauthier's *Dictionnaire des noms géographiques contenus dans les textes hiéroglyphiques* (1925-1931) or are repeated elsewhere.

For more than fifty years there was hardly any archaeological activity in the northern Sinai. In 1939-1940 Felix-Marie Abel wrote a detailed historical study on the region, which offers useful information. The 'Société d'études historiques et géographiques de l'isthme de Suez', a group of people with different backgrounds active in the region between 1946 and 1956, edited a journal and some books, which contain a few valuable articles, but in general do not come up to scientific standards.

It is only when Egypt lost the northern Sinai to Israel after the Six Day War of June 1967 that large-scale archaeological activities were displayed in the area. Already in July 1967 and October 1968 an archaeological team led by Moshe Dothan on behalf of the Department of Antiquities and Museums investigated the el-Qels area. At the end of 1970 the survey of the northwestern Sinai, led by Isaac Margovsky, was completed; also the remainder of the northern Sinai was partially surveyed, including the site of Qasr Ghet in 1968. From January 1972 on the Ben Gurion University of the Negev in Beersheba organised a systematic survey, led by Eliezer D. Oren, of the area between the Suez Canal and the Gaza strip. Some 1300 sites were found, and excavations took place in Bir el-Abd (1973), Tell el-Heir, Tell el-Farama, Tell Kedwa (site T21), el-Qels (1972-1975), Qasr Ghet (1975-1976), el-Felusiyat (1976-1977) and el-Kharruba (1979-1982), to mention only sites west of Rafah. The publication of most of the survey material is still being prepared.

Between 1979 and 1982 the Sinai was gradually given back to Egypt, and from 1981 on the survey was taken over by Mohammed Abd el-Maksoud of the Egyptian Antiquities Department. The sites of Habwa I, Tell el-Heir and the el-Qantara and Tell el-Farama areas were investigated. From 1985 on the excavations at Tell el-Heir take place together with a team from the Université de Lille III, led by Dominique Valbelle. In 1989 a canal was planned that will cross the northern Sinai and open up the area for irrigation and cultivation. The Northern Sinai Archaeological

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Salvage Project, coordinated by Fayza Haikal, made an international appeal to carry out rescue excavations in the endangered areas. The Université de Lille III surveyed the northwestern Sinai in 1990 and 1991, and numerous excavations have taken place since, by the Egyptian Antiquities Department and by foreign institutes and universities<sup>2</sup>. Abd el-Maksoud also started the development an archaeological research centre for the northern Sinai in Tell Abu Seifa, which will be specialized in ceramological studies<sup>3</sup>. In the period 1993-1995 the objects found during the Israeli excavations have been returned to Egypt, where they are stored in the newly founded museum of Taba near Eilat on the Gulf of Aqaba<sup>4</sup>.

The work of Stefan Timm (1984-1992) on the Christian-Coptic settlements in the Arab period is an invaluable source of information, but for the northern Sinai he unfortunately only discusses the places el-Arish / Rinokoloura, Aphnaion and Sele, the bishoprics of Ostrakine, Kasion and Gerra for unknown reasons not being listed.

Our gazetteer of ancient places, archaeological sites and modern toponyms consists of ten chapters, the first and the second covering the region in general, the eight others discussing a specific area in the northern Sinai. While for the latter chapters the study of the ancient sources is mainly focused on a certain toponym, in the first chapter a selection of ancient itineraries and geographical descriptions are discussed as a whole. Although the New Kingdom itinerary of Sethos I depicted on the walls of Karnak and its parallel in P.Anastasi I fall beyond the chronological framework, the places mentioned there have so often been linked with later toponyms, that it is useful to survey them briefly. For the 7th-1st centuries BC coherent geographical information about the northern Sinai is lacking, and the bits of information have to be gathered from the numerous accounts of military expeditions from Egypt to Syria or vice versa. This section also provides the political framework for the region in the Late and Ptolemaic periods. The interpretation of the topographical onomasticon P.Cairo dem. 31169, dated to the 4th-2nd centuries BC, is not evident, and except for Pelousion and (probably) Magdolos no northern Sinai toponym can be identified with certainty. For the Roman and Byzantine periods more

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<sup>2</sup> For more details about the different expeditions, cf. Leclant, *Fouilles et travaux en Égypte et au Soudan, 1980-1981 - 1999-2000* (1982-2001), continued by Grimal for the years 2000-2002 - 2002-2003 (2003-2004).

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Notes, 1996, p. 27.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. BIA, 1991, II, p. 29-31; 1991, IV, p. 29-30; 1993, VII, p. 4.24-25; 1993, VIII, p. 34-35; Notes, 1994a, p. 28; 1994b, p. 30; 1995, p. 17.

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information is available. The geographers Strabon, Plinius, Ptolemaios and Ammianus Marcellinus discuss the region in detail. Iosephos describes a journey through the area and the *Itinerarium provinciarum Antonini Augusti* and the *Tabula Peutingeriana* provide road maps. There are also some papyrological sources. The so-called Invocation of Isis (P.Oxy. XI, 1380) mentions some northern Sinai toponyms; the early 4th century Theophanes archive provides an itinerary to and from Syria and a detailed account of Theophanes' shopping in the area (P.Ryl. IV, 627-638); the itinerary of P.von Scherling G110 (SB XXVI, 16607), with its peculiar orthography, probably describes the situation of the 5th century AD. For the 6th-7th centuries AD Hierokles and Georgios of Cyprus give an administrative list of places in the province Augustamnica I, which are also partially shown on the Medaba mosaic. For the early Arab period there is a gap in the source material and in the 9th-10th centuries AD the situation in the northern Sinai seems completely changed. The Arab itineraries show two roads, one along the coast, apparently following its Byzantine predecessor, and another one more inland, following more or less the track of the New Kingdom itinerary. In the 12th century AD Pelousion (el-Farama) loses its leading position in the area and the place is gradually abandoned. The coastal road is no longer used and the inland road leads to the Delta south of the lake of Tennis, the present-day lake Menzala. In 1261 AD a postal service was established and across the northern Sinai a network of road stations came into being, which stayed in use till the 17th century AD. Some portulani and other sources provide information on the significant points along the coast of the northern Sinai in the Arab period. The first chapter concludes with two synoptic tables, where the chronological information for every separate place is brought together.

The second chapter discusses lake Serbonis, the later Sabkhat Bardawil, whose changing position determines the occupational history of the region. The Kasiotis, named after the hill lying next to lake Serbonis, is the ancient region that contains the places Rinokoloura, Ostrakine and Kasion. The Djifar is the name in use for the entire northern Sinai in Arab sources till the 15th century AD.

Each of the eight following chapters discusses a specific area in the northern Sinai. Chapter three deals with the region between Rafah and Rinokoloura. Chapters four, five and six describe respectively the places Rinokoloura, Ostrakine and Kasion and their immediate environment. Chapter seven discusses the military and other settlements in the coastal area between Kasion and Pelousion. Chapters eight, nine

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and ten, which comprehend the larger regions of respectively the inland road south of Sabkhat Bardawil, the northwestern Sinai and the Pelousiac plain, are subdivided in smaller geographical units. Each chapter starts with a historical summary on the sites involved, followed by a separate discussion of each individual toponym.

Because very few identifications between ancient and even Arab toponyms on the one hand and modern archaeological sites on the other are completely certain, a strict distinction has been made between toponyms mentioned in ancient sources (grouped in Late, Graeco-Roman and Arab periods), and sites known in the 18th-20th centuries AD (Modern period). For instance, all information provided by ancient sources about Rinokoloura is studied under that name, while as few as possible elements with regard to the present-day situation are involved in the discussion, whereas the archaeological remains of ancient Rinokoloura near el-Arish are studied under the heading el-Arish; the suggested identification of Rinokoloura and el-Arish, finally, is discussed in detail in the chapter 'Identifications' of el-Arish. In general, if two toponyms are considered complementary, under each title a reference is made to the other toponym and the reader is informed where he can find further information that is possibly related to the first place. This method, which might seem somewhat roundabout, can be justified by referring - for example - to the huge confusion due to the former identifications of Auaris and Piramesse with Tanis or Pelousion; especially in older literature the names were randomly used for each other and for instance information about Piramesse was often unrecognizably discussed under the heading Pelousion, a place which in the New Kingdom did not even exist. Numerous valuable books and articles have now become virtually useless because their discussion of the sources depended entirely on a faulty identification. I therefore try to assess the value of each source in itself and to infer the geographical information from the texts without reference to an alleged present-day position. Only after all the data about the ancient and the present site are gathered, the information is confronted in the chapter 'Identifications', where the identification is rejected or accepted and elaborated. When new findings will completely alter a suggested identification, at least the bulk of the information will still be useful for future readers. As a rule, therefore, I only use modern site names to refer to archaeological remains and ancient names to refer to places known in written sources. In more synthetic passages both names, if they refer in my opinion to the same place, will be given side by side.

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For every place the information is given in a fixed order: in the first volume the chapters 'Topographical situation', 'Administrative situation', 'Archaeological finds', 'Identifications', 'Orthographic variants', 'Etymology', 'Homonyms', 'Analysis of the sources', and in the second volume the subsidiary chapters 'Bibliography', 'Maps', 'Illustrations', 'Sources', 'Texts found in situ' and 'Orthographic variants'. Only the chapter 'Topographical situation' is given for each place; the other chapters are only listed if relevant material is present.

For toponyms from the Late, Graeco-Roman and Arab periods 'Analysis of the sources' is the basic chapter. Every source mentioning the place is discussed chronologically according to the events described or in more thematic chapters. The content of the source is paraphrased with a focus on the place involved, and interpretation problems are discussed in detail. The Greek, Latin and Coptic texts are fully quoted in the original language; Egyptian hieroglyphic, hieratic and demotic texts are given in (a partial) transcription; Ugaritic, Hittite, Hebrew, Assyrian, Aramaic, Thamudic, Nabataean, Syriac, Armenian, Arabic, Ethiopian and other oriental sources are usually only translated. For every text a translation is provided, either in English or in another modern language, if that happens to be the most recent or most authoritative translation of the passage involved. In some instances, however, it was necessary to slightly adapt the original translation in order to avoid discrepancies with my own interpretation and discussion. If no translation was available, I translated the text myself.

From the bulk of information offered in 'Analysis of the sources' some thematic chapters are made up. In 'Topographical situation' all the data about the position of the place are gathered and compared with each other. The chronological framework of the place is sketched and any information about specific buildings and industrial or economic activities is indicated. In the chapter 'Administrative situation', only given for toponyms from the Late and the Graeco-Roman periods, all the information is gathered with regard to the country and the province to which a place once belonged. Unfortunately hardly anything is known about the internal administrative organisation in the northern Sinai settlements. In 'Orthographic variants' a short survey is given of the spelling of the toponym, which often occurs in the sources in slightly different forms or with changing gender or number. In 'Etymology' both ancient and modern etymological explanations of the toponym are discussed. In the course of the last two centuries scholars have linked most places

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with other ancient or present-day toponyms; in the chapter 'Identifications' all suggestions are in detail refuted or confirmed, obsolete identifications being listed for completeness' sake only. In 'Homonyms' a selection is listed of homonymous places that are a possible source of confusion or that are involved with the dossier in some other way.

For present-day sites the chapter 'Topographical information' is mainly based upon modern maps or descriptions of the region. Because it is very difficult in a desert landscape with few fixed points of reference to pinpoint the exact position of a place, a lot of especially older maps are often rather vague and even contradict each other. Therefore, even for sites known in the last centuries, it has not always been possible to give an exact location, and all the distances given in this work have to be considered only approximate. Also the distances given between larger centres often show minor differences<sup>5</sup>. We will work with the approximate distances of 32 km between Gaza and Rafah, 46 km between Rafah and el-Arish, 132 km between el-Arish and el-Farama and 154 km between el-Arish and el-Qantara. An experienced Arabist is without any doubt capable of explaining the etymology of most of the Arabic toponyms, but since this is beyond my capacities, I limit myself for the chapter 'Etymology' to explicit scholarly references or to an occasional, prudent suggestion. The selective list of Arabic homonyms is usually confined to the eastern Delta. The chapter 'Archaeological finds' contains a summary of the archaeological remains at the site, including a chronological outline of the expeditions that have been at work there. Special attention is paid to the epigraphic and other written documents found in the area, for which in some cases a new reading or an original interpretation can be offered.

For every toponym some subsidiary chapters are given in a second volume, which allows the user to combine the text of the first volume with the lists in the second. 'Bibliography' contains a chronological list of the works mentioned in the discussion about the place in question, plus some works that refer only casually to the place. The list was in the first place a personal working tool, which especially for the larger sites could easily be expanded, but it seemed useful to present the full list

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<sup>5</sup> Cf. e.g. the distances given by Gardiner, 1920, p. 114; Abel, 1939-1940, passim (with inconsistencies); Ball, 1942, p. 140; Oren, 1982a, p. 6.9; Baumgarten, 1990, map; Évieux, 1995, p. 35; Kümmerly, 1995(?); de Jong, 2000, p. 654-655. Details are discussed for each toponym separately.

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instead of a more selective bibliography, for which the reader is referred to the notes in the main text. The general list of full bibliographical references, alphabetically arranged, is given at the end of the second volume.

A similar principle is used for the list of maps, which contains all the maps mentioning the toponym in question that I was able to consult. A general list of maps linked with the northern Sinai is given further on in the second volume. The list is arranged chronologically and for each map a brief description is added.

The chapter 'Illustrations' lists all the published plans, drawings and photos I was able to find, of present-day sites and of any objects excavated there. The list is arranged chronologically and includes references to later copies or adaptations of the same documents.

A fourth subsidiary chapter, 'Sources', contains a chronological list of all the sources that mention a specific toponym. For every source [1] a serial number is given, [2] the exact reference including the edition used, [3] the (approximate) date of publication, and, if known, [4] the related sources. Some remarks. [1] Sources for which the link with a place is only possible but not certain, are preceded by 'cf.' and they are not numbered. If a source refers to a place, but the toponym is not explicitly mentioned, the reference is preceded by 'cf.', but the source does receive a number. If a link suggested by some scholars is not accepted, the source is not listed, but the full discussion of and the exact references to the rejected text can be found in the chapter 'Analysis of the sources'. [2] For well-known Greek and Latin authors edited in the accessible series of the *Loeb Classical Library* it did not seem useful to add the full reference to the edition used. For other Greek authors the editions suggested by the *Thesaurus linguae Graecae* are used as far as possible. For Greek and Latin Christian authors the lists of the *Clavis patrum Latinorum* and the *Clavis patrum Graecorum* are followed. For original Greek works only preserved in a Syriac or Armenian version the language involved is added between brackets and reference is made to the translation used. Also for Arab authors usually only the translation is referred to; quite often a text is not translated, but only paraphrased or summarized, in which case the expression 'mentioned in' is used. While the lists of sources for the toponyms of the Late and Graeco-Roman periods try to be exhaustive, no such attempt has been made for the Arab sources. I did list all the references I could find in modern scholars, to mainly geographical and historical authors mentioning the northern Sinai, but certainly for larger centres as el-Arish and Qatia the number of sources can be



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multiplied. I do think, however, that the bulk of the material with some topographical relevance has been gathered. Because from the 18th century AD on a lot of maps and descriptions reflect a scholarly reconstruction of the older toponyms known rather than an a contemporary itinerary, those works are not considered sources 'stricto sensu', but they are listed in the bibliography and discussed as the rest of the scholarly literature. [3] The sources are chronologically arranged according to the date of publication. If the exact date is not known, but only a certain range can be given (e.g. the life span of the author), the youngest possible date is followed. Any discussion about the date of a source is usually referred to the first time that an author is mentioned. [4] If a Greek or Latin text is only fragmentarily preserved as a quotation in another author, a reciprocal reference is added between brackets for both the fragmentary author and the source text [e.g. '(1) Eratosthenes (= Strabon (2))']. Also if a text is translated or adapted, or if a known author is quoted, a similar reference is made [e.g. '(1) Herodotos (cf. Stephanos (2))'].

All the published inscriptions, ostraka, stone cutter's marks, amphora stamps and other epigraphic texts that are found at or near a site and that can be dated to the Late and Graeco-Roman periods, are listed and numbered in the chapter 'Texts found in situ'.

The last subsidiary chapter involves a list of the different orthographic variants of the toponym. If the name occurs in another case than the nominative, this declined form is added. For every author the basic form is the one given in the edition used, but to a limited extent also manuscript variants or not accepted emendations are listed, in which case the abbreviation 'var. lect.' is added. The variants are grouped by language (Greek, Latin, Coptic, Hebrew) and are ordered chronologically on the first attestation of the form. Any adjectival formations are added at the end of the list. For Arabic names only Latin alphabet transcriptions are listed, but, if possible, reference is made to a work or map that gives the name in the original Arabic alphabet, and the Arabic name is transliterated between square brackets.

Because papyrological documentation for the northern Sinai is very scarce, only some 168 inhabitants from the Late and Graeco-Roman periods are known by name. Most of them are military stationed in the area or local bishops, but also some epitaphs have been found. In the chapter 'Prosopography' in the second volume these persons are listed alphabetically, and for each of them the place of origin, the date and the source reference is given.

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An eternal problem in classical studies is the rendering of Greek and Latin names into modern European languages. One can only hope that the need for uniformity with regard to the progressing computerization and the creation of international data banks one day will expel the unscientific habit of using all kind of 'local' variants for the same Greek or Latin name. In this work Greek names are usually transliterated [with 'η' as 'e'; 'ω' as 'o'; 'υ' as 'y'; 'ου' as 'ou'; 'ζ' as 'z'; 'φ' as 'ph'; 'χ' as 'ch'; capital 'Ρ' as 'R'] and the Greek endings are kept, following the rules of the computerized *Prosopographia Ptolemaica*.

With regard to the uniformity of Arabic names rendered in the Latin alphabet, the situation is even worse. Even for a common name as el-Arish, for which there is apparently only one Arabic form, I could find at least fifty (!) variant transcriptions in use by different authors, and no index is alike in the position of the article or of geographical elements as 'Bir' and 'Tell'. In this work I used as a reference the spelling of the toponyms as they occur in the index of the *Lexikon der Ägyptologie*, although some inconsistencies there have been uniformized, and I had to make my own choice for the numerous names not in this list. There are probably still a lot of inconsistencies with regard to the Arabic 'standard names' chosen for this work. My knowledge of the Arabic language, however, is too poor to be able to judge whether a specific name used by a scholar is just a deviant transliteration or reflects a local pronunciation of the name, and I was usually hesitating to create the umpteenth new variant while perhaps hyper-uniformizing.

In this work the Greek stadion is considered a length of 185 m, the Roman mile a length of 1500 m and the Arab mile a length of 2000 m<sup>6</sup>. With regard to the longitudinal and square measurements given in the different archaeological reports, I can only hope that one day the metrical system will be generally in use.

My first acquaintance with the northern Sinai dates to the period when I prepared my master's thesis for archaeology (1993), examining the Greek presence in Egypt in the 5th and 4th centuries BC. I was especially intrigued by the fact that a whole region with more than ten flourishing cities lay waiting in the sand to be

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<sup>6</sup> For the Greek stadion, cf. Potheary, 1995, p. 49-67. The Roman mile is equated with 1479, 1480, 1482,4 or (about) 1500 m according to the different scholars; for the sake of convenience this last round figure will be used for all conversions. For the Arab mile, cf. Hinz, 1970, p. 63.

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uncovered after some 1300 years. The surveys and excavations of the last thirty years proved the importance of the region for our knowledge of the Egyptian - Syrian contacts through the ages and especially of the different forms of habitation in Graeco-Roman Egypt. In May 1996 I was able - with the kind permission of Mohammed Abd el-Maksoud - to visit the sites of Tell Abu Seifa, Habwa I, Tell Kedwa, Tell el-Heir, Tell el-Farama and Tell el-Makhzan in the northwestern Sinai. I went from el-Qantara to el-Arish along the road south of Sabkhat Bardawil, but I could not reach the sites in the central and eastern part of the northern Sinai. I hope to visit the area once again in the near future.

I mainly focused this study on the ancient places located in the northern Sinai between the 7th century BC and the 7th century AD, and on the archaeological sites that have been published so far, but certainly more work is still to be done on the northern Sinai in the Arab and the modern periods. Not only have the Arab sources and the 18th-19th century scholars and maps with regard to the northern Sinai only fragmentarily been incorporated, but also the number of present-day settlements along the main road constantly increased the last thirty years, which no doubt causes gaps in my inventory of the modern toponyms.

We know so much, and at the same time so little about this region. There is a lot of material available, but it usually only highlights a number of minor aspects, and the larger picture is unfortunately often missing. No doubt the numerous on-going excavations will solve a lot of the problems and questions that are left unanswered in this study. Anyway, I hope that my gazetteer will be a useful aid for future archaeological surveys and excavations in the northern Sinai and for historical studies on the area.

# **1. Itineraries and descriptions of the northern Sinai**

*The New Kingdom northern Sinai itinerary*

*Military expeditions in the 7th-1st centuries BC*

*The topographical onomasticon P.Cairo dem. 31169*

*Itineraries and descriptions of the 1st-7th centuries AD*

*Itineraries and descriptions of the 7th-17th centuries AD*

*Descriptions of the northern Sinai coastline in the 10th-16th centuries AD*

*Synoptic chronological tables*

## **THE NEW KINGDOM NORTHERN SINAI ITINERARY**

Sethos I (1306-1290 BC) carved his battle reliefs on the northern exterior walls of the hypostyle hall that he had helped to build in front of the temple of Amon at Karnak. On the bottom register of the east wing the Shasu campaign is described, which is explicitly dated to Sethos' first year and took place in the northern Sinai and in southern Palestine. The lower part of this register has been seriously damaged, and a lot of the inscriptions still visible in the 19th century are now lost. Under the battle scenes and the triumphant return of king Sethos a series of fortresses and wells are depicted<sup>7</sup>. The accompanying text mentions 'the devas[tation] which the energetic forearm of Pharaoh - may he live, prosper and be healthy! - made (of) [th]e Shasu enemies, from the fortress of Tcharou to the Canaan' (pl. 3, 1-5). 'The fortress of Tcharou' [P3 ḥtm n T3rw] is depicted at the most western end of the scenes (pl. 6, 37 - B) and the 'Town of the Canaan' [Dmi n p3 K3n'n3] at the most eastern end (pl. 3, 14), so also the fortresses and wells in between are apparently situated in a geographical order through the northern Sinai.

Eleven fortresses or towns are depicted, slightly varying in size. They are indicated with the terms ḥtm ('fortress'), ʿt ('dwelling'<sup>8</sup>), mktr ('tower'), nḥtw

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<sup>7</sup> Cf. Gardiner, 1920, p. 99-116 and pl. 11-12, who indicates the toponyms with the letters A-U (inscription C does not exist); Kitchen, 1975 [= 1968], I, p. 6-11 (text); 1989, VII, p. 422-423 (addenda); 1993, Translations, I, p. 6-9 and 1993, Notes, I, p. 10-17; Karnak, 1986, IV, p. 3-26 and pl. 2-8; Morris, 2005, p. 402-443. The Epigraphic Survey unfortunately did not number the inscriptions now lost; in those cases only the numbering of Gardiner is referred to. The fragmentary inscription [...]mʿt (pl. 5, 17) belongs to a well, still visible in the 19th century AD together with the fortress next to it, but is not mentioned by Gardiner.

<sup>8</sup> For the meaning of ʿt, which indicates various kinds of bounded spaces like a room, a house, or an enclosure, cf. Caminos, 1964, p. 93.

## 1. *Itineraries and descriptions*

('stronghold'), *bhn* ('castle') or *dmi* ('town'). One canal (T3 *dni.t* - 'The dividing canal') (pl. 6, 36 - A) and ten wells - usually indicated with the term *hnm.t* - are shown, in most cases accompanied by a fortress. Four wells are (partially) walled; next to two of them one or two trees are shown. The other wells, apparently situated in the central northern Sinai, are rendered as irregularly shaped pools. Most toponyms in the accompanying inscriptions seem perfectly Egyptian, but in some instances the syllabic writing indicates a Semitic etymology. Both the throne name and the personal name of king Sethos I occur in some toponyms, but this does not necessarily imply that he created those places. Only in two instances it is clear from the name 'Town which His Majesty built anew' (*Dmi qd.n hm.f m m3w.t*) (pl. 5, 20 - K; pl. 4, 14 - P) that Sethos I was involved in construction activities. There does not seem to be a fixed rule whether the fortress, the well, or both are named on the relief. Two wells and two fortresses, however, received two different names. In three of those instances the Epigraphic Survey noticed that one of the names was covered with plaster<sup>9</sup>, and a second name, incorporating the throne name of Sethos I *Mn-m3<sup>c</sup>.t-R<sup>c</sup>*, was added in a new redaction, possibly to commemorate Sethos' victories in the area (pl. 4, 17-18 / O-N; pl. 4, 19-20 / T-S; pl. 4, 14-15-16 / P-R-Q). No traces of plaster are mentioned for 'The stronghold of Sethos Mer-n-Ptah' (pl. 5, 19 - J: P3 *nhtw n (Sty-mry-n-Pth)*), next to which also the inscription 'The castle of Men-ma'at-Ra [...]' (pl. 5, 18 - I: P3 *bhn n (Mn-m3<sup>c</sup>.t-R<sup>c</sup>) t3 i3[...] s3.f*) is written, but most likely a similar change of name has taken place. Although the name 'The migdol of Men-ma'at-Ra' (E: P3 *mktr n (Mn-m3<sup>c</sup>.t-R<sup>c</sup>)*) is only accompanied by the name of a well, because of the use of the throne name one might suppose that also this toponym is due to a second redaction.

In P.Anastasi I, which is possibly written under Ramses II (1290-1224 BC), the scribe Hori contrasts his own knowledge of the road from Egypt to Canaan with the ignorance of his colleague Amenemope. On the track between the fortress of the Ways-of-Horos (1), which is another name for Tcharou, and the towns of Raphia (13) and Gaza (14) he alludes to eleven fortresses and wells<sup>10</sup>:

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<sup>9</sup> Cf. Karnak, 1986, IV, p. 10-12.

<sup>10</sup> P.Anastasi I, 26, 9-28, 1; cf. Gardiner, 1911, p. 28-29\* and p. 76-79; Helck, 1971, p. 311-312; Fischer-Elfert, 1983, p. 150-154 and 1986, p. 230-235; Wentel, 1990, p. 109, whose translation is given. The numbering of the toponyms is mine. Redford, 1998, p. 46 tentatively places some of the toponyms on a map.

## 1. Itineraries and descriptions

'O What's-your-name?, you elite scribe and Maher-warrior, who know how to use your hands, a leader of Naarin-troops at the head of the soldiery, I have described to you the hill countries of the northern reaches of the land of Canaan, but you have not answered me in any way nor have you rendered a report to me.

Come, and [I] will describe [ma]ny things [to] you. Head toward (?) the fortress of the Way[s of Horos] [p3 ḥtm n W3.wt-[Ḥr]] (1).

I begin for you with the Dwelling of Sese, l. p. h. [t3 ʿ.t n (Ssw) ʿnh wḏ3 snb] (2). You have not set foot in it at all.

You have not eaten fish from [its pool (?)] nor bathed in it (3).

O that I might recall to you Husayin [Ḥṯyn] (4).

Whereabouts is its fortress [ḥtm] (5)?

Come now to the region of Edjo of Sese, l. p. h. [ʿ n W3dy.t (Ssw)] (6), into its stronghold of Usermare, l. p. h. [m p3y=f nḥtw (Wsr-m3ʿ.t-Rʿ) ʿnh wḏ3 snb] (7),

and [to] Seba-El [Sbl (or Sbr)] (8) and Ibesgeb [Ib-s-q-b] (9).

I will describe to you the appearance of Aiyenin [ʿ-y-n-n] (10). You are not acquainted with its location.

As for Nekhes [N-ḥ-s] (11) and Heberet [(r?) Ḥ-b-r-t] (12), you have not visited them since your birth.

You Maher-warrior, were is Raphia [Rph] (13)? What is its enclosure wall like?

How many miles march is it to Gaza [Qdt] (14)?

Answer quickly! Render a report to me that I may call you a Maher-warrior and boast of your name to others. 'He is a Maryan-warrior', so I shall tell them.'

Only in two cases - (9) and (11) - the parallel with the Karnak relief is evident.

In three other instances the throne name of Ramses II (Wsr-m3ʿ.t-Rʿ) (7) or his more popular name Sese (2, 6) are used instead of the reference to king Sethos. The name of the well (3) next to the fortress 'The dwelling of Sese - life, prosperity, health!' (2) has been lost in the papyrus; most likely it was the name of the walled well next to 'The dwelling of the lion' (pl. 6, 38 - D: T3 ʿ.t p3 m3i), which has remained nameless on the Karnak relief. Probably a scribal mistake is responsible for the different names Ḥṯyn (4) and 'The well of Ḥpn' (F: T3 ḥnm.t Ḥpn) on the relief, but it is difficult to decide which is the correct spelling. Because the scribe asks where the fortress of the well Ḥṯyn is situated (5), there was probably something remarkable about the disposition or the nature of the small fortress 'The migdol of Men-ma'at-Ra' (E: P3 mktr n (Mn-m3ʿ.t-Rʿ)) mentioned on the relief. The 'Town which His Majesty built anew' (pl. 5, 20 - K: [Dmi qd.n] ḥm.f m [m3]w.t) can be identified with Sbl (8), because both names are linked with the well Ib-s-q-b (pl. 5, 21 - L / (9)). There are no obvious parallels on the Karnak relief for the toponym ʿ-y-n-n (10), 'The two wells'. Regardless of the identification of ʿ-y-n-n, it is clear that at least two sites shown on the relief are unparalleled in the papyrus, whose itinerary therefore is apparently not exhaustive. The reading of the names Ḥwtwti(?) and [Y]m? rbt ('Wide pool?') on the Karnak relief (pl. 4, 14-15 - P-R) is not completely certain, but most likely one of the names can be linked with the toponym (r?) Ḥ-b-r-t (12) of the papyrus. It is remarkable, finally, that N-ḥ-s (11) of the papyrus corresponds with 'Nḥs of the prince'

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(pl. 4, 19 - T: N-ḥ-s n p3 sr ) of the first redaction of the relief and not with the new name 'The well (of) Men-ma'at-Ra' (pl. 4, 20 - S: T3 ḥnm.t (Mn-m3'.t-R')) of the second redaction. One gets the same impression for the toponyms (7) and (12). This might be an indication that the new names mentioned in the second redaction of the relief, were not always generally accepted and that the traditional Semitic names persisted.

Under Sethos I there were therefore at least ten guarded wells in the area between the towns of Tcharou and Raphia, covering a distance of somewhat less than 200 km. One might theoretically suppose an average distance of some 18 km between each station, but nothing is certain. None of the intermediary New Kingdom toponyms can etymologically be linked with place-names known in later sources. Archaeological surveys and excavations indicate important New Kingdom clusters near Tell el-Burdj, Tell el-Ghaba, T4, Rumani, Nadjila, Bir el-Abd, Misfaq, Bir el-Mazar, el-Arish, el-Kharruba and Tell Temilat, but every identification with a specific toponym of the Karnak reliefs or in P.Anastasi I is hazardous. Certainly Clédat's attempt to identify the New Kingdom sites with the Arab road stations of the 13th-15th centuries AD, whose position is often only approximately known<sup>11</sup>, is methodologically unacceptable.

### **Synoptic table of stations on the Karnak relief of Sethos I and in P.Anastasi I, 27**

The first column gives a concise description of the fortresses and wells shown on the Karnak relief. The second column lists the accompanying inscription; the numbers refer to Karnak, 1986, IV, pl. 4-6; the letters refer to the order of Gardiner, 1920, p. 99-116; text between square brackets has now disappeared from the wall. In some cases the first inscription has been suppressed with plaster and a new inscription is added, which is given in the third column. The fourth column lists the corresponding toponyms of P.Anastasi I, 27.

| Karnak relief         | Karnak version I                            | Karnak version II | P.Anastasi I, 27, 2-8 |
|-----------------------|---|-------------------|-----------------------|
| buildings, bridge     | -   |                   |                       |
| canal with crocodiles | (6,36 - A) T3 dni.t<br>'The dividing canal' | -                 | -                     |
| canal with fishes     | -   | -                 | -                     |

<sup>11</sup> Cf. Clédat, 1923b, p. 146-158 (also incorporated in Gauthier, 1925-1931); his suggestions will be mentioned in the discussion of each separate toponym.

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|                                 |   |  |  |
|---------------------------------|---|--|--|
| fortress                        | (6,37 - B) P3 ḥ[tm n T3rw]<br>'The fortress of Tcharou'                             | -  | (1) P3 ḥtm n W3.wt-[Ḥr]<br>'The fortress of Ways-of-Horos'   |
| fortress                        | (6,38 - D) T3 't p3 [m3i]<br>'The dwelling of the lion'                             | -  | (2) T3 't n (Ssw) 'nh wḏ3 snb<br>'The dwelling of Sese - life, prosperity, health!'                                |
| [walled square well; two trees] | -   | -  | ? (3) 'fishes from [ ]; have you never bathed in it'?  |
| [small fort]                    | -   | ? (E) [P3 mktr n (Mn-m3' t-R')]<br>'The migdol of Men-ma'at-Ra'  | ? (5) 'where is its fortress (ḥtm)?'   |
| [round walled well]             | (F) [T3 ḥnm.t Ḥpn]<br>'The well of Ḥpn'   | -  | (4) Ḥtyn   |
| [small fort]                    | (6,39 - G) W3ḏy.t [n (Sty-mry-n-Pth)]<br>'W3ḏy.t of Sethos Mer-n-Ptah'              | -  | (6) ' n W3ḏy.t (Ssw) 'nh wḏ3 snb<br>'Region of W3ḏy.t of Sese - life, prosperity, health!'                         |
| [round walled well; one tree]   | (H) [T3 ḥnm.t ' n Imy-'(?)]<br>'The well of the region of Imy-'(?)'                 | -  | -  |
| [fort]                          | -   | -  | -  |
| [well]                          | (5, 17) [...]m't  | -  | -  |
| well                            | -   | -  | -  |
| fort                            | (5,19 - J) P3 [nhṯw] n (Sty-[mry-]n[-Pth])<br>'The stronghold of Sethos Mer-n-Ptah' | (5,18 - I) P3 bhṯ n (Mn-m3' t-R') t3 i3[...] s3.f<br>'The castle of Men-ma'at-Ra. The [...] is his protection' | ? (7) m p3y=f nhṯw (Wsr-m3' t-R') 'nh wḏ3 snb<br>'in his stronghold of Ouser-ma'at-Ra - life, prosperity, health!' |
| fort ('town')                   | (5,20 - K) [Dmi qd.n] ḥm.f m [m3]w.t<br>'Town which His Majesty built anew'         | -  | ? (8) Sbl (Sbr)  |
| well                            | (5,21 -L) T3 ḥnm.t Ib-s-q-b<br>'The well (called) Ib-s-q-b'                         | -  | (9) Ib-s-q-b   |
| larger fort                     | -   | -  | -  |
| well                            | (5,22 - M) T3 ḥnm.t (Sty-mry-n-Pth)<br>'The well of Sethos Mer-n-Ptah'              | -  | ? (10) 'y-n-n ('The two wells')  |
| small fort                      | -   | -  | -  |
| well                            | (4,17 - O) T3 ḥnm.t ndm<br>'The well (called) Sweet'                                | (4,18 - N) T3 ḥnm.t (Mn-m3' t-R') '3 nhṯ.w<br>'The well (called) Men-ma'at-Ra, great of victories'             | -  |
| small fort                      | -   | -  | -  |



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|   |   |   |                      |
|---|---|---|----------------------|
| well                                    | (4,19 - T) N-ḥ-s n p3 sr<br>'N-ḥ-s of the Prince'   | (4,20 - S) T3 ḥnm.t (Mn-<br>m3 <sup>c</sup> .t-R <sup>c</sup> )<br>'The well of Men-ma'at-Ra'   | (11) N-ḥ-s           |
| town (with a well<br>within the walls?) | (4,14 - P) Dmi qd.n ḥm.f m<br>m3w.t m t3 ḥnm.t Ḥwtwti(?)<br>'Town which His Majesty<br>built anew at the well<br>Ḥwtwti(?)' | (4,16 - Q) P3 nḥtw n (Mn-<br>m3 <sup>c</sup> .t-R <sup>c</sup> iw <sup>c</sup> -R <sup>c</sup> )<br>'The stronghold of Men-<br>ma'at-Ra heir of Ra' | ? (12) (r?) Ḥ-b-r-t  |
| walled well                             | (4,15 - R) [Y]m(?) rbt<br>'Wide(?) pool'  | (suppressed with plaster,<br>but no new name)   | -                    |
| town                                    | (4,21 - U) Dmi n [Rph?]<br>'Town of Raphia'   | -   | (13) Rph<br>'Raphia' |
| -                                       | -   | -   | (14) Qdt<br>'Gaza'   |

## MILITARY EXPEDITIONS IN THE 7TH-1ST CENTURIES BC

From the 7th to the 1st century BC more than thirty military expeditions from Syria to Egypt or vice versa are recorded. If a land army was involved<sup>12</sup>, it necessarily had to cross the northern Sinai, but this region is usually not or only briefly referred to. Only in a few instances difficulties on the road are discussed, and one gets the impression that the overland route was not so hazardous as some sources suggest. In fact, most accounts mentioning serious problems with the supply of water in the desert or with the marshes near lake Serbonis relate victorious expeditions, and the difficulties met on the way increase the merit of the achievement: the Assyrian attack of 671 BC, the Persian conquests of 525 and 342 BC and the expedition of Gabinius in 55 BC. The failure of Antigonos and Demetrios in 306 BC on the other hand is put in contrast with the efficiency and success of the attacked Ptolemaios. The area is often described as a waterless, sandy desert<sup>13</sup>, and the swamps are indeed dangerous for somebody who does not know them, as Diodoros says, but with the proper preparations the crossing of the northern Sinai apparently posed no insurmountable problems, which is sufficiently demonstrated by the numerous expeditions through the region.

This chapter briefly discusses the military movements explicitly referring to the northern Sinai, but also mentions a lot of other, mainly military expeditions probably passing the same region. For this second group no comprehensiveness has been aimed at, but it seemed useful to collect here some events that will also occur further on or that throw light on the general geopolitical situation of the area in the different periods.

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<sup>12</sup> Winnicki, 1991b, p. 94 states that an Egyptian expedition to Syria always involved an overland army and a fleet, especially to cut off the track between Pelousion and Gaza, but the list of expeditions indicates that this was certainly no rule.

<sup>13</sup> The terms used are ἡ ἄνυδρος or τὰ ἄνυδρα, 'the waterless land > the desert' (cf. Herodotos, 3, 4.6.11; Polybios, 5, 80; Iosephos, *Bellum Iudaicum*, 1, 20, 3; see also the emendation in Aristeides, 36 (48), 74); ἡ ἔρημος, 'the desert' (cf. Diodoros 1, 31; 20, 73; Iosephos, *Bellum Iudaicum*, 4, 11, 5); **deserta**, 'the desert' (cf. Livius, 45, 12); λυπρὰ καὶ ἀμμώδης, 'barren and sandy' (Strabon, 16, 2, 32); διὰ τῆς ψάμμου τῆς ἀνύδρου, 'across the sandy desert' (cf. Iosephos, *Contra Apionem*, 1, 29); διὰ ψάμμου βαθείας καὶ ἀνύδρου, 'across deep sand, where there is no water' (cf. Ploutarchos, *Antonius*, 3).

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In the spring of 673 BC the Assyrian king Assarhaddon failed in an attack on Egypt, for which no further details are known<sup>14</sup>. Two years later, in the spring of 671 BC, the same king organized another expedition against Egypt, which is described in detail in a fragmentarily preserved tablet. He went from Tyros to Raphia, beyond the border of the 'brook of Egypt', and there gathered water for his troops from wells. The events on the march further on are not clear. It is only certain that the army finally arrived in Egypt, apparently passing by Magdali and Ishhupri. The days and distances mentioned, nor the description of the landscape make much sense, but the general message seems to be that it was a difficult march<sup>15</sup>.

Assurbanipal invaded Egypt probably about 667 and again about 663 BC<sup>16</sup>. For the first expedition he came with a combined force by land and by sea, but no further details are given. The first battle was fought near Kar-Baniti in the eastern Delta<sup>17</sup>.

About 622-620 BC the Scythians, wandering through Asia, marched against Egypt, but somewhere south of the Syrian city of Askalon the Egyptian king Psammetichos I met them and persuaded them with gifts and pleas to return<sup>18</sup>.

Most likely the account in Iustinus about the Egyptian king Vezosis (a deformation of the name Sesostris) refers to this event. The king attacked the Scythians, but got terrified by their approaching troops, left his own army and fled back to Egypt while the Scythians only dropped their invasion because of the marshes<sup>19</sup>. This could be the earliest reference to the barathra or marshes of lake

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<sup>14</sup> *Assarhaddon Chronicle* ('Chronicle 14'), 20 (Grayson, 1975, p. 126); discussed s.v. Sha-amile.

<sup>15</sup> Assarhaddon, Fragment F, Vo 1-19 (Borger, 1956, p. 112-113); discussed s.v. Migdol - Magdolos.

<sup>16</sup> For the dates, cf. Grayson, 1980, p. 244 and 1991, p. 143-144.

<sup>17</sup> Assurbanipal, Prism A = Rassam Prism, I, 72-82 (Streck, 1916, II, p. 8-9); the translation of Oppenheim in Pritchard, 1969 [= 1950], p. 294; 'I made these (sc. Phoenician) kings accompany my army over the land- as well as (over) the sea-route with their armed forces and their ships (respectively). Quickly I advanced as far as Kar-Baniti ...'; for Kar-Baniti, see Verreth, 1999b, p. 238-239.

<sup>18</sup> Herodotos, 1, 104, 2 - 105, 2: ἐνθεῦτεν δὲ ἦσαν ἐπ' Αἴγυπτον· καὶ ἐπέιτε ἐγένοντο ἐν τῇ Παλαιστίνῃ Συρίῃ, Ψαμμήτιχος σφέας Αἰγύπτου βασιλεὺς ἀντιάσας δῶροισί τε καὶ λιτῆσι ἀποτρέπει τὸ προσωτέρω μὴ πορεύεσθαι ('Thence they marched against Egypt; and when they were in Palaestina Syria, Psammetichos king of Egypt met them and persuaded them with gifts and prayers to come no further'); cf. Kienitz, 1953, p. 17; Spalinger, 1978c, p. 49-57.

<sup>19</sup> Iustinus, 2, 3, 8-15 (Seel, 1972, p. 19-20) (cf. 1, 1, 6): *Scythas ab Aegypto paludes prohibuere* ('the marshes prevented the Scythians from invading Egypt'); see also Orosius, 1, 14, 1-3 (Arnaud-Lindet, 1990, I, p. 62-63): *universam quoque Aegyptum populavissent, ni paludibus inpediti*

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Serbonis in the northern Sinai. The story, though, is not completely compatible with that of Herodotos, and the possibility cannot be ruled out that the phrase about the marshes protecting the Egyptian eastern border actually reflects the situation of the 4th century BC as described by Diodoros. On the other hand, a similar story is told by Iordanes in 551 AD, but here no marshes repelled the king of the Goths [!], but the impassable Nile and the fortifications made earlier by Vezosis against the Ethiopians [!]<sup>20</sup>. The possibility therefore cannot be excluded that Iustinus' marshes in fact refer to the marshy area round the Pelousiac mouth and not to the barathra of lake Serbonis.

In 609 BC Necho II marched from Egypt to the Euphrates - passing by Megiddo - to help the Assyrians against the Babylonians; on his way back he settled things in Judaea<sup>21</sup>. About 605 BC Egypt lost the gained territory to the Babylonians.

According to Herodotos Necho II defeated the Syrians near Magdolos and afterwards took the city of Kadytis in Syria<sup>22</sup>. The account probably relates to the fight against the Babylonians of Nebuchadnezzar attacking Egypt about 601/600 BC. Magdolos in all likelihood lies in the northeastern Delta and Kadytis can be identified with Gaza, but details about the northern Sinai in between are lacking. In the end, the 'brook of Egypt' apparently became the borderline between Egyptians and Babylonians<sup>23</sup>.

In 592 BC Psammetichos II organized an expedition to Syria, but neither the nature, nor the means of this expedition are known<sup>24</sup>.

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repellerentur ('ils auraient ravagé l'Égypte entière également, s'ils n'avaient été repoussés par l'obstacle des marais'); cf. Spalinger, 1978c, p. 50-51; Obsomer, 1989, p. 35.36; Carrez-Maratray, 1999b, p. 282.

<sup>20</sup> Iordanes, *Getica*, 6, 47 (Mömmesen, 1882, p. 66): nisi Nili amnis intransmeabilis obstetissent fluenta vel munitiones, quas dudum sibi ob incursiones Aethiopum Vezosis fieri praecepisset, ibi in eius eum patria extinxisset ('if the currents of the impassable river Nile had not stopped them, or the fortifications that Vezosis a long time ago had ordered against the invasions of the Ethiopians, then (Thanausis) would have killed him there in his own fatherland').

<sup>21</sup> Iosephos, *Antiquitates Iudaicae*, 10, 5, 1-2 (74-77.82-83): Νεχαώ ὁ τῶν Αἰγυπτίων βασιλεὺς ἐγείρας στρατιὰν ἐπὶ τὸν Εὐφράτην ἤλασε ποταμόν ('Necho the king of Egypt having raised an army, marched toward the Euphrates'); cf. Lloyd, 1988, III, p. 159.

<sup>22</sup> Herodotos, 2, 159, 2; discussed s.v. Migdol - Magdolos.

<sup>23</sup> 2 *Regum*, 24, 7: 'The king of Egypt did not leave his own country again, because the king of Babylon had conquered everywhere belonging to the king of Egypt, from the brook of Egypt to the river Euphrates'. The 'brook of Egypt' is anachronically rendered as 'Pelousion' in Iosephos, *Antiquitates Iudaicae*, 10, 6, 1 (86); see s.v. Brook of Egypt.

<sup>24</sup> P.Ryl. dem. 9, 14, 16 - 15, 8 (Vittmann, 1998, p. 162-167), with 14, 17: Pr-ϵ3 ϵ.w.s. nϵy r p3 t3 Hr ('Der Pharao begibt sich ins Syrerland'). The expedition is described by scholars as a military

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During the siege of Jerusalem by the Babylonians of Nebuchadnezzar, about 589 BC, the Egyptian king Apries left his country with an army, but the Babylonians drove him out of Syria<sup>25</sup>.

Herodotos states that Apries led an army against Sidon by land and fought against Tyros in a naval battle, while a similar story is found in Diodoros<sup>26</sup>. There is no consensus about the date of this expedition. Kienitz places the events also in 589 BC, but since the Egyptian troops were driven back then, he supposes that Herodotos is wrong stating that an overland army reached Sidon and suggests that the attack on Sidon also took place by sea<sup>27</sup>. Lloyd prefers to date the Egyptian attack on Phoenicia ca. 574-570 BC, but admits that an Egyptian overland expedition against Sidon at that time was virtually impossible because the Babylonians firmly controlled the country<sup>28</sup>. Whatever the exact historical circumstances, however, the overland attack on Sidon is mentioned in two independent sources, and in my view should not be so easily discarded as a mere fiction.

In 582 BC Nebuchadnezzar marched against Koile Syria and launched a campaign against Egypt<sup>29</sup>, which he attacked again in 568/567 BC<sup>30</sup>, but further details are lacking.

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campaign, as a pilgrimage or as a demonstration of power; cf. Griffith, 1909, III, p. 92-95; Yoyotte, 1951, p. 140-144; Sauneron, 1952a, p. 135-136; Kienitz, 1953, p. 25-26; Quaegebeur in Van 't Dack, 1989, p. 103. Kienitz thinks that Psammetichos went by sea, but this is hard to prove.

<sup>25</sup> *Ieremias*, 37, 5-11: 'Meanwhile Pharaoh's army was on the move from Egypt ... (Jeremias to the king): "Is Pharaoh's army marching to your aid? It will withdraw to its own country, Egypt". ... At the time when the Chaldaean army, threatened by Pharaoh's army, had raised the siege of Jerusalem, ...'; Iosephos, *Antiquitates Iudaicae*, 10, 7, 3 (110): ὁ δ' Αἰγύπτιος ἀκούσας ἐν οἷς ἐστὶν ὁ σύμμαχος αὐτοῦ Σαχχίας, ἀναλαβὼν πολλὴν δύναμιν ἦκεν εἰς τὴν Ἰουδαίαν ὡς λύσων τὴν πολιορκίαν. ὁ δὲ Βαβυλώνιος ἀφίσταται τῶν Ἱεροσολύμων, ἀπαντήσας δὲ τοῖς Αἰγυπτίοις καὶ συμβαλὼν αὐτοῖς τῇ μάχῃ νικᾷ καὶ τρεψάμενος αὐτοὺς εἰς φυγὴν ἐξ ὅλης διώκει τῆς Συρίας ('But, when the Egyptian king heard of the plight of his ally Sachchias, he raised a force and came to Judaea to end the siege. Thereupon the Babylonian king left Jerusalem and went to meet the Egyptians and, encountering them in battle, defeated and put them to flight and drove them out of the whole of Syria'); cf. Lloyd, 1988, III, p. 171.

<sup>26</sup> Herodotos, 2, 161: ἐπὶ τε Σιδῶνα στρατὸν ἤλασε καὶ ἐναυμάχησε τῷ Τυρίῳ ('(Apries) sent an army against Sidon and did battle by sea with the king of Tyros'); Diodoros, 1, 68, 1: στρατεύσας δὲ δυνάμεσιν ἀδραῖς πεζαῖς τε καὶ ναυτικαῖς ἐπὶ Κύπρον καὶ Φοινίκην ... καὶ λαφύρων ἀθροίσας πλῆθος ἐπανήλθεν εἰς Αἴγυπτον ('he made a campaign with strong land and sea forces against Cyprus and Phoenicia ... and returned to Egypt with much booty').

<sup>27</sup> Kienitz, 1953, p. 27-29 and especially p. 27, n. 2.

<sup>28</sup> Lloyd, 1988, III, p. 170-172; for the date, cf. Reyes, 1994, p. 73-74.

<sup>29</sup> *Ieremias*, 46, 13: 'when Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon advanced to attack Egypt'; Iosephos, *Antiquitates Iudaicae*, 10, 9, 7 (181-182): στρατεύει Ναβουχοδονόσορος ἐπὶ τὴν Κοίλην Συρίαν, καὶ κατασχὼν αὐτήν, ... ἐνέβαλεν εἰς τὴν Αἴγυπτον καταστρεφόμενος αὐτήν ... ('Nabouchodonosoros marched against Koile Syria and, after occupying it, ... he invaded Egypt in order

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The toponym Ta-aam-pa-nehes (T3-ʿ3m-p3-nḥs) occurs in three demotic literary texts written in the 3rd-1st century BC, but with a setting under the 26th dynasty, and in a demotic ostrakon of 258 BC. Most scholars identify this place with the city of Tahpanhes / Daphnai in the eastern Delta. Winnicki, however, reads the name as N3.w-ʿ3m-p3-Nḥs, which he interpreted as 'the places of the Asiatics (sc. the shepherds) and of the Nubians' and identified with the region east of the Delta along the Mediterranean<sup>31</sup>. He announced a further study where he will give more arguments for this interpretation, but for the moment it is hard to figure out the meaning of this expression in reference to the northern Sinai.

In May - June 525 BC the Persian king Kambyses attacked Egypt<sup>32</sup>. Herodotos describes how Kambyses was in doubt about the route to cross the desert, his major concern apparently being the supply of water<sup>33</sup>. The Greek Phanes advised him to ask the king of the Arabs for help. Herodotos at this point inserts a geopolitical parenthesis about the northern Sinai. The region north of Kadytis (Gaza) belongs to the Palestinian Syrians. All the emporia near the sea between Kadytis and Ienysos belong to the Arabian king. From Ienysos till lake Serbonis next to mount Kasion - which for Herodotos formed the border mark<sup>34</sup> - the region belongs again to the Syrians; it takes three days to cross it and there is no water available. At lake Serbonis Egypt starts<sup>35</sup>. It is rather odd that Kambyses needed the help of the Arabs in a region that is described as belonging to the Syrians. Probably the whole region from Phoenicia to lake Serbonis was originally Syrian; the Arabs about 525 BC apparently controlled the more important emporia there for trade purposes, but were not interested to 'occupy' the desert west of Ienysos to which they had unhindered access anyway, so the area technically could still be considered as Syrian. Herodotos

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to subdue it ...') (the further events described by Iosephos can not be trusted); cf. Lloyd, 1988, III, p. 171.

<sup>30</sup> Neo-Babylonian tablet BM 33041 - BM 33053, Ro 13-14 (translation in Reyes, 1994, p. 75): '[In] the 37th year of Nebuchadnezzar, king of Baby[lon], He went [to] Egypt to do battle'.

<sup>31</sup> Winnicki, 1998, p. 44-47 (Polish); 2000, p. 169 and n. 18.

<sup>32</sup> Herodotos, 3, 4, 3 - 11, 1; for the date, cf. De Meulenaere, 1951, p. 85.124.133.

<sup>33</sup> Herodotos, 3, 4, 3: ὀρμημένω δὲ στρατεύεσθαι Καμβύση ἐπ' Αἴγυπτον καὶ ἀπορέοντι τὴν ἔλασιν, ὅκως τὴν ἀνυδρον διεκπερᾶ, ἐπελθὼν ... ('There he found Kambyses prepared to set forth against Egypt, but in doubt as to his march, how he should cross the waterless desert ...').

<sup>34</sup> Herodotos, 2, 158, 4; discussed s.v. Kasion.

<sup>35</sup> Herodotos, 3, 5, 1-3; discussed s.v. Ienysos.

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continues how the Persians, after the conquest of Egypt, provided water in the desert of Syria, which is the entrance to Egypt<sup>36</sup>.

The Persians entered into a treaty with the Arabs, who provided the army of Kambyses with water. Herodotos knows two versions about this provision. According to the first version the Arabs transported the water in bags of camel skin on the back of their camels and supplied the army when it passed by in the middle of the desert. According to the second story, which Herodotos himself did not trust, the Arabs dug huge water reservoirs at three places in the desert. They filled them via a kind of pipeline with the water of a river that came from a distance of twelve days marching<sup>37</sup>. While the idea of the pipeline is indeed unacceptable, the water reservoirs might be a vague reminiscence to the New Kingdom wells as shown on the Karnak relief and as found in Bir el-Abd.

The Egyptian king Psammenitos (Psammetichos III) waited for Kambyses at the Pelousiac branch<sup>38</sup>, apparently leaving the region of Egypt between lake Serbonis and the Nile unprotected. The march itself of the Persians through the desert is not described in detail and did apparently not cause any problems<sup>39</sup>.

Between 386 and 380 BC Chabrias of Athenai helped the Egyptian kings Hakoris and Nektanebis (I) to build up a defence line against the Persians. The toponym 'Chabrias' Camp' (ὁ Χαβρίου χάραξ, Chabriae castra), still known in the 1st century AD between the Kasion and Pelousion, probably refers to this activity<sup>40</sup>.

In the spring of 373 BC the army of the Persian king Artaxerxes II Mnemon marched with two hundred thousand soldiers through the northern Sinai, escorted by the fleet, to reconquer Egypt<sup>41</sup>. The expedition was a failure and the army returned to Asia<sup>42</sup>.

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<sup>36</sup> Herodotos, 3, 6, 1 - 7, 1; discussed s.v. Ostrakine.

<sup>37</sup> Herodotos, 3, 9, 3: ἐν δὲ τῇ ἀνύδρῳ μεγάλας δεξαμενὰς ὀρύξασθαι, ἵνα δεκόμεναι τὸ ὕδωρ σώζωσι ('and he had great tanks dug in that dry country to receive and keep the water').

<sup>38</sup> Herodotos, 3, 10, 1: ἐν δὲ τῷ Πηλουσίῳ καλεομένῳ στόματι τοῦ Νείλου ἐστρατοπεδεύετο Ψαμμνήριτος ὁ Ἀμάσιος παῖς ὑπομένων Καμβύσεα ('Psammenitos, son of Amasis, was encamped by the so-called Pelousian mouth of the Nile, awaiting Kambyses').

<sup>39</sup> Herodotos, 3, 11, 1: οἱ δὲ Πέρσαι ἐπεῖτε διεξέλασαντες τὴν ἄνυδρον ἴζοντο πέλας τῶν Αἰγυπτίων ὡς συμβαλέοντες, ... ('now the Persians having crossed the waterless country and encamped near the Egyptians with intent to give battle, ...').

<sup>40</sup> See s.v. Chabriou Charax.

<sup>41</sup> Diodoros, 15, 41, 4: ἀρχομένου δὲ τοῦ θέρους ἀνέζευξαν οἱ τοῦ βασιλέως στρατηγοὶ μετὰ πάσης τῆς δυνάμεως, καὶ τοῦ στόλου συμπαραπλέοντος προήγον ἐπὶ τὴν Αἰγυπτου. ὡς δ'

## 1. Itineraries and descriptions

In the spring of 360 BC the Egyptian king Tachos organized an expedition to Phoenicia and Syria with two hundred ships under the command of Chabrias of Athenai, ten thousand Greek mercenaries under the command of Agesilaos of Sparta, and eighty thousand Egyptian soldiers under the command of the king himself. The soldiers apparently had to cross the northern Sinai on foot, while the king and the Greek commanders went by sea<sup>43</sup>.

No details are known about the unsuccessful expedition against Egypt organized by Artaxerxes II, but led by the later king Artaxerxes III Ochus in 359/358 BC, nor about the expedition undertaken by Artaxerxes III himself in 351/350 BC<sup>44</sup>.

In 343/342 BC Artaxerxes III planned another attack on Egypt. On the track between Sidon and Pelousion the king lost part of his army in the so-called Barathra swamps, because he was not familiar with the region<sup>45</sup>. Diodoros already dwelled on these Barathra in his general introduction on Egypt<sup>46</sup>. The northeastern border of the country is protected by the branch of the Nile, by the desert and by the so-called Barathra or 'Pits'. They form part of lake Serbonis, half way Koile Syria and Egypt, and are dangerous because of their quicksand. Since great dunes surround the lake, constant south winds strew a lot of sand over the water surface, making it very difficult to distinguish land and water. People who do not know the nature of the place, are easily trapped, but Diodoros - or his source Hekataios - really exaggerates when he states that whole armies wandering from the normal road have disappeared. In fact the only losses known are the Persian ones in 342 BC.

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ἦκον πλησίον τοῦ Νείλου, ... ('At the beginning of the summer the king's generals broke camp with the entire army, and accompanied by the fleet sailing along the coast proceeded to Egypt. When they came near the Nile, ...').

<sup>42</sup> Diodoros, 15, 43, 4-5: ἔγνωσαν ἐκ τῆς Αἰγύπτου τὴν ἀπαλλαγὴν ποιήσασθαι. διόπερ ἐπανιόντων αὐτῶν εἰς τὴν Ἀσίαν ... ('(The Persian commanders) decided to withdraw from Egypt. Consequently, on their way back to Asia ...')

<sup>43</sup> Ploutarchos, *Agesilaos*, 37, 1-2 (617 A-B): ... καὶ συνεχέπλευσεν ἐπὶ τοὺς Φοῖνικας αὐτῶ ('... (Agesilaos) even sailed with him against the Phoenicians'); Diodoros, 15, 92, 2-3: ... τῆς γὰρ δυνάμεως προελθούσης πορρωτέρω καὶ περὶ Φοινίκην καταστρατοπεδεύουσης, ... ('... In fact when the armament had gone far afield and was encamped near Phoenicia, ...'); cf. Kienitz, 1953, p. 96-97.

<sup>44</sup> Pompeius Trogus, Prologus 10 (Seel, 1972, p. 309): *Aegypto bellum ter intulit* ('(Ochos) three times declared war on Egypt'); cf. Kienitz, 1953, p. 99-101; Salmon, 1985, p. 165; Carrez-Maratray, 1999b, p. 368.

<sup>45</sup> Diodoros, 16, 46, 4-6; discussed s.v. Lake Serbonis.

<sup>46</sup> Diodoros, 1, 30, 4-9 (= Hekataios of Abdera, FGrHist no. 264, F 25); discussed s.v. Lake Serbonis.



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In his description of the Mediterranean coast of Egypt Diodoros probably includes the northern Sinai when he tells how sailors cannot see land in time because it lies so low, and end up in marshy and swampy places or in a desert region<sup>47</sup>.

In November - December 332 BC Alexander the Great marched by land across the northern Sinai, while his fleet went ahead. Arrianos specifies that it took him seven days to go from Gaza to Pelousion, where he found his ships anchored<sup>48</sup>. According to Quintus Curtius Rufus Alexander arrived after seven days in a region in Egypt, which in his days was called Alexander's Camp and was probably situated east of the Pelousiac branch. There Alexander embarked for Memphis, while his troops went to Pelousion<sup>49</sup>. The account of Diodoros - incorrectly dated in 331/330 BC - does not give any details on the march to Egypt and does not even mention Pelousion<sup>50</sup>.

Before arriving in Egypt, Alexander conquered 'Phoenicia, Syria and the greater part of Arabia'<sup>51</sup>. The latter expression probably includes (part of) the northern Sinai.

In the spring of 331 BC Alexander left Egypt for Syria, but no details are given about the journey<sup>52</sup>.

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<sup>47</sup> Diodoros, 1, 31, 5 (= Hekataios of Abdera, FGrHist no. 264, F 25): ἔνιοι δὲ διὰ τὴν ταπεινότητα τῆς χώρας οὐ δυνάμενοι προϊδέσθαι τὴν γῆν λαυθάνουσιν ἑαυτοὺς ἐκπίπτοντες οἱ μὲν εἰς ἐλώδεις καὶ λιμνάζοντας τόπους, οἱ δ' εἰς χώραν ἔρημον ('and now and then mariners who cannot see land in time because the country lies so low, are cast ashore before they realize it, some of them on marshy and swampy places and others on a desert region').

<sup>48</sup> Arrianos, *Anabasis Alexandri*, 3, 1, 1: Ἀλέξανδρος δὲ ἐπ' Αἰγύπτου, ἵνα περὶ τὸ πρῶτον ὠρμήθη, ἐστέλλετο, καὶ ἐβδόμη ἡμέρα ἀπὸ τῆς Γάζης ἐλαύνων ἦκεν εἰς Πηλοῦσιον τῆς Αἰγύπτου. ὁ δὲ ναυτικὸς στρατὸς παρέπλει αὐτῷ ἐκ Φοινίκης ὡς ἐπ' Αἰγύπτου· καὶ καταλαμβάνει τὰς ναῦς ἐν Πηλοσίῳ ὀρμούσας ('Alexander now set out for Egypt, his original goal, and marching from Gaza he arrived on the seventh day at Pelousion in Egypt. His fleet coasted along with him from Phoenicia towards Egypt; and he found the ships already at anchor at Pelousion'); cf. also Aharoni, 1993, map 174. The details that Figueras, 1988, p. 56.61 gives about the route of Alexander, are lacking any ground.

<sup>49</sup> Quintus Curtius Rufus, 4, 7, 2-3; discussed s.v. *Castra Alexandri*.

<sup>50</sup> Diodoros, 17, 49, 1: αὐτὸς δὲ μετὰ πάσης τῆς δυνάμεως παρήλθεν εἰς Αἴγυπτον καὶ παρέλαβε πάσας τὰς ἐν αὐτῇ πόλεις χωρὶς κινδύνων ('He himself with all his army marched on to Egypt and secured the adhesion of all its cities without striking a blow').

<sup>51</sup> Arrianos, *Anabasis Alexandri*, 3, 1, 2: ... Φοινίκην τε καὶ Συρίαν καὶ τῆς Ἀραβίας τὰ πολλὰ ὑπὸ Ἀλεξάνδρου ἐχόμενα ... ((Mazakes the Persian on learning that) Phoenicia, Syria, and the greater part of Arabia were in Alexander's hands ...).

<sup>52</sup> Diodoros, 17, 52, 7: ἐπανῆλθε μετὰ τῆς δυνάμεως εἰς τὴν Συρίαν ('He returned with his army to Syria'); Arrianos, 3, 6, 1: Ἀλέξανδρος δὲ ἅμα τῷ ἦρι ὑποφαίνοντι ἐκ Μέλμιοις ἦει ἐπὶ Φοινίκης· καὶ ἐγεφυρώθη αὐτῷ ὅ τε κατὰ Μέλμιν πόρος τοῦ Νείλου καὶ αἱ διώρυχες αὐτοῦ πᾶσαι. ὡς δὲ ἀφίκετο ἐς Τύρον, ... ('When spring began to show itself, Alexander started from Memphis for Phoenicia; bridges were made for him to cross over the river Nile at Memphis and over all its canals. When he reached Tyros, ...'); Quintus Curtius Rufus, 4, 8, 10: *quanta maxima celeritate potuit, contendit, advenientique* ... ('he hastened to the spot (sc. in Syria) with all possible speed, and on his arrival ...').

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After the death of Alexander in Babylon in 323 BC Ptolemaios, son of Lagos, received Egypt as a satrapy and Laomedon of Mitylene was given Syria<sup>53</sup>. Diodoros in a geographical parenthesis about this division considers the Nile the border between on the one hand Egypt and on the other hand Syria and 'the desert that lies next to it', probably referring to the Sinai<sup>54</sup>.

Probably in the spring of 321 BC Ptolemaios left for Syria with an army to take possession of the corpse of Alexander and to transport it to Egypt<sup>55</sup>.

In the spring of 320 BC Perdikkas marched against Ptolemaios, but the account of Diodoros starts with Perdikkas arriving at Pelousion<sup>56</sup>. The expedition failed, Perdikkas was killed and at the partition that followed at Triparadeisos, Antipatros confirmed Ptolemaios and Laomedon in the possession of their satrapies<sup>57</sup>.

Probably in 319 BC Ptolemaios organized an expedition against Laomedon and took possession of Syria and Phoenicia. According to Diodoros he sent Nikanor with an overland army, while Appianos mentions that Ptolemaios himself went by sea. One account does not need to exclude the other and probably it was a combined expedition, both by land and by sea<sup>58</sup>.

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<sup>53</sup> Diodoros, 18, 3, 1: ... Πτολεμαίω μὲν τῷ Λάγου τὴν Αἴγυπτον ἔδωκεν, Λαομέδοντι δὲ τῷ Μιτυληναίῳ Συρίαν ... ('Perdikkas) gave Egypt to Ptolemaios son of Lagos, Syria to Laomedon of Mitylene, ...').

<sup>54</sup> Diodoros, 18, 6, 3: παρὰ δε τὰ πέρατα τῆς Κοίλης Συρίας καὶ τὴν συνεχῶς κειμένην ἔρημον, καθ' ἣν ὁ Νεῖλος φερόμενος ὀρίζει Συρίαν τε καὶ τὴν Αἴγυπτον, ἀπεδέδεικτο σατραπεία πασῶν ἀρίστη καὶ προσόδους ἔχουσα μεγάλας Αἴγυπτος ('Along the frontiers of Koile Syria and along the desert that lies next to it, through which the Nile makes its way and divides Syria and Egypt, the best satrapy of all and one that has great revenues, was set up, Egypt').

<sup>55</sup> Diodoros, 18, 28, 3: Πτολεμαῖος δὲ τιμῶν τὸν Ἀλέξανδρον ἀπήντησε μετὰ δυνάμεως μέχρι τῆς Συρίας ('Ptolemaios, moreover, doing honour to Alexander, went to meet (the body) with an army as far as Syria').

<sup>56</sup> Diodoros, 18, 33, 1: Περδίκκας δὲ ... πολλῶ θρασύτερος ἐγένετο πρὸς τὴν εἰς Αἴγυπτον στρατείαν· ὡς δ' ἐγγύς ἐγένετο τοῦ Νείλου, κατεστρατοπέδευσεν οὐ μακρὰν πόλεως Πηλουσίου ('Perdikkas ... became much more confident in regard to the Egyptian campaign; and when he approached the Nile, he camped not far from the city of Pelousion').

<sup>57</sup> Diodoros, 18, 39, 5-6: μετὰ δὲ ταῦτα τὰς σατραπείας ἐξ ἀρχῆς ἐμερίσατο καὶ Πτολεμαίω μὲν τὴν προυπάρχουσαν προσώρισεν· ἀδύνατον γὰρ ἦν τοῦτον μεταθεῖναι διὰ τὸ δοκεῖν τὴν Αἴγυπτον διὰ τῆς ἰδίας ἀνδρείας ἔχειν οἰοῦναι δορίκτητον. καὶ Λαομέδοντι μὲν τῷ Μιτυληναίῳ Συρίαν ἔδωκε ... ('Thereafter (Antipatros) distributed the satrapies anew. To Ptolemaios he assigned what was already his, for it was impossible to displace him, since he seemed to be holding Egypt by virtue of his own prowess as if it were a prize of war. And he gave Syria to Laomedon ...').

<sup>58</sup> Diodoros, 18, 43, 2: οὗτος δὲ στρατεύσας εἰς τὴν Συρίαν ... τὴν δὲ Συρίαν ἄπασαν ἐχειρώσατο ... ἐπανήλθεν εἰς τὴν Αἴγυπτον, σύντομον τὴν στρατείαν καὶ πρακτικὴν πεπονημένος ('(Nikanor) marched into Syria ... and subdued the whole of Syria. ... He returned to Egypt, having made a short and effective campaign'); Appianos, *Historia Romana*, 11 (= *Syriaca*), 52

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In 314 BC Antigonos Monophthalmos conquered Syria on Ptolemaios<sup>59</sup>. Since in 313 BC Ptolemaios and Antigonos met for a conference near the Ekregma or 'Outlet' of lake Serbonis, it is most likely that this spot then formed the border between their possessions<sup>60</sup>.

In the late autumn of 312 BC Ptolemaios marched against Demetrios Poliorketes, the son of Antigonos, who stayed in Syria. He left Pelousion, crossed the desert and finally camped near Gaza<sup>61</sup>. Ptolemaios won the battle and occupied Koile Syria, but was forced to return to Egypt probably about May 311 BC<sup>62</sup>.

Later that year the diadochs signed a treaty that Ptolemaios would have Egypt and the adjoining cities in Libye and Arabia, while Antigonos would rule Asia<sup>63</sup>. Although none of the diadochs respected the treaty, it is remarkable that Ptolemaios was officially granted an extension of his territory to the east. It is not clear what exactly is meant with 'the cities adjacent in Arabia', but most likely also the Sinai is included.

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(264-265): Λαομέδοντα δ' ἐπιπλεύσας Πτολεμαῖος ὁ τῆς Αἰγύπτου σατράπης ... καὶ τινα χρόνον ὁ Πτολεμαῖος ἦρχε Συρίας, καὶ φρουρὰς ἐν ταῖς πόλεσι καταλιπὼν ἐς Αἴγυπτον ἀπέπλει ('To this Laomedon Ptolemaios, the satrap of Egypt, came with a fleet ... Thus Ptolemaios ruled Syria for a while, left a garrison in the cities and returned to Egypt'); cf. also Pausanias, 1, 6, 4. For a discussion of the events, cf. Brodersen, 1989, p. 101-102; see also Aharoni, 1993, map 175.

<sup>59</sup> Cf. Diodoros, 19, 58, 1 and 59, 2-3; Pausanias, 1, 6, 5; Appianos, *Historia Romana*, 11 (= *Syriaca*), 53 (271).

<sup>60</sup> Diodoros, 19, 64, 8; discussed s.v. Lake Serbonis. Billows, 1990, p. 118.122.133 thinks that Antigonos took the initiative for the meeting to discuss peace, but the text is not clear at this point and it is just as well possible that Ptolemaios, camping in Pelousion and standing guard against Antigonos, made the first move.

<sup>61</sup> Diodoros, 19, 80, 5: ἀπὸ δὲ Πηλουσίου διὰ τῆς ἐρήμου διελθὼν κατεστρατοπέδευσε πλησίον τῶν πολεμίων περὶ τὴν παλαιὰν Γάζαν τῆς Συρίας ('marching through the desert from Pelousion, he camped near the enemy at old Gaza in Syria'); cf. also Appianos, *Historia Romana*, 11 (= *Syriaca*), 54 (272). For the date, cf. Winnicki, 1989, p. 59-60 and 1991a, p. 197; see also Aharoni, 1993, map 176.

<sup>62</sup> Diodoros, 19, 93, 7: διὸ καὶ κρίνας ἐκλιπεῖν τὴν Συρίαν ... αὐτὸς δὲ τὴν δύναμιν ἀναλαβὼν καὶ τῶν χρημάτων ὅσα δυνατὸν ἦν ἄγειν ἢ φέρειν ἐπανήλθεν εἰς Αἴγυπτον ('deciding, therefore, to leave Syria, ... then he himself, taking the army and what of the booty it was possible to drive or carry, returned into Egypt').

<sup>63</sup> Diodoros, 19, 105, 1: Πτολεμαῖον δὲ τῆς Αἰγύπτου καὶ τῶν συνοριζουσῶν ταύτῃ πόλεων κατὰ τε τὴν Λιβύην καὶ τὴν Ἀραβίαν, Ἀντίγονον δὲ ἀφηγεῖσθαι τῆς Ἀσίας πάσης ('(in this it was provided) that Ptolemaios rule Egypt and the cities adjacent thereto in Libya and Arabia; that Antigonos have first place in all Asia').

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In October - November 306 BC Antigonos and Demetrios attacked Egypt<sup>64</sup>. Antigonos went by land with more than eighty thousand foot soldiers, about eight thousand horsemen and eighty-three elephants. The soldiers each took food for ten days. On camels provided by the Arabs he loaded one hundred and thirty thousand medimnoi of grain and fodder for the animals. It is remarkable that no mention is made of water, as if it was available on the road. Antigonos left Gaza and probably followed the track south of lake Serbonis. Since he transported his material on wagons, it was very difficult to advance through the desert, especially because of the swamps and the Barathra<sup>65</sup>. In the meantime Demetrios followed with his fleet along the coast, but because of a storm some ships were driven into the direction of Raphia, while the core of the fleet got stuck near the Kasion. Since it was enemy territory, they could not disembark and they had to wait for the army of Antigonos to camp near the fleet before the men could get off the ships. They all continued to the Pelousiac branch, probably following the coastline<sup>66</sup>. After an unsuccessful campaign against Ptolemaios the army of Antigonos hurried back to Syria<sup>67</sup>.

In 302 BC Ptolemaios invaded Koile Syria with a considerable army, but because of the false report that Antigonos was advancing against Syria, he left garrisons in the cities that he had captured, and returned to Egypt<sup>68</sup>.

After the battle of Ipsos in 301 BC Ptolemaios took again possession of Koile Syria<sup>69</sup>, establishing Egyptian rule over the northern Sinai for a full century.

The settlement Gerra, the 'Barracks', probably of military origin and situated between the Kasion and Pelousion, is mentioned for the first time by Eratosthenes in the 3rd century BC. One can only guess when exactly the place has been created<sup>70</sup>.

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<sup>64</sup> Diodoros, 20, 73, 1 - 74, 5; discussed s.v. Lake Serbonis. For this expedition, cf. Seibert, 1969, p. 207-224 with a map and Hauben, 1976, p. 267-271; see also Aharoni, 1993, map 176.

<sup>65</sup> Diodoros, 20, 73, 3; discussed s.v. Lake Serbonis.

<sup>66</sup> Diodoros, 20, 74, 1-5; discussed s.v. Kasion.

<sup>67</sup> Diodoros, 20, 76, 6: παρήγγειλε τοῖς στρατιώταις ἀναζευγνύειν καὶ ταχὺ πάλιν ἐπανῆλθεν εἰς τὴν Συρίαν, συμπαραπλέοντος αὐτῷ καὶ τοῦ στόλου παντός ('he commanded the soldiers to break camp and speedily returned to Syria, the whole fleet coasting along beside him').

<sup>68</sup> Diodoros, 20, 113, 1-2: ἐν δὲ ταῖς αὐταῖς ἡμέραις καὶ Πτολεμαῖος ὁ βασιλεὺς ἀναζεύξας ἐξ Αἰγύπτου μετὰ δυνάμεως ἀξιολόγου τὰς μὲν ἐν τῇ Κοίλῃ Συρίᾳ πόλεις ἀπάσας ὑποχειρίους ἐποίησατο· ... τὰς δὲ χειρωθείσας πόλεις φρουραῖς ἀσφαλισάμενος ἐπανῆλθε μετὰ τῆς δυνάμεως εἰς Αἴγυπτον ('during these same days king Ptolemaios, setting out from Egypt with an army of considerable size, subjugated all the cities of Koile Syria; ... he secured with garrisons the cities that he had captured, and went back to Egypt with his army').

<sup>69</sup> Cf. Polybios, 5, 67, 4-10; Diodoros, 21, 1, 5; Pausanias, 1, 6, 8.

## 1. Itineraries and descriptions

The sources about the first Syrian war (274-271 BC) are too scanty to inform about any manoeuvres in the northern Sinai<sup>71</sup>. Egypt was apparently not invaded, for Theokritos can boast about 270 BC that - thanks to Ptolemaios II Philadelphos - no enemy had crossed the Nile or attacked its shore<sup>72</sup>.

For the second Syrian war (261-253 BC) a demotic ostrakon from Karnak, written on 27 October 258 BC, shows Ptolemaios II Philadelphos making preparations for an expedition to Syria<sup>73</sup>. The sources are silent about the actual march, which probably took place somewhere in April - June 257 BC.

In 246 BC, at the beginning of the third Syrian war, Ptolemaios III Euergetes went on expedition to Syria with infantry, cavalry, a fleet and elephants<sup>74</sup>. Although the king himself went to Antiocheia by boat, it is not impossible that part of his army came by land, passing by the northern Sinai. Ptolemaios returned to Egypt already in the second half of 245 BC<sup>75</sup>.

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<sup>70</sup> See s.v. Gerra.

<sup>71</sup> Cf. Abel, 1939, p. 223-224; Lorton, 1971, p. 160-164; Will, 1979, I, p. 146-150; Winnicki, 1990, p. 157-167.

<sup>72</sup> Theokritos, *Idyllae*, 17, 98-101 (Gow, 1952, p. 136-137): οὐ γὰρ τις δηίων πολυκήτεα Νεῖλον ὑπερβάς | πεζὸς ἐν ἀλλοτρίαισι βοὰν ἐστάσατο κώμαις, | οὐδέ τις αἰγιαλόνδε θαῶς ἐξήλατο ναός | θωρηχθεῖς ἐπὶ βουσὶν ἀνάρσιος Αἰγυπτίησιν ('No foe by land crosses the teeming Nile to raise the cry of battle in villages not his own; none springs from his swift ship upon the shore to harry with armed violence the herds of Egypt').

<sup>73</sup> O.dem.Karnak L.S. 462.4, 4 (Bresciani, 1983, p. 15-23, with corrections by Winnicki, 1991b, p. 89-91): iw.f n'k r p3 t3 n p3 Hr ('when he went to the country of Khar'). Bresciani, 1978, p. 34 and 1983, p. 15-31 thinks that the passage alludes to the first Syrian war, but Winnicki, 1991b, p. 89-95 proves that the contemporary second Syrian war is referred to; cf. DBL, 2005, p. 632.

<sup>74</sup> OGIS I, 54 (Monumentum Adulitanum), 8-10: ... ἐξεστράτευσεν εἰς τὴν Ἀσίαν μετὰ δυνάμεως πεζικῶν καὶ ἵππικῶν καὶ ναυτικοῦ στόλου καὶ ἐλεφάντων Τρωγλοδυτικῶν καὶ Αἰθιοπικῶν ... ('(Ptolemaios) a fait une expédition en Asie avec ses forces d'infanterie, de cavalerie, sa flotte et les éléphants troglodytiques et éthiopiens ...') (cf. the edition of Kosmas Indikopleustes in Wolska-Conus, 1968, p. 370-373).

<sup>75</sup> For this date, cf. Hauben, 1990b, p. 32. According to the interpretation of Bagnall, 1981, p. 50 and Winnicki, 1994, p. 175.177 the last lines of OGIS I, 54 (21-24: ... ἀνακομίσας μετὰ τῆς ἄλλης γάξης τῆς ἀπὸ τῶν τόπων εἰς Αἴγυπτον δυνάμεις ἀπέστειλε διὰ τῶν ὀρυχθέντων ποταμῶν - - - 'après les avoir rapportés en Égypte avec les autres trésors pris à ces lieux, il envoya ses armées par les fleuves creusés - - -') refer to the return to Egypt of both the treasures and the troops 'through the canals that had been dug', possibly in the eastern Delta; the phrasing, however, probably implies that only after the return of the treasures to Egypt troops are sent out again through those canals - probably from somewhere in Egypt - to an unknown place (cf. Dittenberger, OGIS I, 1903, p. 88; Bouché-Leclercq, 1903, I, p. 262; Bernand, 1970, p. 1010-1011) and therefore every link with the eastern Delta or the northern Sinai is completely hypothetical.

## 1. Itineraries and descriptions

In the spring of 217 BC Ptolemaios IV Philopator marched from Alexandria to Syria with some seventy thousand soldiers, five thousand horsemen and seventy-three elephants, to fight the Seleucid king Antiochos III, who had invaded Koile Syria. In Pelousion he served out rations to his army and, leaving the city probably on 13 June 217<sup>76</sup>, he crossed the desert, passing by the Kasion and the Barathra. On the fifth day he camped fifty stadia (ca. 9 km) west of Raphia, the first city of Koile Syria. Polybios mentions Rinokoloura immediately west of Raphia, but he does not explicitly state that it was a resting place for Ptolemaios' army<sup>77</sup>. This expedition is also referred to in the so-called Raphia decree of 15 November 217 BC. There it is stated that Ptolemaios left Pelousion and fought Antiochos at Raphia, near the border area of Egypt, which lies east of the villages Bytl and P3-s3-nfr<sup>78</sup>. Ptolemaios won the battle - probably on 22 June 217 BC - and reconquered Koile Syria. Three months later he returned to Alexandria<sup>79</sup>.

About 202 BC Antiochos III invaded Koile Syria again. The army of Ptolemaios V Epiphanes, led by Skopas, marched against him, but was defeated in 200 BC. Skopas finally returned to Egypt about 199/198 BC and Syria became part of the Seleucid empire<sup>80</sup>.

At the end of 170 or at the beginning of 169 BC<sup>81</sup> Antiochos IV invaded Egypt and beat the Egyptian troops between the Kasion and Pelousion<sup>82</sup>. Antiochos left the

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<sup>76</sup> For this date, cf. Thissen, 1966, p. 53 and Van 't Dack, 1988 [= 1970], p. 240-241.

<sup>77</sup> Polybios, 5, 80, 1-3; discussed s.v. Bytl - P3-s3-nfr.

<sup>78</sup> Only the (fragmentary) hieroglyphic and the demotic version of the decree are preserved; cf. Gauthier, 1925, p. 6 and p. 34; discussed s.v. Bytl - P3-s3-nfr.

<sup>79</sup> Polybios, 5, 87, 6: ἀνέβη μετὰ τῆς ἀδελφῆς καὶ τῶν φίλων ἐπὶ Ἀλεξανδρείας ('he returned with his sister and his friends to Alexandria').

<sup>80</sup> Iosephos, *Antiquitates Iudaicae*, 12, 3, 3 (131): τελευτήσαντος δὲ τοῦ Φιλοπάτορος ὁ παῖς αὐτοῦ μεγάλην ἐξέπεμψε δύναμιν καὶ στρατηγὸν Σκόπαν ἐπὶ τοὺς ἐν τῇ Κοίλῃ Συρία ('on the death of Philopator his son sent out a great force with Skopas as general against the people of Koile Syria'); 12, 3, 3 (135) (= Polybios, 16, 39, 1): ὁ δὲ τοῦ Πτολεμαίου στρατηγὸς Σκόπας ὁρμήσας εἰς τοὺς ἄνω τόπους κατεστρέψατο ἐν τῷ χειμῶνι τὸ τῶν Ἰουδαίων ἔθνος ('Skopas, the general of Ptolemaios, set out for the upper country and during the winter subdued the Jewish nation'); Porphyrios, *Adversum Christianos*, FGrHist no. 260, F 45 (= Hieronymus, *Commentarii in Daniele*, 3, 11, 14b - Glorie, 1964b, p. 909, whose text is given here): cumque Antiochus teneret Iudaeam, missus Scopas, Aetholi filius, dux Ptolomaei partium, adversum Antiochum fortiter dimicavit cepitque Iudaeam et, optimates Ptolomaei partium secum adducens, in Aegypto reversus est ('and while Antiochus held Judaea, Scopas son of Aetholus, a leader of Ptolomaeus' party, was sent out and he fought bravely against Antiochus; he took Judaea and brought the aristocrats of Ptolomaeus' party along with him on his return to Egypt.'). For the dates, cf. Will, 1982, II, p. 118-119.

<sup>81</sup> For the date, cf. Skeat, 1961, p. 109, Ray, 1976, p. 125 and Mooren, 1979, p. 78 (second half of November 170) versus Will, 1982, II, p. 317 (169).

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country near the end of the year, but kept a garrison in Pelousion<sup>83</sup>. In the spring of 168 BC Antiochos marched again against Egypt. Near Rinokoloura an embassy of Ptolemaios VI Philometor tried to negotiate peace<sup>84</sup>, but Antiochos was too demanding and finally marched through the 'desert of Arabia' to Memphis and further on to Alexandria<sup>85</sup>. Finally a Roman embassy intervened and Antiochos was forced to leave Egypt. He returned from Pelousion to Syria by sea on 30 July 168<sup>86</sup>.

In 147 BC Demetrios II Nikator tried to drive Alexandros Balas, the son-in-law of Ptolemaios VI Philometor, from the Syrian throne. Ptolemaios went to Syria with a fleet and an overland army, including elephants, under the pretext of helping Alexandros<sup>87</sup>, but he actually took possession of Koile Syria and eventually switched sides. In 145 BC the Egyptian king and Demetrios defeated Alexandros, but

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<sup>82</sup> Porphyrios, *Adversum Christianos*, FGrHist no. 260, F 49a (= Hieronymus, *Commentarii in Daniele*, 4, 11, 21 - Glorie, 1964b, p. 916); discussed s.v. Kasion. Cf. Aharoni, 1993, map 184.

<sup>83</sup> Livius, 45, 11, 1.4-5: in Syriam exercitum abduxit ... Pelusi validum relictum erat praesidium. apparebat claustra Aegypti teneri, ut, cum vellet, rursus exercitum induceret ('(Antiochos) led his army off into Syria. ... At Pelusium he had left a strong garrison. It was evident that the key to Egypt was in Antiochos' hands, so that he could invade it when he wished').

<sup>84</sup> Livius, 45, 11, 9-10; discussed s.v. Rinokoloura.

<sup>85</sup> Livius, 45, 12, 1-2: postquam dies data induitiis praeteriit, navigantibus ostio Nili ad Pelusium praeffectis ipse per deserta Arabiae est profectus receptusque et ab iis, qui ad Memphim incolebant, et ab ceteris Aegyptiis ('After the time allotted for the truce had expired, (Antiochos') officers sailed to Pelusium via the mouth of the Nile, while he marched through the Arabian desert and, after being received by the inhabitants of Memphis and the rest of the Egyptians, ...').

<sup>86</sup> O.Hor 2, Ro 5-6 (Ray, 1976, p. 14-20): n3 mš'w (n) 3tyks 'w.s. ... dd iw.f šm n.f (n) sgr r-bl Kmy ('the journeyings of Antiochos, ... namely that he would go by sail from Egypt'); Vo 11-12: n3 mš'w 3tyks 'w.s. irm p3y.f mš'dd iw.f šm n.f r-bl Kmy <(n) sgr> ('the journeyings of Antiochos and his army, namely that he would go by sail from Egypt'); O.Hor 3, Vo 13-14 (Ray, 1976, p. 20-29): šm bl Pr-ir-'Imn (i.)ir 3tyks ('the withdrawal from Pelousion (which) Antiochos made'); Polybios, 29, 27, 8: οὗτος μὲν ἀπήγε τὰς δυνάμεις εἰς τὴν Συρίαν ('he led his army back to Syria'); Livius, 45, 12, 7: die deinde finita cum excessisset Aegypto Antiochus ('Later, when Antiochos had quitted Egypt by the appointed day').

<sup>87</sup> Cf. *I Maccabaei*, 11, 1-2 (Rahlfs, 1935, I, p. 1079): καὶ βασιλεὺς Αἰγύπτου ἤθροισεν δυνάμεις πολλὰς ὡς ἡ ἄμμος ἢ παρὰ τὸ χεῖλος τῆς θαλάσσης καὶ πλοῖα πολλὰ καὶ ἐζήτησε κατακρατῆσαι τῆς βασιλείας Ἀλεξάνδρου δόλω καὶ προσθεῖναι αὐτὴν τῇ βασιλείᾳ αὐτοῦ. καὶ ἐξῆλθεν εἰς Συρίαν λόγοις εἰρηνικοῖς, καὶ ἤνοιγον αὐτῷ οἱ ἀπὸ τῶν πόλεων ('The king of Egypt then assembled an army as numerous as the sands of the seashore, with many ships, and set out to take possession of Alexandros' kingdom by a ruse and to add it to his own kingdom. He set off for Syria with protestations of peace, and the people of the towns opened their gates to him'); Diodoros, 32, 9c: ὅτι Πτολεμαῖος ὁ Φιλομήτωρ ἦκεν εἰς Συρίαν συμμαχήσων Ἀλεξάνδρῳ διὰ οἰκειότητα ('Ptolemaios Philometor entered Syria intending to support Alexandros on the grounds of kinship'); Iosephos, *Antiquitates Iudaicae*, 13, 4, 5 (103): ὑπὸ δὲ τοῦτον τὸν καιρὸν καὶ ὁ βασιλεὺς Πτολεμαῖος ὁ Φιλομήτωρ ἐπικληθεὶς ναυτικὴν ἄγων δύναμιν καὶ πεζὴν εἰς Συρίαν ἦκε, συμμαχήσων Ἀλεξάνδρῳ· γαμβρὸς γάρ ἦν αὐτοῦ. καὶ πᾶσαι προθύμως αὐτὸν αἱ πόλεις Ἀλεξάνδρου κελεύσαντος ἐκδεχόμεναι παρέπεμπον ἕως Ἀζώτου πόλεως ('It was also at about this time that king Ptolemaios surnamed Philometor came to Syria with a force of ships and foot-soldiers to fight as an ally of Alexandros, who was his son-in-law. And all the cities, at Alexandros' command, gladly welcomed him, and escorted him as far as the city of Azotos'). One can only guess which cities receiving Ptolemaios south of Azotos are meant. For a possible link with this expedition, see s.v. Ptolemais in Pelousion.

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Ptolemaios died of his wounds. Afterwards Demetrios tried to destroy the Egyptian army, but it fled back to Egypt<sup>88</sup>.

Ca. 145 BC the infant king Antiochos VI, who opposed Demetrios II, appointed Simon Makkabaios, the brother of the Jewish high priest Jonathan, as commander of the region from Tyros to the frontiers of Egypt. No details are given about the exact position of this borderline<sup>89</sup>.

In 129/128 BC Demetrios II invaded Egypt. He only got as far as Pelousion, where Ptolemaios VIII Euergetes II Physkon forced him to return<sup>90</sup>. During the following expedition of Alexandros Zabinas in Syria against Demetrios (129-123 BC) Egyptian troops are sent for help, but no more details are known<sup>91</sup>.

Shortly before the outbreak of the Judaeian - Syrian - Egyptian conflict in 103 BC Kleopatra III sent troops to Antiochos VIII Grypos in Syria, because her son Ptolemaios IX Soter II helped his opponent Antiochos IX Kyzikenos. No further details are known<sup>92</sup>.

When Ptolemaios IX left Cyprus and came to Syria, probably at the beginning of 103 BC, Kleopatra III went to Ptolemaios at the Syrian coast with a fleet and an

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<sup>88</sup> Iosephos, *Antiquitates Iudaicae*, 13, 4, 9 (120): οἱ μὲν οὖν στρατιῶται φεύγουσιν αὐτοῦ τὴν πείραν εἰς Ἀλεξάνδρειαν ('accordingly the soldiers fled from his attack to Alexandria').

<sup>89</sup> Cf. *I Maccabaei*, 11, 59 (Rahlf's, 1935, I, p. 1083): καὶ Σίμωνα τὸν ἀδελφὸν αὐτοῦ κατέστησεν στρατηγὸν ἀπὸ τῆς κλίμακος Τύρου ἕως τῶν ὁρίων Αἰγύπτου ('He appointed (Jonathan's) brother Simon commander of the region from the Ladder of Tyros to the frontiers of Egypt'); cf. Iosephos, *Antiquitates Iudaicae*, 13, 5, 4 (146): τὸν ἀδελφὸν δ' αὐτοῦ Σίμωνα στρατηγὸν τῆς στρατιᾶς ἀπὸ κλίμακος τῆς Τυρίων ἕως Αἰγύπτου καθίστησιν ('He also appointed (Jonathan's) brother Simon commander of the army from the Ladder of Tyros to Egypt'). Figueras, 2000, p. 69.85 in this respect also refers to Iosephos, *Antiquitates Iudaicae*, 5, 1, 22 (82): Σεμεωνὶς δέ, δευτέρα γὰρ ἦν, ἔλαχε τῆς Ἰδουμαίας τὴν Αἰγύπτω τε καὶ τῇ Ἀραβίᾳ πρόσσορον οὖσαν ('That of Semeon, being the second, obtained the portion of Idumaea bordering on Egypt and Arabia'), but this passage actually refers to the tribe of Simeon to whom Joshua allotted land (cf. *Iosue*, 19, 1-9), not to the period of Simon Makkabaios.

<sup>90</sup> Porphyrios, *Chronicon*, FGrHist no. 260, F 32, 21 (= Eusebios, *Chronicon* (Armenian) (translated in Karst, 1911, p. 121)): '(Demetrios) richtete seine Aufmerksamkeit auf die Egypter. Bis nach Pelousion gelangt, kehrte er, da sich ihm zum Widerstand entgegenwarf Physkon Ptolomeos, wieder zurück, da auch gar noch die Truppen seine Herrschaft bekämpften; denn sie hassten ihn'; cf. *Excerpta Eusebii* (Cramer, 1839, p. 126): Πτολεμαῖος δὲ ἀγανακτήσας, ὅτι τῷ Πηλουσίῳ προσέβαλεν ὁ Δημήτριος ('Ptolemaios was vexed because Demetrios attacked Pelousion').

<sup>91</sup> Iustinus, 39, 1, 5 (Seel, 1972, p. 269): *auxiliaque ab Aegypto ingentia mittuntur* ('large auxiliary troops were sent from Egypt').

<sup>92</sup> Iustinus, 39, 4, 4 (Seel, 1972, p. 273): *Cleopatra vero timens, ne maior filius Ptolomeus a Cyziceno ad recuperandam Aegyptum auxiliis iuaretur, ingentia Crypo auxilia ... mittit* ('Cleopatra, fearing that her elder son Ptolomeus would be assisted by Cyzicenus to re-establish himself in Egypt, sent powerful auxiliary troops to Grypus'); cf. Van 't Dack, 1989, p. 28.109.127.



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overland force, but no details about her journey through the northern Sinai are given<sup>93</sup>. Her other son Ptolemaios X Alexandros meanwhile sailed to Phoenicia. Ptolemaios IX thought that Egypt was unprotected and left Syria for the northern Sinai, but had to return empty-handed, probably because the Egyptian border was still guarded; he is chased back to Syria by troops from Kleopatra and spent the winter in Gaza<sup>94</sup>.

Shortly after the winter of 103/102 BC both Ptolemaios IX and Kleopatra returned home, while at the Egyptian border near Pelousion a guard was maintained certainly until the autumn of 102 BC<sup>95</sup>.

About 79 BC Rinokoloura belonged to the Judaeen kingdom of Alexandros Iannaios, but it is not clear when exactly it came into his possession<sup>96</sup>.

In the spring of 55 BC Ptolemaios XII Auletes tried to convince Aulus Gabinius, the Roman governor of Syria, to restore him on the throne in Egypt. According to Plutarchos Gabinius did not hesitate because of the war itself, but because of the dangerous road to Pelousion. The itinerary went through a sandy region without any water and passed by the Ekregma and the swamps of lake Serbonis. Gabinius finally decided to enter Egypt and sent his officer Marcus Antonius ahead, to whom the troops in Pelousion surrendered<sup>97</sup>. The Egyptian army was defeated near

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<sup>93</sup> Iosephos, *Antiquitates Iudaicae*, 13, 13, 1 (349): παραχρήμα μετὰ ναυτικῆς καὶ πεζῆς δυνάμεως ἐπ' αὐτὸν ἐξώρμησεν ('(Kleopatra) at once set out against him with a sea and land force'); cf. the statue of Petimouthes, l. 2 (Quaegebeur in Van 't Dack, 1989, p. 88-108): spr.f r p3 t3 n H3r iw.f hr-ḥn' t3 pr-'3.t ('(Petimouthes) reached the land of Khar in the company of the queen').

<sup>94</sup> Iosephos, *Antiquitates Iudaicae*, 13, 13, 1-2 (351-352): Πτολεμαῖος δ' ἐκ τῆς Συρίας ἀπελθὼν ἐπὶ τὴν Αἴγυπτον ἔσπευσεν, αἰφνιδίως αὐτὴν οἰόμενος κενὴν οἶσαν στρατιᾶς καθέξειν· ἀλλὰ διαμαρτάνει τῆς ἐλπίδος ... ἀκούσασα δὲ ἡ Κλεοπάτρα τὴν ἐπιχείρησιν τὴν τοῦ υἱοῦ καὶ ὅτι τὰ περὶ τὴν Αἴγυπτον οὐχ ὄν προσεδόκα τρόπον προκεχώρηκεν αὐτῷ, πέμψασα μέρος τῆς στρατιᾶς ἐξέβαλεν αὐτὸν ἐκ τῆς χώρας. καὶ ὁ μὲν ἐκ τῆς Αἰγύπτου πάλιν ὑποστρέψας τὸν χειμῶνα διέτριβεν ἐν Γάζῃ ('Thereupon Ptolemaios left Syria and hastened to Egypt, thinking to get possession of it suddenly while it was left without an army, but he was disappointed of his hope. ... When Kleopatra heard of her son's attempt and learned that his plans concerning Egypt had not prospered as he had expected, she sent a portion of her army against him and drove him out of the country. And so he left Egypt once more and spent the winter at Gaza'); cf. Iosephos, *Bellum Iudaicum*, 1, 4, 2 (86): ἐπεὶ δ' οὗτος ὑπὸ τῆς μητρὸς Κλεοπάτρας διωχθεὶς εἰς Αἴγυπτον ἀνεχώρησεν ('but when (Ptolemaios), pursued by his mother Kleopatra, retired to Egypt').

<sup>95</sup> For a chronological survey of the events of this war, cf. Van 't Dack, 1989, p. 109-110.

<sup>96</sup> Iosephos, *Antiquitates Iudaicae*, 13, 15, 4 (395); discussed s.v. Rinokoloura.

<sup>97</sup> Plutarchos, *Antonius*, 3, 3 (916 F-917 A) (discussed s.v. Lake Serbonis); Cassius Dion, 39, 58, 1: καὶ οὕτως ἐς μὲν τὸ Πηλοῦσιον ἀφίκετο μηδενὸς ἐναυτιουμένου ('thus he reached Pelousion without encountering any opposition').

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Alexandria and Ptolemaios XII was crowned again. Because of a revolt Gabinius returned in a hurry to Syria<sup>98</sup>.

In September 48 BC Ptolemaios XII and his army stayed near mount Kasion, waging war against Kleopatra VII, who had raised troops in Syria and camped in the neighbourhood. After his defeat at Pharsalos Pompeius looked for help with the king, but he was murdered<sup>99</sup>.

Iulius Caesar, in pursuit of Pompeius, arrived in Alexandria, where he was besieged by the Egyptians. He called for troops from Asia and Gnaeus Domitius Calvinus sent two legions. Legio XXXVII arrived by sea, while the other, whose name is not known, did not arrive in time, because it was sent by the overland route through Syria<sup>100</sup>. In fact it is not really sure whether this legion ever reached Egypt<sup>101</sup>.

At the beginning of 47 BC Mithridates of Pergamon arrived in Egypt with other troops to rescue Caesar. He marched by land from Syria to Pelousion<sup>102</sup>.

After the war, possibly in June 47 BC, Caesar left Alexandria for Syria with one legion<sup>103</sup>. According to the report in the *Bellum Alexandrinum* Caesar went by land, but, since Iosephos mentions that he went by boat to Antiocheia<sup>104</sup>, the expression 'itinere terrestri' has probably rightly been deleted in most editions.

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<sup>98</sup> Iosephos, *Bellum Iudaicum*, 1, 8, 7 (177): πρὸς ὃ Γαβίνιος δείσας, ἤδη δὲ παρῆν ἀπ' Αἰγύπτου τοῖς τῆδε θορύβοις ἠπειγμένος ('Gabinius was alarmed; he was already on the spot, news of the local disturbances having hastened his return from Egypt'); Iosephos, *Antiquitates Iudaicae*, 14, 6, 2 (100): ἐπανελθὼν δὲ ἐκ τῆς Αἰγύπτου ... ('when (Gabinius) returned from Egypt, ...').

<sup>99</sup> See s.v. Kasion.

<sup>100</sup> *Bellum Alexandrinum*, 34: duas in Aegyptum ad Caesarem mittit litteris eius evocatas; quarum altera bello Alexandrino non occurrit, quod itinere terrestri per Syriam erat missa ('he sent to Caesar in Egypt the two legions which the latter had called for in his dispatch; one of these two did not arrive in time for the Alexandrian war, as it was sent by the overland route through Syria').

<sup>101</sup> Cf. Van 't Dack, 1988 [= 1983], p. 189 for further literature.

<sup>102</sup> *Bellum Alexandrinum*, 26: cum magnis copiis ... itinere pedestri, quo coniungitur Aegyptus Syriae, Pelusium adducit ('accompanied by large forces ... he arrived at Pelusium by the overland route which links Egypt with Syria'); cf. Iosephos, *Bellum Iudaicum*, 1, 9, 3 (187-189): κάπειδὴ Μιθριδάτης ὁ Περγαμηνὸς μεθ' ἧς ἦγεν ἐπ' Αἰγύπτου δυνάμει εἰργόμενος τῶν κατὰ τὸ Πηλοῦσιον ἐμβολῶν ἐν Ἀσκάλωνι κατείχετο, ... πρὸς τὸ Πηλοῦσιον ἐξελαύνει ('When Mithridates of Pergamon, with the army which he was leading to Egypt, was forbidden to pass the frontier at Pelousion and was held up at Askalon ... he now marched on Pelousion'); Iosephos, *Antiquitates Iudaicae*, 14, 8, 1 (129): Μιθριδάτης δὲ ἄρας ἐκ Συρίας εἰς Πηλοῦσιον ἀφικνεῖται ('Mithridates then left Syria and came to Pelousion').

<sup>103</sup> *Bellum Alexandrinum*, 33: ipse {itinere terrestri} profectus est in Syriam ('he set out in person for Syria {by the overland route}'); cf. 65: cum in Syriam Caesar ex Aegypto venisset ('on his arrival in Syria from Egypt').

<sup>104</sup> Iosephos, *Antiquitates Iudaicae*, 14, 8, 3 (137): καταλύσας μεντοι Καῖσαρ μετὰ χρόνον τὸν πόλεμον καὶ εἰς Συρίαν ἀποπλεύσας ... ('moreover, when Caesar in the course of time concluded

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At the beginning of 43 BC the Roman officer Aulus Allienus led four legions from Kleopatra VII to Publius Cornelius Dolabella, but he had to surrender them in Palestine to Gaius Cassius. Nothing is known about his exact itinerary<sup>105</sup>.

The Judaeen king Herodes I fled in 40 BC from Palestine to Egypt and further on to Rome. He first camped in an unidentified sanctuary probably in Idumaea, then went to Rinokoloura where he heard the death of his brother, and finally arrived at Pelousion<sup>106</sup>.

In the winter of 37/36 BC Marcus Antonius made Kleopatra VII in charge of Phoenicia, Koile Syria, Cyprus and parts of Cilicia, Judaea and Arabia<sup>107</sup>.

In 34 BC Kleopatra VII apparently went by land from the Euphrates to Pelousion and was on the last track escorted by king Herodes<sup>108</sup>.

At the beginning of 30 BC Octavianus marched from Syria to Pelousion to attack Marcus Antonius and Kleopatra VII. King Herodes furnished his troops with

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the war and sailed to Syria, ...'); cf. *Bellum Alexandrinum*, 66: ipse eadem classe qua venerat proficiscitur in Ciliciam ('he himself set out for Cilicia in the same fleet in which he had arrived').

<sup>105</sup> Cicero, *Epistulae ad familiares*, 12, 11, 1 (Cassius to Cicero): quattuorque legiones, quas A. Allienus ex Aegypto eduxit, traditas ab eo mihi esse scito ('and I beg to inform you that the four legions A. Allienus brought out of Egypt have been handed over by him to me'); Appianus, *Historia Romana*, 15 (= *Bella civilia*, 3), 78 (= 4, 59): Ἀλλιηνός, ὑπὸ Δολοβέλλα πεμφθεὶς εἰς Αἴγυπτον, ἐπανῆγεν ἐξ αὐτῆς τέσσαρα τέλη ('Allienus, who had been sent to Egypt by Dolabella, brought from that quarter four legions of soldiers').

<sup>106</sup> Iosephos, *Bellum Iudaicum*, 1, 14, 2 (277-278); Iosephos, *Antiquitates Iudaicae*, 14, 14, 2 (374-375); cf. the Latin adaptation of Pseudo-Hegesippos, *Historia*, 1, 29, 10 (Ussani, 1932, p. 51); discussed s.v. Rinokoloura.

<sup>107</sup> Ploutarchos, *Antonius*, 36, 2: Καπίτωνα Φοντήιον ἔπεμψεν ἄξοντα Κλεοπάτραν εἰς Συρίαν. ἐλθούση δὲ χαρίζεται καὶ προστίθησι μικρὸν οὐδὲν οὐδ' ὀλίγον, ἀλλὰ Φοινίκην, Κοίλην Συρίαν, Κύπρον, Κιλικίας πολλήν· ἔτι δὲ τῆς τε Ἰουδαίων τὴν τὸ βάλαμον φέρουσαν καὶ τῆς Ναβαταίων Ἀραβίας ὅση πρὸς τὴν ἐκτὸς ἀποκλίνει θάλασσαν (('Antonius) sent Fonteius Capito to bring Kleopatra to Syria. And when she was come, he made her a present of no slight or insignificant addition to her dominions, namely, Phoenicia, Koile Syria, Cyprus, and a large part of Cilicia; and still further, the balsam-producing part of Judaea, and all that part of Arabia Nabataea which slopes toward the outer sea') (cf. *Antonius*, 54, 3).

<sup>108</sup> Iosephos, *Bellum Iudaicum*, 1, 18, 5 (362): προπέμπει δ' αὐτὴν μέχρι Πηλουσίου πάση θεραπείᾳ καταχρώμενος (('Herodes) then escorted her to Pelousion, treating her with every mark of respect'); Iosephos, *Antiquitates Iudaicae*, 15, 4, 2 (103): ὁ δὲ τὴν Κλεοπάτραν δωρεαῖς θεραπεύσας ἐπ' Αἰγύπτου προὔπεμψεν ('Instead, (Herodes) courted Kleopatra with gifts and escorted her on the way to Egypt').

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plenty of water on their way to Pelousion across the arid desert and on their way back<sup>109</sup>.

If one examines these military and other expeditions through the northern Sinai from the Assyrian kings till Octavianus, it is possible to draw some conclusions. The landscape of the northern Sinai - at least from the 5th century BC on - seems to have been dominated by the presence of lake Serbonis and mount Kasion, both mentioned by Herodotos. Near lake Serbonis lie the Barathra, swampy 'Pits', dangerous because of quicksand. The lake communicates with the Mediterranean via an Ekregma or 'Outlet' and its water was apparently not drinkable. The itineraries of the expeditions of 306 and 217 BC imply that the lake and the Barathra are situated east of mount Kasion, which therefore lies between lake Serbonis and Pelousion.

The sources are rather silent about the habitation in the area. The first place known is Ienysos, mentioned by Herodotos and probably to be situated somewhere in the region Rafah - el-Arish. Unfortunately there is no further information at all about this place. The toponym Chabriou Charax, between the Kasion and Pelousion, probably goes back to a military settlement created about 386-380 BC. The passing of Alexander in 332 BC brought along the toponym Alexander's Camp (Castrum Alexandri) near Pelousion. Both names were still known in Roman times, but it is not sure whether the places really were inhabited continually. In the late 4th century BC the city of Rinokoloura appears in the sources near Koile Syria and in the 3rd century BC the settlement of Gerra near Pelousion. Other toponyms in the region only occur from the late 1st century BC on.

It took Alexander in 332 BC seven days to go from Gaza to Pelousion, while in 217 BC Ptolemaios went in five days from Pelousion to Raphia. Since it is possible

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<sup>109</sup> Iosephos, *Bellum Iudaicum*, 1, 20, 3 (395): προυνόησεν δὲ καὶ διὰ τῆς ἀνύδρου πορευομένοις μέχρι Πηλουσίου παρασχέιν ὕδωρ ἄφθονον ἐπαινοῦσι τε ὁμοίως, οὐδὲ ἔστιν ὅ τι τῶν ἐπιτηδείων ἐνεδέησεν τῇ δυνάμει ('Then, for the march to Pelousion across the arid desert, and likewise for the return, he took care to furnish the troops with abundance of water; in short, there were no necessaries which the army lacked'); cf. Iosephos, *Antiquitates Iudaicae*, 15, 6, 7 (200-201): παρέσχε δὲ καὶ τὴν ἀνυδρον διερχομένοις τὴν τῶν ἐπειγόντων χορηγίαν, ὡς μήτε οἴνου μήτε ὕδατος, ὃ καὶ μᾶλλον ἦν ἐν χρεία τοῖς στρατιώταις, ὑστερηθῆναι. ... ὁ δὲ, καὶ πάλιν ἐπανιόντων ἀπ' Αἰγύπτου, τῶν πρώτων οὐδὲν εἰς τὰς ὑπηρεσίας ἤπτων ἐφάνη ('When they were crossing the desert, (Herodes) supplied them lavishly with things urgently needed, so that they lacked neither wine or water, which was even more of a necessity for the soldiers. ... And when they returned from Egypt, he appeared no less ready to serve than he had been on the first occasion'); Ploutarchos, *Antonius*, 74, 1 (950 C): τοῦ δὲ χειμῶνος παρελθόντος αὐθις ἐπήει διὰ Συρίας, οἱ δὲ στρατηγοὶ διὰ Λιβύης. ἀλόντος δὲ Πηλουσίου ... ('But when the winter was over, (Caesar) again marched against the enemy through Syria, and his generals through Libya. When Pelousion was taken, ...').

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to do the track Gaza - Raphia in one day, Ptolemaios and his army apparently marched one day faster than Alexander on a similar distance. Maybe the facilities crossing the northern Sinai had been improved in the course of that century, but this is hard to prove. Indeed a lot of other variables can determine the speed of a military expedition and especially the apparent lack of fixed intermediary supply stations in the area did not invite to follow a strict travelling scheme as in Roman and Byzantine times.

Although military campaigns usually began about March and ended in the (early) autumn<sup>110</sup>, at least three expeditions chose another moment to cross the northern Sinai: Alexander went about November - December 332 BC, Ptolemaios in the late autumn of 312 BC and Antigonos and Demetrios about October - November 306 BC. Antigonos' fleet had bad luck with the weather, but - on a whole - it does appear possible to cross the northern Sinai at whatever moment of the year.

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<sup>110</sup> Cf. Winnicki, 1991b, p. 94.

## **THE TOPOGRAPHICAL ONOMASTICON P.CAIRO DEM. 31169**

About 1906 the demotic papyrus Cairo 31169 was found during excavations in the tomb of Ptahhotep in Saqqara<sup>111</sup>. It probably is a manual containing a topographical onomasticon (Ro, col. 1, 1 - 4, 9), names of gods (Ro, col. 4, 10 - 10, 31, possibly continued in P.Cairo dem. 31168, Ro, col. 1-7) and theophoric names (Vo, col. 1-4). The text is often damaged and at least one column is missing at the beginning. Palaeographically the document can be dated to the 4th-2nd centuries BC; if the toponym P3-sbty-nḥt-Ḥr-m-ḥb-ʿm-ntr<sup>1</sup> in 3, 4 contains a reference to Nḥt-Ḥr-(n)-Ḥbyt, the personal name of Nektanebos (II) (360-343), as Zauzich suggests, the original text, which was probably written in hieratic, might have been composed in the 4th century BC.

The topographical list is apparently composed clockwise, starting in the Memphites, going to the western Delta and continuing in general via the central to the eastern Delta<sup>112</sup>. Zauzich suggests that the list is arranged according to the nomes, with four toponyms listed for each nome. One sometimes gets the impression that the border areas of the nome are indicated, but for the moment this is impossible to prove for the whole document. There does not seem to be a strict geographical order for the four names within each nome. The end of the topographical list, however, raises some problems:

3, 8 Pr-Spd(w) - 'House of (the god) Spdw', Saft el-Henna

3, 9 Pr-... - 'House [ ]' (Chuvin: Pr-Itm, 'House of Atoum', Pithom, Tell el-Maskhuta)

3, 10 T3-iḥ.t-p3-nḥs - 'The cow (of) the Negro', Tahpanhes, Daphnai

3, 11 'Ggn'<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>111</sup> For this papyrus, cf. Spiegelberg, 1908, p. 270-280 and 1906, pl. 109-111; Daressy, 1911a, p. 155-171 and 1911b, p. 4-9; Müller, 1911, col. 195-198; Offord, 1912, p. 202-205; Beinlich, Horst, s.v. Listen, topographische, in LÄ, III, 1980, col. 1061-1062; Lüddeckens, Erich, s.v. Papyri, Demotische, Kairo, in LÄ, IV, 1982, col. 802; Cheshire, 1985, p. 19-24; Chuvin, 1986, p. 48-52; Zauzich, 1987a, p. 83-91 and handout, whose transcription is followed; Smith, 1988, p. 84; Hoffmann, 2000, p. 104-106; DBL, 2005, p. 134-136.

<sup>112</sup> So the toponyms in col. 2, 14-17, located by Daressy, 1911a, p. 161-162 and 1911b, p. 4 in the northern Sinai, in fact belong to the central Delta; cf. Chuvin, 1986, p. 48, n. 36. See s.v. Lake Serbonis; s.v. Kasion; s.v. Gerra; s.v. Qatia.

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- 3, 12 T3-ḥny-p3-3(ḥ)-3rry - 'The water of the vineyard', according to Zauzich possibly the Wadi Tumilat
- 3, 13 P3y-krr - probably identical with Pr-grr, 'House of the frog' of the Pianchi stele, which possibly corresponds with the Phagroriopolis located by Strabon in the neighbourhood of the Wadi Tumilat<sup>113</sup>
- 3, 14 P3-i.ir-Imn - 'Whom Amon has made', Pelousion
- 3, 15 T3-ḥmy - 'The mud', the Barathra near Pelousion (?)<sup>114</sup>
- 3, 16 ... (Chuvin: Ḍpn, Saphon of the exodus, Kasion in the northern Sinai<sup>115</sup>)
- 3, 17 Hrhrt - often linked with Pi-Hahirof of the exodus
- 3, 18 T3-ḥny-ta-... - 'The water of ...' (Chuvin: T3-ḥny n qrt, 'La "hôné" de Kéret', the Pelousiac branch or lake Serbonis<sup>116</sup>; DBL: T3-ḥny-ḥTqrḥ(?)
- 3, 19 P3-sbty-p3-ḥtn'-... 'The wall of the ...' (Chuvin: P3-sbty-p3-qni(?), 'Le Mur (du nommé) Pékeny')

If the division of the text in nomes with each four toponyms can be upheld for other parts of the list, it is difficult with our present knowledge to look for any system in the twelve toponyms just mentioned. For Zauzich the nome Arabia (8-11), the Phagroriopolites (12-15) and an unidentified nome (16-19) are referred to, but I cannot see any of this: Daphnai (10) and Pelousion (14) certainly do not belong respectively to Arabia and the Phagroriopolites. Perhaps the names have to be grouped two by two (cf. 8-9? - 14-15?), but nothing is certain. Since the list seems to switch to another geographical arrangement from line 20 on, the possibility cannot be ruled out that already lines 16-19 do not have to be considered toponyms in the northeastern Delta. In that case Pelousion and its Barathra (14-15) are possibly seen as Egypt's

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<sup>113</sup> For 3, 12-13, see also s.v. Gerra.

<sup>114</sup> For Cheshire, 1985, p. 21-22 T3-ḥmy is the secular name of Pelousion, which possibly goes back on a nearby settlement, but it is more plausible to consider T3-ḥmy the Egyptian name of the well-known marshes near Pelousion.

<sup>115</sup> See s.v. Kasion.

<sup>116</sup> See s.v. Lake Serbonis.

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northeastern border, a position that indeed corresponds with the situation in the 4th century BC.

(Four border fortresses<sup>117</sup>.)

3, 20 Mktr - Migdol

3, 21 Mktr-iry-t3 (Chuvin: Mktl t3...t3, 'Migdol de... (?)')

3, 22 Mktr-ꜥp3-Rꜥ-ibꜥ (Chuvin: Mktr n3 blꜥd, 'Migdol des tessons')

3, 23 Mktr-ꜥbnr-ḥmꜥ (Chuvin: Mktr b3k ḥmw, 'Migdol du travail des charpentiers')

Lines 20-23 have been interpreted in different ways. Most often the four Migdols are considered lying in the northern Sinai along the road from Egypt to Syria. The first Migdol, which is not followed by a specification, is then identified with the well-known Migdol at the eastern border, or - less likely - considered a kind of title introducing the three following Migdols. Chuvin's 'Migdol of the sherds' is identified with Ostrakine<sup>118</sup>, and his 'Migdol of the work of the carpenters' is linked with the 'Kasiotikos' technique, which involves a special way ropes and knots are used to keep together some woodwork and which is named after the Kasiotis region<sup>119</sup>. On the whole, Chuvin looks for a geographical sequence on one line from Egypt to Syria: Pelousion (14-15), mount Kasion (16), Pi-Hahiroth near mount Kasion (17), the Pelousiac branch or lake Serbonis (18), an unidentified fortress (19), Magdolos (20), an unidentified Migdol (21), Ostrakine (22), a Migdol in the Kasiotis (23) and Syria (24). It is clear, however, that this list does not represent a strictly geographical order, especially not because Syria (24) is in fact not the end of the enumeration, but the beginning of a new group of toponyms referring to neighbouring countries. Zauzich, therefore, is probably right considering the group of four Migdols not a continuation of the previous list, but an indication of fortifications at the four borders of Egypt.

(Four neighbouring countries:)

3, 24 P3-t3-ḥr (Chuvin: P3 t3 n Ḥr) - 'The land Khar', Syria<sup>120</sup>

3, 25 P3-t3-nḥs - 'The Negro land', Kush<sup>121</sup>

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<sup>117</sup> See s.v. Migdol - Magdolos; s.v. Stratopeda.

<sup>118</sup> See s.v. Ostrakine. For an obsolete reading of the name, see also s.v. Kasion.

<sup>119</sup> See s.v. Kasion.

<sup>120</sup> Cf. Gauthier, 1927, IV, p. 151.154.226 and 1929, VI, p. 29.

<sup>121</sup> Cf. Gauthier, 1929, VI, p. 22.



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3, 26 P3-t3-3rby - 'The land Arbi', Arabia<sup>122</sup>

? <4, 2 3pt - 'Apet', Libye (?)<sup>123</sup>>

(Four border regions (?):)

3, 27 Sw̄n - Syene (?)<sup>124</sup>, according to Zauzich possibly a pars pro toto for the Dodekaschoinos

3, 28 D̄yḥ - Djahy, Palestine (?)<sup>125</sup>

3, 29 P3-k3m-[ ] - 'The garden [ ]', a border region in the east (?)

3, 30 T3-... [ ] - 'The [ ]', a border region in the west (?)

Zauzich's interpretation of this group is apparently based upon the identification of D̄yḥ, but it has to be stressed that the shift of meaning from Syene to the Dodekaschoinos is unparalleled and that nothing is certain as long as the two last toponyms have not been identified.

(Four mythical countries (?):)

3, 31 P3-t3-ḥt - 'The land of silver'

3, 32 P3-t3-nb - 'The land of gold'

3, 33 P3-ṛt3'-[ ] - 'The land of [ ]'

3, 34 [ ]

(Two areas of the Nile valley (?) and two oases:)

4, 0 [ ]

4, 1 3... (Spiegelberg: 3tni?)

4, 3 Wḥy-rsy - 'Southern oasis'

4, 4 Wḥy-mḥty - 'Northern oasis'

(Four quarters of the compass:)

4, 5 Rsy - 'South'

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<sup>122</sup> Cf. Gauthier, 1929, VI, p. 1.

<sup>123</sup> Cf. Gauthier, 1925, II, p. 44; Zauzich, 1987a, p. 88.90.

<sup>124</sup> There is some discussion whether Syene is referred to or the (northern?) Delta toponym Senou, known for its wine from the Old Kingdom till the Graeco-Roman period; see s.v. Senou - Sounou and s.v. Si'nu - Sa'nu.

<sup>125</sup> Cf. Gauthier, 1929, VI, p. 103; Cheshire, 1985, p. 24, n. 25; Zauzich, 1987a, p. 88 and 1987b, p. 170-171; Valbelle, 1990a, p. 98.

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4, 6 Mḥty - 'North'

4, 7 I3by - 'East'

4, 8 Imnty - 'West'

4, 9 iw pw nfr - 'It is well finished'

## ITINERARIES AND DESCRIPTIONS OF THE 1ST-7TH CENTURIES AD

In the early 1st century AD the geographer Strabon describes the territory of Phoenicia: it stretches along the coast of the Mediterranean, from Orthosia in the north to the Egyptian border at Pelousion. From Ioppe to mount Kasion the distance is more than 1000 stadia (ca. 185 km) and from the Kasion to Pelousion it is another 300 stadia (ca. 55 km)<sup>126</sup>:

... εἰς δ' ἐντεῦθεν εἰς τὸ Κάσιον τὸ πρὸς Πηλουσίῳ μικρῶ πλείους ἢ χίλιοι στάδιοι, τριακόσιοι δ' ἄλλοι πρὸς αὐτὸ τὸ Πηλούσιον.

'... Thence to mount Kasion near Pelousion the distance is little more than one thousand stadia; and, three hundred stadia farther, one comes to Pelousion itself.'

Strabon mentions from east to west the toponyms Gaza, Raphia, Rinokoloura, lake Serbonis with the Ekregma, the Kasion hill, Gerra, Chabrias' Camp, the Barathra near Pelousion and finally Pelousion itself<sup>127</sup>:

μετὰ δὲ Γάζαν Ῥαφία, ἐν ἣ μάχῃ συνέβη Πτολεμαίῳ τε τῷ τετάρτῳ καὶ Ἀντιόχῳ τῷ Μεγάλῳ. εἶτα Ῥινοκόλουρα, ... καὶ αὕτη μὲν οὖν ἢ ἀπὸ Γάζης λυπρὰ πᾶσα καὶ ἀμμώδης· ἔτι δὲ μᾶλλον τοιαύτη ἢ ἐφεξῆς ὑπερκειμένη, ἔχουσα τὴν Σιρβωνίδα λίμνην παράλληλον πρὸς τῇ θαλάττῃ μικρὰν διόδον ἀπολείπουσαν μεταξὺ μέχρι τοῦ Ἐκρηγματος καλουμένου, μήκος ὅσον διακοσίων σταδίων, πλάτος δὲ τὸ μέγιστον πεντήκοντα· τὸ δ' Ἐκρηγμα συγκέχωσται. εἶτα συνεχῆς ἄλλη τοιαύτη ἢ ἐπὶ τὸ Κάσιον, κάκειθεν ἐπὶ τὸ Πηλούσιον. ἔστι δὲ τὸ Κάσιον θινώδης τις λόφος ἀκρωτηριάζων ἀνδρῶν, ὅπου τὸ Πομπηίου τοῦ Μάγνου σῶμα κεῖται καὶ Διὸς ἔστιν ἱερὸν Κασίου· πλησίον δὲ καὶ ἐσφάγη ὁ Μάγνος, δολοφονηθεὶς ὑπὸ τῶν Αἰγυπτίων. εἶθ' ἢ ἐπὶ Πηλούσιον ὁδός, ἐν ἣ τὰ Γέρρα καὶ ὁ Χαβρίου λεγόμενος χάραξ καὶ τὰ πρὸς τῷ Πηλουσίῳ βάραθρα, ἃ ποιεῖ παρεκχεόμενος ὁ Νεῖλος, φύσει κοίλων καὶ ἐλωδῶν ὄντων τῶν τόπων. τοιαύτη μὲν ἢ Φοινίκη.

'(31) After Gaza one comes to Raphia, where a battle was fought between Ptolemaios the fourth and Antiochos the Great. Then to Rinokoloura, ... (32) Now the whole of this country from Gaza is barren and sandy, but still more so is the country that lies next above it, which contains lake Sirbonis, a lake which lies approximately parallel to the sea and, in the interval, leaves a short passage as far as the Ekregma, as it is called; the lake is about two hundred stadia in length and its maximum breadth is about fifty stadia; but the Ekregma has become filled up with earth. Then follows another continuous tract of this kind as far as the Kasion, and then one comes to Pelousion. (33) The Kasion is a sandy hill without water and forms a promontory; the body of Pompeius Magnus is buried there, and on it is a temple of Zeus Kasios; near this place Magnus was slain, being treacherously murdered by the Egyptians. Then comes the road to Pelousion, on which lie Gerra and the camp of Chabrias, as it is called, and the Barathra near Pelousion. These pits are formed by side-flows from the Nile, the region being by nature hollow and marshy. Such is Phoenicia.'

The region between Gaza and Rinokoloura is barren and sandy, but further on it becomes even worse. Strabon does not give any distances between the different places, but only states that lake Serbonis - somewhere between Rinokoloura and Pelousion - has a length of about 200 stadia (ca. 37 km) and a maximal width of 50

<sup>126</sup> Strabon, 16, 2, 28 (C 759). See s.v. Kasion.

<sup>127</sup> Strabon, 16, 2, 31-33 (C 759-760). For Yoyotte, 1997, p. 30, n. 17 this passage goes back on an unidentified earlier source, but the mention of Pompeius' tomb makes it clear that the account has been written, or in any case rewritten, after 48 BC.

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stadia (ca. 9 km). Between the lake and the Mediterranean is a narrow passage leading to the Ekregma or outlet in the sea, which in the time of Strabon was filled up. At the Kasion Strabon knows the tomb of Pompeius and a temple of Zeus Kasios, but for him the Kasion is apparently only a sandy hill and not a city. Further west on the road to Pelousion follow the Barracks (Gerra), the so-called Camp of Chabrias and the Barathra or marshes near Pelousion, which are connected with the Pelousiac branch of the Nile. This is probably the road that Strabon elsewhere called the road to Phoenicia passing by the Kasion (τὴν παρὰ τὸ Κάσιον ὁδὸν τὴν ἐς Φοινίκην)<sup>128</sup>.

Strabon does not explicitly refer to the Egyptian border here, but from other contexts it is clear that for him the eastern borderline was formed by the branch of the Nile, with Pelousion, west of that branch, belonging to Egypt<sup>129</sup>. The use of the name Phoenicia for the region along to coast all the way to Pelousion seems rather artificial. Anyway, further on he more correctly links the Kasion and lake Serbonis with Judaea and the Idumaeans<sup>130</sup>.

According to Strabon 'the road to Egypt' coming from the east traverses the regions of Phoenicia, Judaea and the Arabia of the Nabataeans, which is next to Egypt<sup>131</sup>:

ταύτη δὲ καὶ δυσείσβολός ἐστιν ἡ Αἴγυπτος ἐκ τῶν ἑωθινῶν τόπων τῶν κατὰ Φοινίκην καὶ τὴν Ἰουδαίαν, καὶ ἐκ τῆς Ἀραβίας δὲ τῆς Ναβαταίων, ἥπερ ἐστὶ προσεχῆς· διὰ τούτων ἐπὶ τὴν Αἴγυπτον ἡ ὁδός.

'Here, too, Egypt is difficult to enter, I mean from the eastern regions about Phoenicia and Judaea, and from the Arabia of the Nabataeans, which is next to Egypt; these are the regions which the road to Egypt traverses.'

In this passage the name Phoenicia seems to be used in the more common meaning as the region north of Judaea, while the area between Egypt, i.e. the Pelousiac branch, and Judaea was under control of the Nabataean Arabs.

For Plinius in 77 AD the region east of the Pelousiac branch belongs to Arabia and Idumaea. He knows Pelousion, Chabrias' Camp, the Kasion mountain, the temple of Zeus Kasios, the tomb of Pompeius, Ostrakine, a modest lake Serbonis with an Ekregma, Rinokoloura and Raphia<sup>132</sup>:

a Pelusio Chabriae castra, Casius mons, delubrum Iovis Casii, tumulus Magni Pompei. Ostracine Arabia finitur, a Pelusio LXV p. mox Idumaea incipit et Palaestina ab emersu Sirbonis lacus, quem quidam CL circuitu tradidere: Herodotus Casio monti adplicuit; nunc

<sup>128</sup> Strabon, 1, 3, 17 (C 58).

<sup>129</sup> Cf. e.g. Strabon, 17, 1, 2 (C 786).

<sup>130</sup> Strabon, 16, 2, 34 (C 760). See s.v. Lake Serbonis and s.v. Kasion.

<sup>131</sup> Strabon, 17, 1, 21 (C 803).

<sup>132</sup> Plinius, *Naturalis historia*, 5, 14, 68.

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est palus modica. oppida Rhinocolura et intus Rhaphea, Gaza et intus Anthedon, mons Argaris.

'After Pelusium (come) the camp of Chabrias, mount Casium, the temple of Iuppiter Casius, the tomb of Pompeius Magnus. With Ostracine Arabia ends, 65 miles from Pelusium. Then begins Idumaea and Palestine, starting from the outlet of lake Sirbonis, for which some writers record an circumference of 150 miles: Herodotus approaches it to mount Casium; now it is an insignificant swamp. (There are) the towns of Rhinocolura and more inland Rhaphea, Gaza and more inland Anthedon, mount Argaris.'

Ostrakine is situated at 65 miles (ca. 97,5 km)<sup>133</sup> east of Pelousion probably at the border between Arabia on the one hand and Idumaea and Palestine on the other. The phrasing 'Ostracine Arabia finitur ... mox Idumaea incipit ... ab emersu Sirbonis lacus', however, is rather ambiguous as it seems to leave a kind of blank space between Ostrakine and the Ekregma, while it is also odd that the Ekregma is apparently situated east of Ostrakine and not west, as in Ptolemaios. One gets the impression that different traditions<sup>134</sup> are incorrectly combined with the misleading word 'mox': at least in the late 4th century BC the Ekregma of lake Serbonis formed the border with Syria, which might account for the second part of the sentence; Ostrakine, probably founded in the late 1st century BC and situated more to the east, apparently became a new border place and so was mentioned by Plinius in the beginning of the sentence.

About 75-79 AD Iosephos gives a detailed itinerary of Titus, the son of emperor Vespasianus, marching with a select army of 2000 men from Alexandria to Jerusalem probably at the beginning of 70 AD, a march that Iosephos himself had joined<sup>135</sup>. Titus went by boat till Thmouis and from there by land to Pelousion, where he rested two days. It apparently took a third day to cross the Nile branch and the next morning he continued through the desert to the temple of Zeus Kasios, where he encamped for the night. The next evening he reached Ostrakine, the third night he rested in Rinokoloura and the fourth night in Raphia, where Syria begins<sup>136</sup>:

ἐκεῖθεν δ' ἀποβάς ὁδεύει καὶ κατὰ πολίχνην [τινὰ] Τάνιν αὐλίζεται. δεύτερος αὐτῷ σταθμὸς Ἡρακλέους πόλις καὶ τρίτος Πηλούσιον γίνεται. δυοὶ δ' ἡμέραις [ἐνταῦθα] τὴν στρατιάν ἀναλαβὼν τῇ τρίτῃ διέξεισι τὰς ἐμβολὰς τοῦ Πηλουσίου, καὶ προελθὼν σταθμὸν ἓνα διὰ τῆς ἐρήμου πρὸς τῷ τοῦ Κασίου Διὸς ἱερῷ στρατοπεδεύεται, τῇ δ' ἡστέραία κατὰ τὴν Ὀστρακίνην· οὗτος ὁ σταθμὸς ἦν ἄνδρος, ἐπεισάκτοις δὲ ὕδασιν οἱ ἐπιχώριοι χρῶνται. μετὰ ταῦτα πρὸς Ῥινοκορούροις ἀναπαύεται, κακεῖθεν εἰς Ῥάφειαν προελθὼν σταθμὸν τέταρτον, ἔστι δ' ἡ πόλις αὕτη Συρίας ἀρχή.

'There (sc. in Thmouis) he disembarked and, resuming his march, passed a night at a small town called Tanis. His second station was Herakleous Polis, and his third Pelousion. Having halted there two days to refresh his army, on the third he crossed the river-mouths of Pelousion, and, advancing one station through the desert, encamped near the temple of Zeus Kasios, and on the next day at Ostrakine; this station was destitute of water; the inhabitants use water that is brought in from

<sup>133</sup> For the acceptable figure of 65 miles, cf. Ball, 1942, p. 76.

<sup>134</sup> Cf. von Bissing, 1903, p. 165-166.

<sup>135</sup> Cf. Nicolas, 1979, p. 1174-1175.

<sup>136</sup> Iosephos, *Bellum Iudaicum*, 4, 11, 5 (661-662).

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elsewhere. He next rested near Rinokoroura, and from there he advanced to his fourth station Rapheia; this city is the beginning of Syria.'

It was apparently possible to cross the northern Sinai in four days, with resting places after each track. On the other hand, Iosephos with this detailed itinerary seems to stress the efficiency and speed of Titus' movements and maybe the journey was not so evident as it might look. It took Alexander probably six days to do the same track in the opposite sense and for Ptolemaios IV it lasted five days, but as the conditions and accommodations in the area have possibly improved since then, it is difficult to assess Titus' effort.

Iosephos mentions the northern Sinai again in another context. According to Manethon the Egyptian king Amenophis (Amenhotep) beat the coalition of lepers and 'shepherds' (i.e. the Hyksos) coming from Jerusalem and pursued them back to Syria. Iosephos criticizes this story and does not think that Amenophis went all the way to Syria while engaged in battle, for it is difficult for an army to cross this sandy, waterless desert even without fighting<sup>137</sup>:

ὁ δὲ καὶ μέχρι τῆς Συρίας ἀναιρῶν, φησὶν, αὐτοὺς ἠκολούθησε διὰ τῆς ψάμμου τῆς ἀνύδρου, δῆλον ὅτι οὐ βῆδιον οὐδὲ ἀμαχεὶ στρατοπέδῳ διελθεῖν.

'(Amenophis), says one author, pursued them to Syria, killing them all the way, across the sandy desert; but the difficulty of marching an army across the desert, even without a battle, is notorious.'

The so-called Invocation of Isis (P.Oxy. XI, 1380)<sup>138</sup> is copied under Traianus or Hadrianus, but the text itself has probably been composed in the 1st century AD, possibly before 70 AD, for Rinokoloura is still considered a Syrian town. The absence of Ostrakine, however, which might imply even an earlier date, can also be explained otherwise<sup>139</sup>. The first part of the invocation (l. 1-119) is a list of toponyms followed by a name of the goddess Isis; it has to be noticed, though, that this name does not always necessarily supposes a real link with the place mentioned in the papyrus. The geographical order of the places is rather loose, but apparently some clusters of toponyms can be situated in the same region. Some well-known northern Sinai places occur: Pelousion (l. 73-74: ἐν Πηλουσίῳ ὀρμίστριαν - 'at Pelousion bringer to harbour'), the Kasion hill (l. 74-75: ἐπὶ τοῦ Κασίου Ταχνηψιν - 'at the Kasion Tachnepsis'), and the Ekregma (l. 75-76: ἐπὶ τοῦ Ἐκ(κ)ρή(γ)ματο[ς] Ἰσιν σώζουσιν - 'at the Ekregma Isis preserver'). In the next line Arabia is mentioned (l.

<sup>137</sup> Iosephos, *Contra Apionem*, 1, 29 (277).

<sup>138</sup> P.Oxy. XI, 1380 has often been republished and commented on; cf. Pack, 1965, no. 2477 and Totti, 1985, p. 62-75.

<sup>139</sup> See s.v. Rinokoloura and s.v. Ostrakine.

## 1. *Itineraries and descriptions*

76-77: ἐν τῇ Ἀραβίᾳ μεγάλην θεόν - 'in Arabia great goddess'); interpretations differ (the nome Arabia, Arabia Petraea, Arabia Felix), but it is not necessary at all to look for a strict order and to consider Arabia as an indication for the place Ostrakine, as Abel does<sup>140</sup>. In another geographical cluster Rinokoloura is mentioned (l. 93: ἐν Ρεινοκορούλοις παντόπ[τιν] - 'at Reinokoroula all-seeing'), together with Raphia (l. 97-98) and Gaza (l. 98-99). It is therefore clear that for the author of this text the northwestern part of the Sinai belonged to Egypt, the northeastern part to Syria, a division that corresponds with the description of Plinius.

In 155 AD the orator Aristeides praises emperor Antoninus Pius while describing the benefits of his empire. Travellers don't have to be frightened anymore by some dangerous tracks such as the passages through Arabia to Egypt, which are described as narrow and sandy<sup>141</sup>:

καὶ οὔτε Πύλαι Κιλικιοὶ φόβον παρέχουσιν οὔτε στεναὶ καὶ ψαμμώδεις δι' Ἀράβων ἐπ' Αἴγυπτον πάροδοι, οὐκ ὄρη δύσβατα, ...  
'And he is frightened neither by the Cilician Gates, nor by the narrow, sandy passages through Arabia to Egypt, nor by impassable mountains, ...'

Despite the plural 'passages', there is little doubt that the northern Sinai road is referred to, a region that Aristeides in an earlier oration described as 'the waterless district of Arabia'<sup>142</sup>. The 'narrow, sandy passages' perhaps allude to the narrow passable tracks that are left between lake Serbonis, the Mediterranean and the huge sandy dunes more to the south. The text apparently implies that the road through the northern Sinai was no major obstacle anymore in the 2nd century AD.

In the middle of the 2nd century AD the geographer Claudius Ptolemaios gives the names and coordinates of some places in the northern Sinai<sup>143</sup>. The Pelousiac mouth (Πηλουσιακὸν στόμα) is the last of the seven branches of the Nile that Ptolemaios lists, and it is situated at 63° 15' eastern longitude - 31° 10' north latitude. Without an introductory remark he continues with the city of Pelousion (Πηλούσιον πόλις) at the same coordinates as the Pelousiac mouth and the 'border' Gerra (Γέρρον

<sup>140</sup> Abel, 1939, p. 545. He also incorrectly places l. 77-78 in the northern Sinai; see s.v. Ienysos.

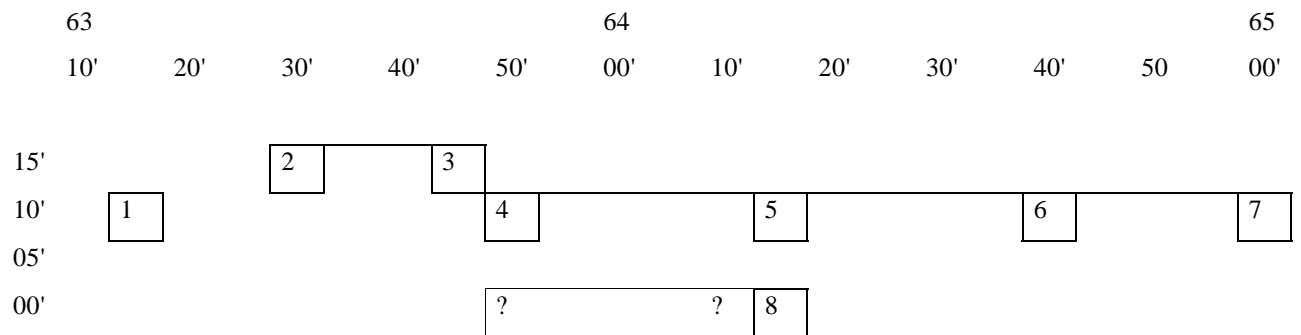
<sup>141</sup> Aristeides, 26 (14), 100 (Keil, 1898, II, p. 121); cf. the translation of Behr, 1981, p. 95.

<sup>142</sup> Aristeides, 36 (48), 74 (Keil, 1898, II, p. 287); discussed s.v. Lake Serbonis.

<sup>143</sup> Ptolemaios, 4, 5, 5-6.11 and 5, 15, 5 (Müller, 1901, I 2, p. 681-683. 692. 989). The figures of the north latitude are compatible with our 'Greenwich' system, but to compare the figures of the eastern longitude they have to be converted first; cf. the table in Ball, 1942, p. 104. Figueras, 2000, p. 43, fig. 4 unfortunately used an obsolete edition, therefore placing Ostrakine, Rinokoloura and Raphia in an incorrect position; I also wonder why Birsama is added to his graph, since as far as I know this place is not attested in Ptolemaios.

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ἄριον) at 63° 30' - 31° 15'. The region east of Gerra he calls the Kasiotis (Κασιώτιδος), in which he lists four places: Kasion (Κάσιον) at 63° 45' - 31° 15', Ekregma of lake Serbonis (Ἐκρηγμα Σιρβωνίδος λίμνης) at 63° 50' - 31° 10', Ostrakine (Ὀστρακίνη) at 64° 15' - 31° 10' and Rinokoloura (Ῥινοκόρουρα) at 64° 40' - 31° 10'. Of the seven lakes of Egypt that Ptolemaios lists, lake Serbonis (ἡ Σιρβωνίς λίμνη) is mentioned last and situated at 64° 15' - 31°. Raphia (Ῥαφία), at the other side of the Egyptian border, is situated at 65° - 31° 10'.



(1) Pelousion; (2) Gerra; (3) Kasion; (4) Ekregma; (5) Ostrakine; (6) Rinokoloura; (7) Raphia; (8) lake Serbonis.

The position of the places on the north latitude of 31° 10' and 15' is quite acceptable and the small curve between Pelousion and the Ekregma, with the Kasion extending to the north, matches more or less the situation nowadays. Lake Serbonis is situated at 31°, i.e. 10' or about 15,5 km<sup>144</sup> south of the line Ekregma - Ostrakine; as an average this is not impossible, but for Ostrakine itself, which probably lay near the eastern corner of the lake, this distance is rather surprising.

The total distance between Pelousion and Raphia is 1° 45' or about 129,5 km; adding the separate distances between the places one arrives at a distance of about 135,5 km. This is short in comparison with the actual distance of about 178 km, but

<sup>144</sup> According to the calculations An Depuydt was so kind to make for me, one degree on the north-south axis is about 111 km; at about 31° north latitude one degree on the east-west axis is about 95 km. On the north-south axis Ptolemaios apparently reckoned 500 stadia to a degree, although opinions disagree about the exact length of his stadia (185 m - 196,39 m - 213,13 m?); cf. Müller, 1901, I 2, p. 684; Ball, 1942, p. 96.119; Viedebant, 1920, p. 94.96.106; Polaschek, Erich, s.v. Klaudios Ptolemaios, in RE, Suppl. X, 1965, col. 694. According to Müller, 1901, I 2, p. 682 Ptolemaios reckoned 400 stadia of some 185 m to a degree on the east-west axis at about 31° north latitude. I will follow Müller and reckon with 500 stadia of 185 m (= 92,4 km) to a degree on the north-south axis (or about 83 % of the real distance of 111 km) and with 400 stadia of 185 m (= 74 km) to a degree on the east-west axis (or about 78 % of the real distance of 95 km). For the calculation of the distances between two places not on the same axis, the simple rule of trigonometry ( $a^2+b^2=c^2$ ) has been used. It has to be stressed that the figures obtained have a relative, rather than an absolute value.



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the absolute distances in Ptolemaios in general are a bit too low because of his assumption of too small a value for the length of a degree<sup>145</sup>. The coordinates of Ptolemaios offer quite acceptable relative figures for the distances between the places: from Pelousion to Gerra it is about 20 km, further on to Kasion about 18,5 km, to the Ekregma about 10 km at the maximum, to Ostrakine about 31 km, to Rinokoloura another 31 km and finally to Raphia about 25 km. Since the position of Gerra about half way Pelousion and Kasion does not correspond with other sources, one can wonder whether a difference has to be made between a town Gerra and a 'border' Gerra more to the east, but this does not seem very likely and it is better to consider its position too far east an inaccuracy of Ptolemaios.

About 300 AD the *Itinerarium provinciarum Antonini Augusti* describes the road from Raphia to Pelousion<sup>146</sup>:

|            |             |
|------------|-------------|
| Rafia      |             |
| Rinocorura | m.p. XXII   |
| Ostracena  | m.p. XXVIII |
| Cassio     | m.p. XXVI   |
| Pentascino | m.p. XX     |
| Pelusio    | m.p. XX     |

'(From) Rafia (to) Rinocorura: 22 miles; (from Rinocorura to) Ostracena: 24 miles; (from Ostracena to) Cassium: 26 miles; (from Cassium to) Pentascinum: 20 miles; (from Pentascinum to) Pelusium: 20 miles.'

The total distance of 112 miles or 168 km between Raphia and Pelousion approaches the real figure of 178 km. The intermediate distances will be discussed for every toponym separately: from Raphia to Rinokoloura it is about 33 km, further on to Ostrakine about 36 km, to Kasion about 39 km, to Pentaschoinon about 30 km and finally to Pelousion again about 30 km. The distance between Raphia and Rinokoloura seems to be too short, and perhaps the figure of XXII has to be corrected in XXXII (some 48 km). The station Gerra, between Pentaschoinon and Pelousion, is not mentioned in the itinerary, no doubt because it does not fit the scheme of one-day tracks.

In another section the *Itinerarium* also describes the road from Serapeion, near the entrance to the Wadi Tumilat, in southern direction to Klyisma at the Red Sea and in northern direction to Pelousion<sup>147</sup>:

Serapiu

<sup>145</sup> Cf. Müller, 1901, I 2, p. 682; Ball, 1942, p. 96.119. Since 5' is the smallest unit that Ptolemaios works with, every distance can also only be correct within a margin of some 3 to 4 km.

<sup>146</sup> *Itinerarium provinciarum Antonini Augusti*, 151, 3 - 152, 4 (Cuntz, 1929, p. 21).

<sup>147</sup> *Itinerarium provinciarum Antonini Augusti*, 170, 3-171, 4 (Cuntz, 1929, p. 23).

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|                        |               |
|------------------------|---------------|
| Clysmo                 | m.p. L        |
| item a Serapiu Pelusio | m.p. LX, sic: |
| Thaubasio              | m.p. VIII     |
| Sile                   | m.p. XXVIII   |
| Magdolo                | m.p. XII      |
| Pelusio                | m.p. XII      |

'From Serapium to Clysmum: 50 miles. Further from Serapium to Pelusium: 60 miles, divided as follows: (from Serapium) to Thaubasium: 8 miles; (from Thaubasium) till Sile: 28 miles; (from Sile) till Magdolos: 12 miles; (from Magdolos) till Pelusium: 12 miles.'

The total distance from Klysmo to Pelousion amounts to 110 miles (ca. 165 km), which far exceeds the actual 115 km, and one gets the impression that all the distances given are too high.

Possibly in 322 or 323 AD the official Theophanes travelled from Egypt to Antiocheia and back; his precise function or the purpose of his trip are not known. Several documents about this journey mention the northern Sinai<sup>148</sup>. Maybe in the evening of 16 Pharmouthi (11 April) Theophanes arrived in Pelousion, where he stayed the next day. On 18 Pharmouthi (13 April) he went from Pelousion via Gerra to Pentaschoinon; on 19 Pharmouthi (14 April) he continued to the Kasion, the next day to Ostrakine, on 21 Pharmouthi (16 April) to Rinokoloura and on 22 Pharmouthi (17 April) he arrived via Boutaphios in Raphia. The account P.Ryl. IV, 627 gives a draft of his itinerary<sup>149</sup>, which is headed (l. 223) τὸ καταμονῆς, 'the list of stopping-places (or 'mansiones')':

|     |     |                                   |               |
|-----|-----|-----------------------------------|---------------|
| 229 | ς   | ἀπὸ Ἡρακλέους εἰς Πηλούσιν        | μίλι(α) κδ    |
| 230 | ζ   | ἀπὸ Πηλου[ερ]σίου εἰς Γέρος       | μίλι(α) ι     |
|     |     | ἀπὸ Γέρος εἰς Πεντάσχοινον        | μίλι(α) ι?    |
|     | η   | ἀπὸ Πεντάσχοίνου εἰς τὸ [Κάσιον   | μίλι(α)] ις   |
|     | θ   | [ἀ]πὸ Κασίου εἰς Ὀστρακίην        | μίλι(α)] κς   |
|     | [ι  | ἀπὸ Ὀστρακίης εἰς Ῥινοκόρωνα      | μίλι(α)] κδ   |
| 235 | [ια | ἀπὸ Ῥινοκόρωνα <εἰς> Βουτάφιον    | [μίλι(α) ιθ?] |
|     | [   | ἀπὸ Βουτάφιου εἰς Ῥαφείαν         | μίλι(α) ι?γ   |
| 229 | '6  | From Herakleous to Pelousin       | milia 24      |
| 230 | 7   | From Pelou[[er]sion to Geros      | milia 10      |
|     |     | From Geros to Pentaschoin[on      | milia 10?]    |
|     | 8   | From Pentaschoinon to the [Kasion | milia] 16     |
|     | 9   | From Kasion to Ostrakin[e         | milia] 26     |
|     | [10 | From Os]trakine to Rin[okorona    | milia] 24     |
| 235 | [11 | From Rino]korona <to> Boutaphios  | [milia 19?]   |
|     | [   | From Bou]taphios to Rapheia       | [milia 1]3?'  |

<sup>148</sup> P.Ryl. IV, 627, 229-236 and passim; 628, 4-11; 630\*, 436-507; 638, 22-23. Bagnall, 1985, p. 29 at first suggested to date the trip ca. 318 AD, but later on preferred 322 or 323 AD (cf. Bagnall, 1993, p. 271, n. 76, referring to Worp, CPR XVIII, 1991, p. 50). My text differs in several details from the edition of Roberts in P.Ryl., especially with regard to the restorations in the lacunae. For the archive of Theophanes in general, cf. Cadell, 1989, p. 315-323 and Bagnall, 1993, p. 271-272; for Theophanes' journey, cf. Kirsten, 1959, p. 411-426; Casson, 1974, p. 190-193 and Drexhage, 1998, p. 1-10.

<sup>149</sup> For some of the draft documents of Theophanes' travel archive the verso of older papyri has been used (P.Ryl. IV, 616.617.621), so it is most likely that he compiled his itineraries and accounts at home in Hermou Polis, after the trip.

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The figure in front is not the date, but indicates a track that could be travelled in one day, starting from Nikiou, a city in the southwestern Delta. Any resting days are apparently not incorporated in the count. Theophanes maybe copied the distances from an 'imperial post' itinerary, but this is only a guess. The dates can be inferred from the accounts on the same papyrus, where expenditures in Pelousion (cf. l. 211-212; 257-263: ἐν Πηλουσίῳ; see also l. 129; 305; 313), Raphia (cf. l. 314; see also l. 306) and Gaza (l. 264) are referred to.

A fair copy of this itinerary is preserved in P.Ryl. IV, 628:

|    |     |                                     |  |
|----|-----|-------------------------------------|--|
| 4  | [ς  | ἀπὸ [Ἡ]ρακλέοπ[όλεως εἰς Πηλούσιον] |  |
| 5  | [ζ  | ἀπὸ Π[η]λουσίου εἰς τὸ Γέρος]       |  |
|    | [   | ἀπὸ τοῦ Γέρος εἰς Πεντάσχοινον]     |  |
|    | [η  | ἀπὸ Πεντάσχοίνου εἰς τὸ Κάσιον]     |  |
|    | [θ  | ἀπὸ τοῦ Κασίου εἰς Ὀστ[ρακίνη]      |  |
|    | [ι  | ἀπὸ Ὀστρακίνης εἰς Ρινοκόρουρα]     |  |
| 10 | [ια | ἀπὸ Ρινοκόρουρα εἰς Βουτάφισ]       |  |
|    | [   | ἀπὸ Βουτάφισ εἰς Ῥαφ[ίαν]           |  |
| 4  | [6  | from [He]rakleo[polis to Pelousion] |  |
| 5  | [7  | From] P[e]lousion to [Geros]        |  |
|    | [   | From] Geros to P[entaschoinon]      |  |
|    | [8  | From] Pentaschoinon t[o the Kasion] |  |
|    | [9  | From] the Kasion to Ost[rakine]     |  |
|    | [10 | From O]strakine to Rinok[oroura]    |  |
| 10 | [11 | From Ri]nokoroura to B[outaphis]    |  |
|    | [   | From] Boutaphis to Raph[ia]         |  |

The entries for Gerra, the Kasion, Rinokoloura, Boutaphios and maybe also Pelousion and Raphia have been corrected or normalized in this fair copy.

In the summer of the same year Theophanes returned from Antiocheia to Egypt. On 9 Mesore (2 August) he went from Raphia via Boutaphios to Rinokoloura. Only for this part of his journey a draft of the itinerary itself has been preserved (P.Ryl. IV, 638):

|    |   |          |
|----|---|----------|
| 22 | [ἀπὸ Ῥαφίας εἰς Βουτάφιον                 | μίλ[ια ] |
| 23 | [ἀπὸ Βουτράφιου εἰς [Ῥινοκόρουρα(?)       | μίλ[ια ] |
| 22 | '[From] Raphia to B[outaphios             | milia ]  |
| 23 | '[From] B[ou]taphios to [R]ino[koroura(?) | milia ]' |

Although the draft has been written on the verso of P.Ryl. IV, 628, Theophanes apparently preferred the spelling Boutaphios of P.Ryl. IV, 627 to the Boutaphis of 628 and maybe the same goes for the spelling Rinokoloura, in which case [Ῥινοκόρωνα] should be restored instead of [Ῥινοκόρουρα]. The different spellings of the toponyms are shown in the following table:

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| 627 - εἰς     | 627 - ἀπὸ       | 628 - εἰς     | 628 - ἀπὸ     | 638 - εἰς        | 638 - ἀπὸ   |
|---------------|-----------------|---------------|---------------|------------------|-------------|
| Πηλούσιον     | Πηλου[[ε]ρ]σίου | [Πηλούσιον]   | Π[η]λουσίου   |                  |             |
| Γέρος         | Γέρος           | [τὸ Γέρος]    | τ[ο]ῦ Γέρος   |                  |             |
| Πεντάσχοι[ον] | Πεντασχοίου     | Π[εντάσχοι]ον | Πεντασχοίου   |                  |             |
| τὸ [Κάσιον]   | Κασίου          | [τὸ Κάσιον]   | τ[ο]ῦ Κασίου  |                  |             |
| Ὀστρακί[η]ν   | [Ὀστ]ρακίνης    | Ὀστ[ρακί]νην  | [Ὀ]στρακίνης  |                  |             |
| Ῥι[νο]κόρωνα  | [Ῥι]νοκόρωνα    | Ῥινοκ[ό]ρουρα | [Ῥι]νοκόρουρα | [Ῥι]νοκόρουρα(?) |             |
| Βουτάφιον     | [Βου]ταφίου     | Β[ου]τάφης    | Βουτάφης      | Β[ου]τάφιον      | Β[ου]ταφίον |
| Ῥαφεί[α]ν     | [Ῥ]αφίας        | Ῥαφ[ί]αν      | Ῥαφίας        | [Ῥ]αφ[ί]αν       | Ῥαφίας      |

The remainder of his journey back can only be inferred from the account P.Ryl. IV, 630-637 (= 630\*). On 9 Mesore (2 August) Theophanes was in Raphia (l. 436-453); the next day he did his shopping in Rinokoloura (l. 454-469: ἐν Ῥινοκόρουρ[α]) and went on to Ostrakine. Probably in the morning of 11 Mesore (4 August) he bought some food there (l. 470-476: ἐν Ὀστρακί[η]ν) and he arrived in the evening in Kasion (l. 477-481: ἐν τῷ Κασίῳ)<sup>150</sup>. On 12 Mesore (5 August) he went to Pentaschoinon, where he bought some things (l. 482-485: ἐν Πεντασχοί[ω]), and finally arrived in Pelousion (l. 486-490: ἐν Πηλουσίῳ).

Roberts saw no indication of the means of travel of Theophanes, nor any mention of supplies for his beasts, and presumed that he was travelling by *cursus publicus* or government post<sup>151</sup>. There is a remarkable difference between the journey to and from. In the spring it took Theophanes five days to go from Pelousion to Raphia, but returning the same track lasted only four days. The difference lies in the track between Pelousion and Kasion. In April he probably went quite at ease from Pelousion to Gerra (some 15 km) and further on to Pentaschoinon (maybe again some 15 km?), where he spent the night; the next day he did only some 24 km to get to Kasion. Both distances are small in comparison with the track to Ostrakine (some 39 km) and Rinokoloura (some 36 km). In August Theophanes did his shopping in Kasion the evening before, went to Pentaschoinon, did not stop in Gerra and arrived in the evening in Pelousion (all together some 54 km?), where he apparently could rest the day after. If well organised, it was apparently possible to do the track Pelousion -

<sup>150</sup> Alt, 1954, p. 158-159 on the other hand thinks that Theophanes did the track Rinokoloura - Ostrakine - Kasion in one day, but this is impossible and Alt was probably misled by the account.

<sup>151</sup> Roberts, P.Ryl. IV, 1952, p. 117; cf. Casson, 1974, p. 190; Drexhage, 1998, p. 1. A single indication like χόρτου τῶν κτηνῶν (δρ.) ἢ 'fodder for the animals, 400 drachmas' in P.Ryl. IV, 630\*, 515 (on the track between Pelousion and Heliou Polis) is not easy to interpret.

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Kasion in one day and already Titus had done the same thing even accompanied by an army on foot.

About 359 AD Hilarion, the bishop of Maiouma near Gaza, left Palestine for Egypt. A lot of people followed him till Betylion (Bitylion). There he persuaded them to turn back - perhaps because Bitylion was the last town before entering Egypt - and he continued with only a small group. No details are given about his journey through the northern Sinai, but after five days he reached Pelousion<sup>152</sup>:

cum infinito agmine prosequentium venit Betylion, ubi persuasis turbis ut reverterentur, elegit quadraginta monachos, qui haberent viaticum, et possent ieiunantes ingredi. quinto igitur die venit Pelusium.

'With a countless group of followers he reached Betylion, where he convinced the crowds to return and where he chose forty monks who would have travel provisions, and who could walk while fasting. On the fifth day he so reached Pelusium.'

About 391/392 AD (?) Ammianus Marcellinus describes the Egyptian province Augustamnica and mentions the places Pelousion, Kasion, Ostrakine and Rinokoloura<sup>153</sup>:

in Augustamnica Pelusium est oppidum nobile ... et Cassium, ubi Pompei sepulchrum est Magni, et Ostracine et Rhinocorura.

'In Augustamnica is the famous town of Pelusium ... and Cassium, where the tomb of Pompeius Magnus is, and Ostracine and Rhinocorura.'

The *Tabula Peutingeriana*, possibly reflecting the situation of the 4th century AD<sup>154</sup>, shows the road from Rinokoloura via Ostrakine, Kasion and Gerra to Pelousion, north of a nameless chain of mountains<sup>155</sup>:

Ascalone - XV (m.p.) - [two names dropped out?] - Rinocorura - XXIII (m.p.) - Ostracine - [distance dropped out?] - Cassio - XXIII (m.p.) - Gerra - VIII (m.p.) - Pelusio.

'Ascalon - 15 (miles) - [two names dropped out?] - Rinocorura - 23 (miles) - Ostracine - [distance dropped out?] - Cassium - 23 (miles) - Gerra - 8 (miles) - Pelusium'

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<sup>152</sup> Hieronymus, *Vita Hilarionis*, 20, 8-9 (Bastiaensen, 1975, p. 116-119). A recent textcritical edition is unfortunately lacking. In some older editions (as Migne, PL 23, 1845, col. 44) the clause 'quinto igitur die venit Pelusium' has been omitted, which has caused quite some confusion about the position of Bitylion and other toponyms in this passage. The itinerary of Hilarion as sketched on the map of Miller, 1895, III, p. 17 and as reconstructed by Figueras, 2000, p. 22-23 is not correct. See also s.v. Bitylion.

<sup>153</sup> Ammianus Marcellinus, 22, 16, 3.

<sup>154</sup> It is remarkable that the station of Pentaschoinon, attested for the first time about 300 AD in the *Itinerarium Antonini*, is not mentioned on the *Tabula Peutingeriana*, where only the station of Gerra occurs between Kasion and Pelousion. This might be interpreted as an indication that this section of the *Tabula* is older than the data of the *Itinerarium*, but nothing is certain.

<sup>155</sup> *Tabula Peutingeriana* (Miller, 1916, col. 812-813, with a drawing of section IX 4-5 on col. 857-858 and the data transposed to a modern map on col. 813-814). An excellent reproduction on a scale of 1:1 of one of the first printed editions of the *Tabula*, preserved in Nijmegen, is presented by Stuart, 1993 (for the northern Sinai, cf. section VIII 4-5).

## 1. Itineraries and descriptions

The map is apparently not free of mistakes and one can only guess about the distances between Raphia and Rinokoloura on the one hand and Ostrakine and Kasion on the other hand. The name of a place is usually written in a twist of the road, followed by the distance to the next place, but for this track some anomalies occur. First, there is a twist in the road between Askalon and Rinokoloura without the name of a place written in it, while one expects both Gaza and Raphia with the accompanying distance; the 15 miles (ca. 22,5 km) mentioned apparently refer to the track Askalon - Gaza. There is, however, another nameless twist in the road between Rinokoloura and Ostrakine, and perhaps the name Rinokoloura has to be shifted one twist to the west, leaving two nameless twists between that city and Askalon, which can correspond with Gaza and Raphia. Also on the track Ostrakine - Pelousion there are some problems. The figure between Ostrakine and Kasion is lost, while the distance between Gerra and Kasion is written before the name Kasion instead of after the name Gerra. Also only  $23 + 8 = 31$  miles (ca. 46,5 km) are given between Kasion and Pelousion instead of the expected 36 miles (ca. 54 km). One could suppose that the figures given are not to be trusted and that the station of Pentaschoinon and an accompanying distance have dropped out, but it is perhaps more likely that the figure of XXIII is just a mistake for XXVIII, without paying too much attention to the deviant disposition of the names and figures on the track.

About 403-404 AD Sulpicius Severus mentions sixteen 'mansiones' or road stations on his way from Alexandria to Bethlehem<sup>156</sup>:

igitur inde digressus Bethleem oppidum petii, quod ab Hierosolymis sex milibus disparatur, ab Alexandria autem sedecim mansionibus abest.

'So I left from there on my way to the city of Bethlehem, which is situated at six miles from Hierosolyma (Jerusalem), while it takes sixteen stops to reach it from Alexandria.'

Certainly some stations of the northern Sinai are included in this figure, but any further identification of his itinerary is a mere hypothesis.

Theophilus left Constantinopolis for Alexandria in 404 AD, but on his way was driven to Gerra, a small town some 50 stadia (ca. 9 km) from Pelousion<sup>157</sup>:

καὶ Θεόφιλος δὲ αὐτίκα μηδὲν ἀναβαλλόμενος ἤδη τοῦ χειμῶνος ἀρχομένου ἅμα Ἰσαακίῳ τῷ μοναχῷ ἀπέπλευσεν εἰς Ἀλεξάνδρειαν. ἀπὸ δὲ τοῦ πελάγους ὡδε συμβὰν κατήρεν εἰς Γεράν, πόλιν μικράν ἀμφὶ πενήτηκοντα στάδια τοῦ Πηλουσίου ἀφειστώσαν.

<sup>156</sup> Sulpicius Severus, *Dialogi*, 1, 8, 1 (Halm, 1866, p. 159).

<sup>157</sup> Sozomenos, *Historia ecclesiastica*, 8, 19, 3 (Bidez, 1960, p. 375); cf. the translation of Hartranft, 1891, p. 411. See s.v. Gerra.

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'Theophilos, also, fled the city at the commencement of the winter; and, in company with Isaakios the monk, sailed for Alexandria. A wind arose which drove the vessel to Gera, a small city about fifty stadia from Pelousion.'

The papyrus SB XXVI, 16607, probably written in the 5th century AD, contains an itinerary of places in Egypt, Syria and Asia Minor, including the road from Pelousion to Raphia<sup>158</sup>. The orthography of the toponyms is often puzzling: Πελουσίου (Pelousion), Τ[α]φναειν (Aphnaion), Πεντασκαλος (Pentaschoinon), Πικασπισω (Kasion), Ἀσσοδρακινα (Ostrakine), Νινοκο[ρ]εγε (Rinokoloura), Ταπιδουλα (probably Bitylion) and Ραφία (Raphia).

Hierokles, who probably wrote about 527/528 AD, lists thirteen towns in the province Augustamnica I, eight of which can be situated in the northern Sinai: Rinokoloura, Ostrakine, Kasion, Pentaschoinon, Aphnaion, Gerra, Skenai, Pelousion. In this administrative list the places are apparently mentioned in a geographical order from east to west. Only five other towns in the Augustamnica I are mentioned, sc. Sethroites, Hephaistos, Panephysis, Tanis and Thmouis<sup>159</sup>:

νη'. Ἐπαρχία Αὐγούστα α', ὑπὸ κορρήκτορα, πόλεις ιγ'  
Ῥινοκόρουρα - Ὀστρανίκη - Κάσσιον - Πεντάσχοινον - Ἀφνάιον - Γέρρας - Σκένηα -  
Πηλούσιον - Σεθραίτης - Ἡφαιστος - Πανίθυσος - Πάννις - Θμούης  
'48. Eparchia Augusta I, under a corrector, 13 cities  
Rinokoroura - Ostranike - Kassion - Pentaschoinon - Aphnaion - Gerras - Skenna - Pelousion -  
Sethraites - Hephaistos - Panithysos - Pannis - Thmoues'

The last four towns of the neighbouring province of Palaestina I mentioned by Hierokles are Raphia (Ῥαμφία), Askalon (Ἀσκάλων), Ariza (Ἄριζα) and Bitylion (Βιτύλη), but the geographical order of Raphia and Askalon is unacceptable and the identification of Ariza is problematic<sup>160</sup>.

In the Medaba mosaic<sup>161</sup>, probably made about 560-565 AD, Ῥα[φί]α (Raphia), τὸ [τοῦ ἁγίου] Ἱ[λαρίωνος] ('the place of Saint Hilarion') and Β[ι]τ[ύ]λιον

<sup>158</sup> SB XXVI, 16607 (P.von Scherling G110), 7-14; cf. Noordegraaf, 1938, p. 273-310 (with a different numbering of the lines); cf. Préaux, 1938, p. 410-411; Honigmann, 1939c, p. 645-649; Thomsen, 1942, p. 126-132; Pack, 1965, no. 2274. Thomsen does not consider the document an itinerary stricto sensu, but a list of pilgrim places and therefore dates the text in the 6th-7th centuries AD; neither his interpretation, nor his dating (which is rejected by Kirsten, 1959, p. 415) is very convincing, nor is there any reason to identify Τ[α]φνάειν with Daphnai in the Delta (cf. Alt, 1943, p. 64-66) or to suppose that the order of the toponyms is disturbed.

<sup>159</sup> Hierokles, 726, 4 - 727, 12 (Honigmann, 1939a, p. 46).

<sup>160</sup> Hierokles, 719, 8-11 (Honigmann, 1939a, p. 42).

<sup>161</sup> Medaba mosaic (IGLS XXI 2, 153), 123-132.137. For this section of the mosaic, see also the editions, commentaries and plates of Lagrange, 1897, p. 179-180; Schulten, 1900, p. 28-32; Jacoby, 1905, p. 43-48; Abel, 1940, pl. 8; O'Callaghan, R. T., s.v. Madaba, in DB, Suppl. V, 26, 1953, col. 689-

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(Bitylion) are situated in Palestine. After the indication 'Borders of Egypt and Palestine' (ὄροι Αἰγύπτου καὶ Παλαιστίνης) follow in Egypt the towns of Ρινοκόρουρα (Rinokoloura), Ὀστρακίνη (Ostrakine), τὸ Κάσιον (Kasion), τὸ Πεντάσχοινον (Pentaschoinon) and τὸ Ἀφναίον (Aphnaion). The part of the mosaic between Aphnaion and the Pelousiac mouth is missing, so maybe the place Gerra or Skenai is lost in the hiatus. The very large city τὸ Πηλούσιον (Pelousion) is situated west of the Pelousiac branch (Πηλουσῖακόν).

Georgios of Cyprus, who wrote about 591-603 AD, lists fourteen places in the province Augustamnica I<sup>162</sup>. The administrative list starts with the metropolis Pelousion, but the other toponyms are mentioned without a strict geographical order: Sethroites, Tanis, Thmouis, Rinokoloura, Ostrakine, Pentaschoinon, Kasion, Aphnaion, Hephaistos, Panephysis, Gerra, Skenai and Tenesos. Note especially the reverse order 'Pentaschoinon - Kasion' and the position of 'Geros' and 'Itageros' among Delta towns.

Ἐπαρχία Αὐγουσταμικῆς

Πηλούσιον μητρόπολις - Σεθροΐτης - Τάνης - Θμούης - Ρινοκούρουρα - Ὀστρακίνη - Πεντάσχοινον - Κάσιον - Ἀφθαίον - Ἰφεστός - Πανέφουσος - Γέρος - Ἰτάγερος - Θένησος

Ἐπαρχία Augustamnica

Pelousion the metropolis - Sethroetes - Tanes - Thmoues - Rinokouroura - Ostrakine - Pentaschoinon - Kasion - Aphthaion - Iphestos - Panephouos - Geros - Itageros - Thenessos'

Also in the province of Palaestina I the places occur in a loose order, including Raphia (Ῥαφία) and Bitylion (Βιττύλιος).

The sources that give a description of the northern Sinai, are very heterogeneous: geographers (Strabon, Plinius, Ptolemaios), historians and biographers (Iosephos, Ammianus Marcellinus, Hieronymus, Sulpicius Severus, Sozomenos), a 'religious' list (P.Oxy. XI, 1380), itineraries and maps (*Itinerarium Antonini*, *Tabula Peutingeriana*, SB XXVI, 16607, Medaba mosaic), personal accounts (Theophanes) and administrative lists (Hierokles, Georgios). The most precious information comes from Theophanes' detailed and first-hand travel notes, although the other sources add valuable data.

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690 (fig. 533) and col. 695-696; Avi-Yonah, 1954, p. 71-76 and pl. 9-10; Donner, 1977, pl. 124-129; Finkelstein, 1980, p. 191; Oren, 1982a, p. 23; Donner, 1992, p. 76-83; Alliata, 1999, p. 93-97.

<sup>162</sup> Georgios of Cyprus, 686-700.1010.1023 (Honigmann, 1939a, p. 58.67). This administrative list has been transformed into a list of bishoprics in the *Notitia episcopatum* of Benešević, 1927, p. 69, with only some differences in orthography; this *Notitia*, mentioned by Honigmann, 1939a, p. 60, has probably been composed in the Arab period, but further information is lacking.



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In the early 1st century AD Rinokoloura seems to be the only major settlement in the eastern part of the northern Sinai. The Ekregma of lake Serbonis was filled up and one gets the impression that the lake was becoming smaller. A new feature in the description of the Kasion area is the presence of the tomb of Pompeius Magnus, who died in the neighbourhood in 48 BC, and Strabon is the first to mention a sanctuary of Zeus Kasios there. Between the Kasion and Pelousion was the military settlement Gerra, whereas it is not sure whether Chabrias' and Alexander's Camp were actually still in use. Ostrakine, somewhat halfway Rinokoloura and Kasion and probably near the eastern edge of lake Serbonis, probably came into being in the late 1st century BC. Especially the western part of the northern Sinai became more densely populated later on: about 300 AD Pentaschoinon appears between the Kasion and Gerra, and the military settlement (?) Skenai between Gerra and Pelousion; from the 5th century AD on Aphnaion occurs between Pentaschoinon and Gerra.

This gives in Byzantine times the following order of places from east to west: Rinokoloura, Ostrakine, Kasion, Pentaschoinon, Aphnaion, Gerra, Skenai and Pelousion, as far as known all situated close to the Mediterranean. It is also possible to reconstruct the absolute distances between most of the places. Apart from some distances given by Strabon, Plinius and Sozomenos, four sources offer an overall view, of which the *Itinerarium Antonini Augusti* and the itinerary of Theophanes (P.Ryl.) seem the most trustworthy, although the latter is not complete; the approximate distances in Ptolemaios are all too small; the *Tabula Peutingeriana* on the other hand shows a lot of inconsistencies. I will bring together some of the figures, but a more detailed discussion is presented for each toponym separately in the next chapters.

- Raphia - Boutaphios - Rinokoloura: Ptolemaios: 25 km; *Itinerarium*: 33 km; P.Ryl.: 19,5? + [28,5?] = 48 km (?); *Tabula*: the figure is missing. The reconstructed figure of the papyrus is based upon the actual distance of some 46 km between Rafah and el-Arish.

- Rinokoloura - Ostrakine: Ptolemaios: 31 km; *Itinerarium*: 36 km; P.Ryl.: 36 km; *Tabula*: 34,5 km. A distance of about 36 km therefore seems quite acceptable.

- Ostrakine - Ekregma - Kasion: Ptolemaios: 41 km; *Itinerarium*: 39 km; P.Ryl.: 39 km; *Tabula*: the figure is missing. The distance in Ptolemaios is surprisingly high, but an explanation is on hand. The figure of 41 km consists of two tracks: from Ostrakine to the Ekregma (25' / 0' or 31 km) and from the Ekregma to Kasion (5' / 5' or 10 km).

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Since Ptolemaios' smallest 'unit' to count with is 5', any place situated e.g. immediately southeast of another place has to be located at 5' / 5', i.e. at a distance of some 10 km, regardless the real distance. Since the figure of 31 km in Ptolemaios more or less corresponds with 36 km in other sources, it is not unlikely that - in comparison with the distance of 39 km in the *Itinerarium* and in P.Ryl. - the Ekregma was actually situated some 3 km southeast of Kasion.

- Kasion - Pentaschoinon: *Itinerarium*: 30 km; P.Ryl.: 24 km. This is the only track where the *Itinerarium* and P.Ryl. differ and probably the figure of the papyrus, representing a first hand testimony, is to be preferred.

- Pentaschoinon - Gerra - Pelousion: *Itinerarium*: 30 km; P.Ryl.: [15?] + 15 = 30 km (?). The figure of 30 km seems quite acceptable.

- Aphnaion is probably situated about half way Pentaschoinon and Gerra, but no absolute distances are known.

- Kasion - Gerra: Ptolemaios: 18,5 km; *Itinerarium*: > 30 km; P.Ryl.: 24 + [15?] = 39 km (?); *Tabula*: 34,5 km (?). The figure of 39 km seems quite acceptable. Ptolemaios gives a remarkably low figure on this track and a high one on the next one; it is most likely that he just put Gerra half way Kasion and Pelousion without regard to the actual distance.

- Gerra - Pelousion: Ptolemaios: 20 km; P.Ryl.: 15 km; Sozomenos: 9 km; *Tabula*: 12 km. The figure of the papyrus, representing a first hand testimony, is probably to be preferred.

- Skenai is probably situated between Gerra and Pelousion, but no absolute distances are known.

- Kasion - Pelousion: Strabon 55,5 km; Ptolemaios: 38,5 km; *Itinerarium*: 60 km; P.Ryl.: [54?] km; *Tabula*: 46,5 km. The figures of Strabon and P.Ryl. seem reliable. The *Itinerarium* probably gives too high a distance on the track Kasion - Pentaschoinon.

- Ostrakine - Pelousion: Plinius: 97,5 km (Martianus Capella: 99 km); Ptolemaios: 74 km linea recta (79,5 km along the road); *Itinerarium*: 99 km; P.Ryl.: [93?] km. The figure of Plinius quite well approaches that of the papyrus.

- Rinokoloura - Pelousion: Ptolemaios: 105 km linea recta (110,5 km along the road), which corresponds with some 135 km, if adjusted with the 78 % ratio of the too small values on the east-west axis; *Itinerarium*: 135 km; P.Ryl.: [129?] km, which well matches the actual distance of about 132 km between el-Arish and el-Farama. To the

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distance of 81 km in the *Tabula* has probably to be added some 39 km for the Ostrakine track, which gives a rather low, though acceptable total of 120 km.

- Raphia - Pelousion: Ptolemaios: 129,5 km linea recta (135,5 km along the road), which, if adjusted, corresponds with some 166 km; *Itinerarium*: 168 km, with one figure apparently some 15 km too short and another figure some 6 km too high, which gives a hypothetical total of 177 km; P.Ryl.: [177?] km, which well matches the actual distance of about 178 km between Rafah and el-Farama; the figures in the *Tabula* are incomplete.

Modern authors often use the expression 'Via maris' ('the road of the sea') to refer to the road across the northern Sinai, but it is not used as such in the sources and is better avoided<sup>163</sup>.

### Synoptic tables of the itineraries of the 1st to 7th centuries AD

[st = stadion, ca. 185 m; M = Roman mile, ca. 1,5 km

1° / 60' E-W = 400 stadia, ca. 74 km; 1° / 60' N-S = 500 stadia, ca. 92,5 km]

| Strabon<br>(after 6 AD)  | Plinius<br>(77)  | Iosephos<br>(75-79)  | P.Oxy. XI, 1380<br>(ca. 98-138) | Ptolemaios<br>(ca. 148-178)  |
|--|--|--|---------------------------------|--|
| (1) Ραφία  | (7) Rhaphea  | (6) Ράφεια<br>(one day)  | (-) Ράφεια                      | (-) Ραφία<br>(20' / 0' - 25 km)  |
| (2) Ρινοκόλουρα  | (6) Rhinocolura<br><br>(4) Ostracine<br>(65 M - ca. 97,5<br>km to Pelousion) | (5) Ρινοκόρουρα<br>(one day)<br><br>(4) Όστρακίνη<br>(one day) | (-) Ρεινοκόρουλα                | (7) Ρινοκόρουρα<br>(25' / 0' - 31 km)<br><br>(6) Όστρακίνη<br>(25' / 0' - 31 km to<br>Ekregma)<br>(0' / 10' - 15,5 km<br>to lake Serbonis) |
| (3) ή Σιρβωνίς<br>λίμνη  |  |  |                                 | (-) ή Σιρβωνίς<br>λίμνη  |
| (4) τὸ Ἐκρηγμα   | (5) emersus<br>Sirbonis lacus  |  | (3) τὸ<br>Ἐκ(κ)ρηγμα            | (5) ἔκρηγμα<br>Σιρβωνίδος λίμνη<br>(5' / 5' - ≤ 10 km)   |
| (5) τὸ Κάσιον (τις<br>λόφος) - τὸ<br>Πομπηίου σῶμα -<br>Διὸς ἱερόν<br>Κασίου<br>(300 st - ca. 55,5<br>km to Pelousion) | (3) Casius mons -<br>delubrum Iovis<br>Casii - tumulus<br>Pompei             | (3) τὸ τοῦ<br>Κασίου Διὸς<br>ἱερόν<br>(one day)                | (2) τὸ Κάσιον                   | (4) Κάσιον<br>(15' / 0' - 18,5 km)   |
| (6) τὰ Γέρρα   |  |  |                                 | (3) Γέρρον ὄριον<br>(15' / 5' - 20 km)   |

<sup>163</sup> Cf. Meshel, 1973a, p. 162-166.

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|                                       |                        |                                  |               |  |
|---------------------------------------|------------------------|----------------------------------|---------------|--|
| (7) ὁ Χαβρίου<br>χάραξ                | (2) Chabriae<br>castra |                                  |               |  |
| (8) τὰ πρὸς τῷ<br>Πηλουσίῳ<br>βάραθρα |                        | (2) τὰς ἐμβολὰς<br>τοῦ Πηλουσίου |               | (1) Πηλουσιακὸν<br>στόμα                                     |
| (9) Πηλούσιον                         | (1) Pelusium           | (1) Πηλούσιον<br>Tot.: 4 days    | (1) Πηλούσιον | (2) Πηλούσιον<br>Tot.: 105' / 0' -<br>129,5 km (135,5<br>km) |

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| Itin. Antonini<br>(ca. 300)                           | P.Ryl. IV,<br>627-628<br>(ca. 322-323)                | P.Ryl. IV, 630-<br>638 (ca. 322-323) | Hieronymus<br>(Hilarion,<br>ca. 359) | Ammianus<br>(391/392?)                | Tabula Peut.<br>(4th cent. AD?)       |
|---|---|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| (1) Rafia<br>(22 M - 33 km,<br>immo<br>32 M - 48 km?) | (8) Ραφία<br>([1]3? M -<br>19,5 km? -<br>1/2 day)     | (1) Ραφία<br>(1/2 day)               | (1) Betilium<br>(Βιτύλιον)           |                                       |                                       |
|   | (7) Βουτάφιος<br>([19?] M -<br>28,5 km? -<br>1/2 day) | (2) Βουτάφιος<br>(1/2 day)           |                                      |                                       |                                       |
| (2) Rinocorura<br>(24 M - 36 km)                      | (6) Ρινοκόρουρα<br>(24 M - 36 km<br>- one day)        | (3) Ρινοκόρουρα<br>(one day)         |                                      | (4) Rhinocorura                       | (1) Rinocorura<br>(23 M - 34,5<br>km) |
| (3) Ostracena<br>(26 M - 39 km)                       | (5) Όστρακίνη<br>(26 M - 39 km<br>- one day)          | (4) Όστρακίνη<br>(one day)           |                                      | (3) Ostracine                         | (2) Ostracine                         |
| (4) Cassio<br>(20 M - 30 km)                          | (4) (τὸ)<br>Κάσιον<br>(16 M - 24 km<br>- one day)     | (5) τὸ Κάσιον<br>(1/2 day)           |                                      | (2) Cassium -<br>Pompei<br>sepulchrum | (3) Cassio<br>(23 M - 34,5<br>km)     |
| (5) Pentascino<br>(20 M - 30 km)                      | (3) Πεντάσχοινον<br>([10?] M - 15<br>km? - 1/2 day)   | (6) Πεντάσχοινον<br>(1/2 day)        |                                      |                                       |                                       |
|   | (2) (τὸ) Γέρος<br>(10 M - 15 km<br>- 1/2 day)         |                                      |                                      |                                       | (4) Gerra<br>(8 M - 12 km)            |
| (6) Pelusio   | (1) Πηλούσιον   | (7) Πηλούσιον                        | (2) Pelusium<br>(Πηλούσιον)          | (1) Pelusium                          | (5) Pelusio                           |
| Tot.: 112 M -<br>168 km                               | Tot.: 118? M -<br>177? km - 5<br>days                 | Tot.: 4 days                         | Tot.: 5 days                         |                                       |                                       |

1. Itineraries and descriptions

| SB XXVI, 16607<br>(5th century) | Hierokles<br>(527/528) | Medaba<br>(ca. 560-565?)             | Georgios<br>(591-603) | Reconstruction           |
|---------------------------------|------------------------|--------------------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------|
| (8) Ραφία                       | (a) Ραμφία             | (1) Ρα[φία]                          | (-) Ραφία             | Raphia<br>(19,5 km?)     |
|                                 | (c) Ἄριζα              | (2) τὸ [τοῦ ἁγίου]<br>Ἰλαρίωνος]     |                       |                          |
| (7) Ταπιδουλα                   | (d) Βιτύλη             | (3) Β[ητ]ύλιον                       | (-) Βιττύλιος         | Boutaphios<br>(28,5 km?) |
|                                 |                        | (4) ὄροι Αἰγύπτου<br>καὶ Παλαιστίνης |                       |                          |
| (6) Νινοκόρριεψε                | (1) Ρινοκόρουρα        | (5) Ρινοκόρουρα                      | (5) Ρινοκούρουρα      | Rinokoloura<br>(36 km)   |
| (5) Ἄσσοδρακινα                 | (2) Ὀστρανίκη          | (6) Ὀστρακίνη                        | (6) Ὀστρακίνη         | Ostrakine<br>(39 km)     |
| (4) Πικασπισω                   | (3) Κάσιον             | (7) τὸ Κάσιν                         | (8) Κάσιον            | Kasion<br>(24 km)        |
| (3) Πεντασκαλος                 | (4) Πεντάσχοινον       | (8) τὸ Πεντάσχοι[ι]νον               | (7) Πεντάσχοινον      | Pentaschoinon<br>(15 km) |
| (2) Τ[α]φναειν                  | (5) Ἄφναιον            | (9) τὸ Ἄ.[ ]                         | (9) Ἄφθάιον           |                          |
|                                 | (6) Γέρας              |                                      | (12) Γέρος            | Gerra<br>(15 km)         |
|                                 | (7) Σκέινα             |                                      | (13) Ἰτάγερος         |                          |
|                                 |                        | Πηλουσ[ιακόν]                        |                       |                          |
| (1) Πελουσίου                   | (8) Πηλούσιον          | (10) τὸ Πηλούσιν                     | (1) Πηλούσιον         | Pelousion                |
|                                 |                        |                                      |                       | Tot.: 177 km             |

## ITINERARIES AND DESCRIPTIONS OF THE 7TH-17TH CENTURIES AD<sup>164</sup>

About 640 AD, during the conquest of Egypt, Abdallah Yuqana, a lieutenant of Amr ibn el-As, came from Syria to Egypt; he left the desert and those fortresses which were upon the way to Egypt, on his right hand and so passed Rafah, el-Arish, el-Adad, el-Baqqara and el-Farama<sup>165</sup>. Thus says the work *Conquests in Egypt*, attributed to Waqidi; it is possibly written somewhere after 1099 AD, but it might contain a substratum of this author, who died ca. 823 AD<sup>166</sup>. If so, this passage is the oldest Arab source to mention the last four toponyms. Rafah, el-Arish and el-Farama are well-known places; el-Adad is not found elsewhere; el-Baqqara is only known in the 9th-10th centuries AD as a station on the southern inland road between el-Arish and el-Farama.

Waqidi's account was not considered reliable by Butler and Maspero and indeed it presents some geographical and other problems. First, it is not clear what is meant with 'the desert' north of the route. It is impossible for someone going from east to west to leave the Sinai desert on his right hand, so probably the region of the former lake Serbonis is referred to, north from the inland road to Egypt and at that time more or less dried up. Secondly, to avoid the fortresses, which seem to be situated on the inland road, the lieutenant should have taken a route even more to the south, where it is very difficult to travel because of the dunes. From a military point of view this would probably also be useless: at least the first four places mentioned did not hinder Amr some time before on his way to Egypt and since they could be considered already as occupied territory, there was also no reason to avoid them; in this respect even the designation 'fortress' becomes suspicious for el-Arish, el-Adad and el-Baqqara. Rafah, el-Arish and el-Farama are therefore maybe places the lieutenant only passed by, but did not stay in. For the track between el-Arish and el-Farama another explanation is possible. Since there were two different roads between those two places - one along the coast and the other one south of the former lake Serbonis -, it is not impossible

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<sup>164</sup> Cf. Cytryn-Silverman, 2001, p. 3-25 and the maps p. 32-36 with an historical background for the northern Sinai in the 7th-18th century AD. For a list of travellers through the northern Sinai from 1321 to 1917, cf. Schur, 1987, p. ix-xxxvi and especially p. xxiv-xxvi.

<sup>165</sup> Waqidi (translated in Butler, 1978 [= 1902], p. 195-196, n. 3 and mentioned in Maspero, 1912, p. 28.40.135, each with a slightly different account).

<sup>166</sup> Cf. Dunlop, 1971, p. 77.

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that the lieutenant took the southern road leaving on his right hand 'the desert' (a dried up lake Serbonis) and the Byzantine towns or 'fortresses' on the coast, places whose names were erroneously replaced by those of two Arab stations in fact situated on the southern road itself.

During the invasion of Egypt the places in the northern Sinai still had their old Graeco-Egyptian names, so the use of the Arab names in this context is certainly anachronistic. Instead of el-Arish originally Rinokoloura might have been written, but for el-Adad and el-Baqqara any identification with Byzantine towns remains pure speculation. It is not impossible that Waqidi or one of his predecessors just matched the less known Greek toponyms of his source with some familiar Arab toponyms, which do not even have to be situated near the Greek ones. So, although the itinerary of Waqidi might reflect the existence of a northern and a southern road through the northern Sinai, it is not unlikely that it is in fact a testimony for the road between Rafah and el-Farama in the early 9th century AD, rather than a source for the toponymy of the northern Sinai about 640 AD.

About 844-848 AD Ibn Khurdadbeh describes the road from Rafah to el-Farama<sup>167</sup>: from Rafah to el-Arish 24 miles (ca. 48 km) through the sands; further on to el-Warrada 18 miles (ca. 36 km), to el-Tha'ama 18 miles (ca. 36 km), to el-Udhaib 20 miles (ca. 40 km) in the sands and finally to el-Farama 24 miles (ca. 48 km), totalling 104 miles (ca. 208 km) between Rafah and el-Farama.

This itinerary has twice been quoted by the 15th century author Maqrizi<sup>168</sup>, but with some major differences. The stations Rafah and el-Tha'ama have dropped out, apparently by mistake. Instead of the station el-Udhaib mentioned in the manuscripts of Ibn Khurdadbeh, in the first context a place called el-Gharib (el-Ghurabi) is situated 20 miles (ca. 40 km) west of el-Warrada, and in the second context a place called Umm el-Arab, without the indication 'in the sands'. Maqrizi stresses that this itinerary is completely different from the one used in his time.

el-Warrada is known in sources from the 9th-15th centuries AD as a major station on the southern road. The name el-Tha'ama is not found elsewhere. The station el-Udhaib is mentioned, together with Umm el-Arab, in the neighbourhood of el-

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<sup>167</sup> Ibn Khurdadbeh (translated in de Goeje, 1889, p. 58-59); cf. Marmardji, 1951, p. 103.

<sup>168</sup> Maqrizi (translated in Bouriant, 1900, p. 528.669); the second passage has apparently been followed by Ibn Iyas (mentioned in Hartmann, 1910, p. 677).



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Farama by the 13th century writer Yaqut; neither place seems to be known elsewhere<sup>169</sup>; the alternative name el-Ghurabi on the other hand is well known as a road station between Qatia and el-Salhiya from the 13th century AD on.

In another context Ibn Khurdadbeh adds that it took about forty days to go from el-Shadjaratain, the border place between Rafah and el-Arish, to Assuan<sup>170</sup>. The place el-Shadjaratain ('The two trees') is known in a similar context from the 9th till at least the 11th century AD. Since the itinerary of Ibn Khurdadbeh listed the major road stations situated at the distance of a one-day's march from each other, el-Shadjaratain was apparently only an intermediary station and therefore left out in his scheme.

The alleged distance of 208 km between Rafah and el-Farama is about 30 km more than the actual distance of ca. 178 km. Since the distance of about 84 km on the track Rafah - el-Arish - el-Warrada is confirmed in other sources, it is apparently the unparalleled track el-Warrada - el-Tha'ama - el-Udhaib - el-Farama that has to account for the difference. According to Hartmann the name el-Tha'ama is a corrupt form for el-Baqqara<sup>171</sup> and indeed el-Tha'ama is the first place east of el-Warrada, just as el-Baqqara in most other sources of this period. Such an identification, however, would suppose that the road went south of the former lake Serbonis, as in the later sources, but el-Tha'ama could just as well have been a station on the coast, north of lake Serbonis. This might well fit with Maqrizi's statement that the itinerary represents an older track, no longer used in his days. Another argument for this location is the fact that the next station, Umm el-Arab, is situated by Maqrizi on the coast of the Mediterranean<sup>172</sup>. Ibn Khurdadbeh is also the only Arab author of this period to mention three stations between el-Arish and el-Farama instead of two, which might suggest that he did not describe the normal road, but the one along the coast. The allusion to a track through the sand between el-Tha'ama and el-Udhaib cannot be used as a counter-argument, for dunes are common in the whole area and are not restricted to the south road. If one accepts that the road along the coast is referred to, part of the 30 km difference can be accounted for, since according to the later author Qudama that road was about 14 km longer than the inland road. It cannot be denied, however, that the figure of 124 km between el-Warrada and el-Farama in Ibn Khurdadbeh seems to be some 10 to 15 km too high. Every precise location of the stations el-

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<sup>169</sup> Cf. de Goeje, 1889, p. 58; Hartmann, 1910, p. 677.

<sup>170</sup> Ibn Khurdadbeh (translated in de Goeje, 1889, p. 60).

<sup>171</sup> Cf. Hartmann, 1910, p. 677.

<sup>172</sup> Maqrizi (translated in Bouriant, 1900, p. 670).

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Tha'ama and el-Udhaib therefore remains hazardous, and neither is it clear why Ibn Khurdadbeh mentions different stations from the later itineraries. Yet, the itinerary on the whole seems to be rather trustworthy and possibly still reflected the Byzantine situation along the coastal road. The 'approximate' identifications with Raphia, Rinokoloura, Ostrakine and Pelousion are pretty sure, but it is not obvious whether Kasion, Pentaschoinon, Aphnaion or some other places are referred to on the track between Ostrakine and Pelousion.

The Frankish monk Bernardus travelled about 870 AD from Tamiathis in the Egyptian Delta to Jerusalem. He passed Tanis and Farama (el-Farama) where foreigners could rent camels for the trip through the desert, which took six days. There nothing grows except for some palm trees. In the middle of this desert are two 'hospitia', Albara and Albachara, where both Christians and Muslims sell to travellers whatever they need. After Albachara a fertile land starts that goes all the way to Gaza. Bernardus arrived in Alariza (el-Arish) and finally continued in Palestine<sup>173</sup>:

de Tanis venimus ad civitatem Farameam, ubi est ecclesia in honore beate Marie, in loco ad quem, angelo monente, fugit Ioseph cum puero et matre. in hac civitate est multitudo camelorum, quos ab incolis regionis illius precio locant advene, ad deferenda sibi onera propter desertum, quod habet iter dierum VI. huius deserti introitus a predicta civitate incipit, et bene desertum dicitur, quoniam nec herbam, nec alicuius seminis fructum affert, exceptis arboribus palmarum, sed albescit ut campania tempore nivis. sunt autem in medio itinere duo hospitia, unum quod vocatur Albara, alterum quod vocatur Albachara, in quibus negotia exercentur a Christianis et paganis emendi, que necessaria sunt iter agentibus. in eorum vero circuitu nichil preter quod dictum est, gignit terra. ab Albachara invenitur iam terra secunda usque ad civitatem Gazam, que fuit Samson civitas, nimis opulentissima omnium rerum. deinde venimus Alariza. de Alariza adivimus Ramulam, ...

'From Tanis we went to the city of Farama, and there is a church in honour of blessed Maria, at the place to which the angel told Ioseph to flee with his son and the mother. In this city there are many camels, which the local people hire to foreigners to carry their baggage across the desert, which takes six days to cross. This is the city from which you enter the desert, and "desert" is the right name for it: it bears neither grass nor crops (apart from palm trees) but is completely white, like a landscape in time of snow. Along this route are two inns, one called Albara and the other Albachara, and travellers can buy what they need in the Christian and pagan shops there, but nothing grows in the land round them apart from what we have mentioned. After Albachara the fertile land begins and stretches till the city of Gaza, which was Samson's city, and is full of goods of every kind. Then we reached Alariza. From Alariza we came to Ramula, ...'

The geographical data are rather summary. Bernardus apparently did not mention every station along the road where he camped. He states that the desert ended somewhere after Albachara, but it is not sure whether this place was also the terminal station of the six days march starting in el-Farama or just a station in between. Although the text does not state it explicitly, it is most likely that Alariza lies

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<sup>173</sup> *Itinerarium Bernardi Monachi Franci*, 9-10 (Tobler, 1879, p. 313-314); cf. the translation in Wilkinson, 1977, p. 142; cf. Gil, 1992, p. 483-485.

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somewhere in the fertile region described. Albachara obviously equals el-Baqqara of the Arab sources and Albara apparently equals el-Warrada. This place would fit very well the description of a major trading centre in the middle of the northern Sinai, and even a phonetic link between the two names is not unlikely. The fact that Bernardus places Albara west of Albachara, is probably a mistake, just as he mentioned Gaza only in a parenthesis before el-Arish and not in its proper place before Ramula (el-Ramla)<sup>174</sup>.

In 891 AD Ya'qubi mentions the same road: from Palestine to el-Shadjaratain at the border with Egypt, then to el-Arish, the first fortified place in Egypt, further on to el-Baqqara, to el-Warrada, which is situated among the sand-hills, and finally to el-Farama, the first city of Egypt<sup>175</sup>. As Bernardus, he probably placed el-Baqqara east of el-Warrada by mistake<sup>176</sup>.

Qudama, who wrote shortly after 929 AD, probably used the same official sources as Ibn Khurdadbeh<sup>177</sup>. This explains some of the similarities between the two itineraries, but there are some major differences. Unlike in the itinerary of Ibn Khurdadbeh the road coming from Rafah bifurcates after el-Arish. The first road goes through the Djifar desert and passes by the well-known stations el-Warrada at 18 miles (ca. 36 km) and el-Baqqara after another 20 miles (ca. 40 km) arriving finally in el-Farama after 24 miles (ca. 48 km). The second road follows the coast and passes el-Makhlasa at 21 miles (ca. 42 km) and el-Qasr, a fortress of the Christians with drinkable water and palm trees, after another 24 miles (ca. 48 km) arriving finally also in el-Farama after 24 miles (ca. 48 km)<sup>178</sup>. The inland road totals 86 miles or about 172 km, which matches the actual 178 km between Rafah and el-Farama. The coastal road totals 93 miles or about 186 km, apparently involving a detour of some 14 km.

This itinerary is one of the few sources actually mentioning two different roads between el-Arish and el-Farama. The road following the coast probably goes north of the former lake Serbonis and passes by the unknown place el-Makhlasa and the

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<sup>174</sup> Cf. Hartmann, 1910, p. 677 (but 1916b, p. 374 he inconsequently locates el-Warrada west of el-Baqqara); Dalman, 1924, p. 56; Abel, 1940, p. 239.

<sup>175</sup> Ya'qubi (translated in Wiet, 1937, p. 183).

<sup>176</sup> Cf. Hartmann, 1910, p. 677.

<sup>177</sup> Cf. de Goeje, 1889, p. xxii.

<sup>178</sup> Qudama (translated in de Goeje, 1889, p. 167); cf. Hartmann, 1910, p. 678. Figueras, 2000, p. 14.55 and *passim* incorrectly ascribes the itinerary of Qudama to Ibn Khurdadbeh.

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Christian community el-Qasr. It apparently represents the old way known in Roman and Byzantine times and in Ibn Khurdadbeh. The road through the desert probably goes south of lake Serbonis and passes by el-Warrada and el-Baqqara, which possibly represent newer stations, founded in the 7th-9th centuries AD.

Muqaddasi mentions about 986 AD the Djifar region with el-Farama as its capital and el-Baqqara, el-Warrada and el-Arish as its towns<sup>179</sup>. When listing the roads through the area he first describes the well-known track el-Farama - el-Baqqara - el-Warrada - el-Arish - Rafah, each at a distance of one 'stage' from the other. A second road goes from el-Farama to Deir el-Nasara, which is situated on the coast, and further on to el-Makhlasa and el-Arish, again each at a distance of one 'stage' from the other<sup>180</sup>. el-Makhlasa is already known from the itinerary of Qudama, while the name Deir el-Nasara - 'Monastery of the Christians' - is new and probably corresponds with el-Qasr in Qudama.

The work of el-Muhallabi, written about 990 AD, is only preserved through quotations in the 13th century writer Yaqut. For el-Muhallabi the most important towns of the Djifar are el-Arish, Rafah and el-Warrada<sup>181</sup>, apparently not listed in a geographical order. It is rather surprising that el-Farama is not mentioned, but perhaps this is due to the fact that the city had lost its importance already in the time of Yaqut. Between el-Arish and Rafah el-Muhallabi knows the stations Abi Ishaq, el-Shadjaratain (the Syrian border) and el-Barmakia, each situated at 6 miles (ca. 12 km) one from another<sup>182</sup>. He wrote a more detailed discussion of at least Rafah and el-Arish, but also a general description of the region. The stations Abi Ishaq and el-Barmakia are not known in other sources.

These seven testimonies for the 9th-10th centuries AD suggest that the road from Palestine to Egypt started in Rafah and ended in el-Farama, as did the road from Raphia to Pelousion in Roman and Byzantine times. Although sources for the 11th

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<sup>179</sup> Muqaddasi (translated in Collins, 1994, p. 163).

<sup>180</sup> Muqaddasi (translated in Collins, 1994, p. 180-181).

<sup>181</sup> el-Muhallabi in Yaqut, *Mu'qam al-buldan* (Wüstenfeld, 1867, II, p. 90; translated in Gaudefroy-Demombynes, 1923, p. 6-7, n. 2); cf. Wüstenfeld, 1864, p. 465-466; Hartmann, 1910, p. 685.

<sup>182</sup> el-Muhallabi in Yaqut, *Mu'qam al-buldan* (Wüstenfeld, 1868, III, p. 660-661; translated in Marmardji, 1951, p. 139); cf. Wüstenfeld, 1864, p. 465-466; Hartmann, 1910, p. 685; Gaudefroy-Demombynes, 1923, p. 6-7, n. 2.

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and the 12th centuries AD are lacking, this situation probably continued till the first half of the 12th century AD, while el-Farama lost every importance from the late 12th or the 13th century AD on. The caravans did no longer pass by and the road instead went south of the city.

An identification of the intermediary stations is less simple. None of the Arab names can etymologically be linked with one of the Greek names of the towns known previously in that region. Instead one gets the impression that the ancient towns on the coast were abandoned and new road stations took over their functions. The road along the coast apparently continued at least till the 10th century AD, but the southern road definitely became the more important one. The Egyptian border is crossed in a place called el-Shadjaratain, and passing by Abi Ishaq one arrives at el-Arish. Between el-Arish and el-Farama ran two different roads, with the bifurcation at the time of Ibn Khurdadbeh at el-Warrada and at the time of Qudama somewhere between el-Arish and el-Warrada. On the northern road along the coast lay - according to the first author - el-Tha'ama and el-Udhaib (or Umm el-Arab), and - according to the second author - el-Makhlasa and el-Qasr, most likely identical with the Deir el-Nasara in Muqaddasi. The exact relationship between the stations in Ibn Khurdadbeh and Qudama is not known, since the distances in both itineraries are not really compatible. The names and the order of the stations on the southern track are not obvious either. Waqidi mentions el-Adad and el-Baqqara; Bernardus and Ya'qubi know el-Baqqara east of el-Warrada, while Qudama and Muqaddasi mention el-Baqqara west of el-Warrada. Maybe el-Adad was an earlier station in the same region as el-Warrada that lost its importance to this last place. Ibn Khurdadbeh, Qudama and some itineraries of the 13th century AD place el-Warrada at 36 to 40 km east of el-Arish and so confirm the approximate position of this station in the northeastern Sinai. Since it is more likely that el-Baqqara was situated somewhere halfway the longer track between el-Warrada and el-Farama, than halfway between el-Arish and el-Warrada, which was only a one day's march, the order of Qudama and Muqaddasi is to be preferred<sup>183</sup> and one has to suppose that Bernardus and Ya'qubi - possibly just by mistake - switched the order of the stations el-Baqqara and el-Warrada. el-Arish, el-Warrada and el-Baqqara are probably the three major stations on the road between Rafah and el-

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<sup>183</sup> See also the order in Ibn Hauqal (translated in Gildemeister, 1883, p. 11-12) and in Maqrizi (translated in Bouriant, 1900, p. 544): Rafah, el-Arish, el-Warrada, el-Baqqara, el-Farama.

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Farama, each at about one day marching from the other. Without any doubt there were also some minor stopping places, whose names for this period are unknown<sup>184</sup>.

### Synoptic table of the itineraries of the 9th-10th centuries AD

[M = Arab mile, ca. 2 km]

| Waqidi<br>(before 823?) | Ibn Khurdadbeh<br>(ca. 844-848)                  | Bernardus<br>(ca. 870) [Latin] | Ya'qubi<br>(891)    | Qudama<br>(after 929)                                  |
|-------------------------|--|--------------------------------|---------------------|--|
| (1) Rafah               | (1) Rafah<br>(24 M - 48 km)                      |                                |                     | (1) Rafah<br>(24 M - 48 km)                            |
|                         | (-) el-Shadjaratain                              |                                | (1) el-Shadjaratain |  |
| (2) el-Arish            | (2) el-Arish<br>(18 M - 36 km)                   | (4) Alariza                    | (2) el-Arish        | (2) el-Arish<br>(a: 18 M - 36 km)<br>(b: 21 M - 42 km) |
| (3) el-Adad             | (3) el-Warrada<br>(18 M - 36 km)                 | (2) Albara                     | (4) el-Warrada      | (3a) el-Warrada<br>(20 M - 40 km)                      |
|                         | (4) el-Tha'ama<br>(20 M - 40 km)                 |                                |                     | (3b) el-Makhlasa<br>(24 M - 48 km)                     |
| (4) el-Baqqara          |  | (3) Albachara                  | (3) el-Baqqara      | (4a) el-Baqqara<br>(24 M - 48 km)                      |
|                         | (5) el-Udhaib /<br>Umm el-Arab<br>(24 M - 48 km) |                                |                     | (4b) el-Qasr<br>(24 M - 48 km)                         |
| (5) el-Farama           | (6) el-Farama                                    | (1) Farama                     | (5) el-Farama       | (5) el-Farama  |
|                         | Tot.: 104 M- 208 km                              | Tot.: 6 days?                  |                     | Tot.: 86 M - 172 km<br>93 M - 186 km                   |

<sup>184</sup> Cf. Ibn Khurdadbeh (translated in de Goeje, 1889, p. 89) and Qudama (translated in de Goeje, 1889, p. 172), who know seventeen post stations in the Djifar; Muqaddasi (translated in Collins, 1994, p. 179) mentions a marketplace every 6 miles (ca. 12 km) along the road and probably the same post stations are referred to.

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| Muqaddasi<br>(ca. 986) | el-Muhallabi<br>(ca. 990)            | Reconstruction         |
|------------------------|--------------------------------------|------------------------|
| (5) Rafah              | (2) Rafah<br>(6 M - 12 km)           | Rafah<br>(48 km)       |
|                        | (-) el-Barmakia<br>(6 M - 12 km)     |                        |
|                        | (-) el-Shadjaratain<br>(6 M - 12 km) |                        |
|                        | (-) Abi Ishaq<br>(6 M - 12 km)       |                        |
| (4-d) el-Arish         | (1) el-Arish                         | el-Arish<br>(36 km)    |
| (3) el-Warrada         | (3) el-Warrada                       | el-Warrada<br>(40 km)  |
| (c) el-Makhlasa        |                                      | el-Makhlasa<br>(48 km) |
| (2) el-Baqqara         |                                      | el-Baqqara<br>(48 km)  |
| (b) Deir el-Nasara     |                                      | el-Qasr<br>(48 km)     |
| (1-a) el-Farama        |                                      | el-Farama              |
| Tot.: 4 'stages'       |                                      | Tot.: 172 km<br>186 km |

Yaqut, who crossed the northern Sinai about 1213 AD, found a lot of places with shops where travellers could buy everything they needed; in this respect he lists Rafah, el-Qass, el-Za'aqa, el-Arish, el-Warrada and Qatia. Both el-Za'aqa and Qatia are not known before the 11th century AD. The latter place is situated by Yaqut in the neighbourhood of el-Farama, which apparently does no longer lie on the caravan road itself. It is clear that el-Qass is inserted on the wrong place in this list; in another context Yaqut describes how - from the main road between Egypt and Palestine - one could see a hill on a spit of land going into the sea, which holds the ruins of the ancient city el-Qass. It is not unlikely that the name of this city contains the Greek

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name Kasion. Yaqut adds that it takes seven days to cross the Djifar, from Rafah to the unknown el-Khashabi at its western end<sup>185</sup>.

In 1261 AD a postal service was established or reorganized, which was maintained until 1400 AD. It was then possible for the post to reach Damascus from Cairo in normally four and occasionally even in three or two days, while an army usually spent about a month on this journey<sup>186</sup>. The increased number of stations in the northern Sinai, which were now situated at a much closer distance from each other, is without any doubt due to this reorganisation. These postal stations are mentioned in most itineraries of this period.

*La devise des chemins de Babiloine* is a project for a crusade, written ca. 1289-1291 AD. It describes the road from Gaza to Cairo to be used to conquer Egypt. This itinerary, written in French, gives the distances between two places in 'liues' or 'lieues', which corresponds with a one hour walking distance or about 4 km. The track goes from Rephah or Rephaph (Rafah) to Zaheca (el-Za'aqa) (5 'liues', ca. 20 km), Karrober (el-Kharruba) (5 'liues', ca. 20 km), Hariss (el-Arish) (4 'liues', ca. 16 km), Oarrade (el-Warrada) (10 'liues', ca. 40 km), Soade (el-Sawada) (5 'liues', ca. 20 km), El Montayleb or El Montaleb (el-Mutaileb) (4 'liues', ca. 16 km), Elmahane or El Mahane (Ma'n) (5 'liues', ca. 20 km), Katye or El Katye (Qatia) (3 'liues', ca. 12 km), El Gorabi (el-Ghurabi) (5 'liues', ca. 20 km), and Cosair or El Cosair (el-Qusair) (4 'liues', ca. 16 km) arriving finally in Salechie (el-Salhiya) at the edge of the Delta (9 'liues', ca. 36 km, or 7 'liues', ca. 28 km, when the water is low)<sup>187</sup>. The track between el-Ghurabi and el-Qusair could be threatened by an inundation of 'le lac de Tennis', a lake called after the Delta city of Tenesos or Tennis and part of the modern lake Menzala. The track between el-Qusair and el-Salhiya on the other hand ran through the desert. Rafah, el-Za'aqa, el-Arish, el-Warrada and Qatia are stations already known before, but the seven other toponyms are new. The distance between Rafah and el-Arish in the *Devise* is 14 'liues' or about 56 km, some 10 km too much. The distance between el-Arish and Qatia is 27 'liues' or about 108 km, which approaches

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<sup>185</sup> Yaqut (translated in Gaudefroy-Demombynes, 1923, p. 6-7, n. 2); cf. Wüstenfeld, 1864, p. 465-466; Hartmann, 1910, p. 684-685. The toponyms quoted by Yaqut from the work of el-Muhallabi have been discussed already.

<sup>186</sup> Popper, 1955, I, p. 45.

<sup>187</sup> *La devise des chemins de Babiloine* (Michelant, 1882, p. 241-243); cf. Schefer, 1884, p. 94-95; Clédat, 1923b, p. 153-158.



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the real figure of 103 km. The distance between Qatia and el-Salhiya is 18 'liues' or about 72 km, which matches the real figure. The total distance of 59 'liues' or about 236 km is therefore quite acceptable.

An almost contemporary project for a crusade is known in three different documents. The part containing the itinerary for the invasion of Egypt is probably composed before 1289 AD, but the French document entitled *Via ad terram sanctam* has been written between 1291 and 1293 AD<sup>188</sup>. The same itinerary has been translated into Latin in the *Memoria terre sancte* between 1300 and 1321 AD<sup>189</sup> and was used in the work of Marino Sanudo of 1321 AD<sup>190</sup>. In the *Via* the track goes from Rafah to Zahque (el-Za'aqa) (4 'liues', ca. 16 km), Heus (el-Ushsh) (4 'liues', ca. 16 km), Larris (el-Arish) (4 'liues', ca. 16 km), Bir el Cani (Bir el-Qadi) (3 'liues', ca. 12 km); Bousser (4 'liues', ca. 16 km), Aorade (el-Warrada) (2 'liues', ca. 8 km), Saoede (el-Sawada) (4 'liues', ca. 16 km), Meteileb (el-Mutaileb) (5 'liues', ca. 20 km), Nahlet Sabiha (Subaikhat Nakhlat) (4 'liues', ca. 16 km), Catie (Qatia) (4 'liues', ca. 16 km), Horabi or Gourabi (el-Ghurabi) (4 'liues', ca. 16 km), Cousser or Couseir (el-Qusair) (5 'liues', ca. 20 km) and Birhysce (Bir Ghazi) (4 'liues', ca. 16 km) arriving finally in Salehie (el-Salhiya) at the edge of the Delta (4 'liues', ca. 16 km). For each track and station on the list a brief description is given about the state of the road and the provision of food and water. el-Arish, el-Warrada and el-Sawada have a market place and they are apparently the more important stations on the road.

In two instances also secondary roads are indicated. The main road goes from Bousser to el-Warrada, passing by Sabaquet Bardoill (Sabkhat Bardawil), the place where king where Balduinus died in 1118 AD, but there is also a track with a lot of sand and bad water apparently going more to the south, but neither the terminus, nor any other station on the way are mentioned. Also in Qatia one could choose from several roads. Apparently 2 'liues' or about 8 km to the north or the northwest 'la baherie de Tennis', the lake of Tennis, was situated. Two different roads started from Qatia to Habesce (el-Abbasa), a city in the Delta between el-Salhiya and Bilbeis and possibly near the western mouth of the Wadi Tumilat; the more northern road follows the track as described above; the more southern road passes by a lot of unknown

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<sup>188</sup> *Via ad terram sanctam* (Kohler, 1904, p. 432-434).

<sup>189</sup> *Memoria terre sancte* (Kohler, 1904, p. 454-457).

<sup>190</sup> Marino Sanudo, 3, 14, 12 (Röhricht, 1898, p. 120-122).

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stations: Ahras (5 'liues', ca. 20 km); Bouhoroc (4 'liues', ca. 16 km); Hocar (4 'liues petites', ca. 16 km); Hascebi (4 'liues', ca. 16 km), which has a market place and is apparently the most important place on the track; Essiuont (4 'liues', ca. 16 km), where a 'flum' or stream is reached; further on to Masinat (3 'liues', ca. 12 km), Bebie (3 'liues', ca. 12 km), Vaherie (3 'liues', ca. 12 km) and finally Habesce (el-Abbasa) (3 'liues', ca. 12 km). The distance of 33 'liues' or about 132 km might correspond with a road going from Qatia to Ismailia and continuing west through the Wadi Tumilat, while the 'flum' might refer to the arm of the Nile that flows in that Wadi<sup>191</sup>.

The *Memoria* and Marino Sanudo generally give the same stations and distances - in 'leuce' - and except for some orthographic variants in the toponyms and some minor changes in the description, the contents is the same<sup>192</sup>. There are some differences with the itinerary of the *Devise*. Twice a name has been replaced (Karrobler became Heus; El Mahane became Nahlet Sabiha), three stations have been added (Bir el Cani and Bousser between el-Arish and el-Warrada; Birhysce between el-Qusair and el-Salhiya). The distance between Rafah and el-Arish is 12 'liues' or about 48 km, between el-Arish and Qatia 26 'liues' or about 104 km and between Qatia and el-Salhiya (following the northern track) 17 'liues' or about 68 km, totalling 55 'liues' or 220 km and in general a bit more accurate than the distances in the *Devise*.

Abu'l-Feda mentioned the Djifar several times in his *Geography*, a work written in 1321 AD. In that region are only a few road stations for travellers; the most important one is Qatia, the second one is el-Warrada. Further in his text he notices three places in the Djifar: Rafah, el-Arish and el-Warrada, each at a distance of about one day; for unknown reasons he does not repeat Qatia<sup>193</sup>.

el-Omari, who wrote ca. 1345 AD, lists the road stations between Cairo and Syria, including el-Salhiya, Bir Ghazi, el-Qusair (next to the old el-Aqula), Habwa, el-Ghurabi, Qatia, Subaikhat Nakhlat Ma'n, el-Mutaileb, el-Sawada, el-Warrada, Bir el-

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<sup>191</sup> Cf. Fischer, 1910, pl. 7 indicating a track between Qatia and Ismailia. Hartmann, 1910, p. 690 on the other hand could not explain the track and thinks that the names are corrupt.

<sup>192</sup> For the few differences in distances the older tradition of the *Via* seems more trustworthy: between Rafah and el-Za'aqa the *Via* and Sanudo give 4 'liues', the *Memoria* 3 'leuce'; between el-Arish and Bir el-Qadi the *Via* and the *Memoria* give 3 'liues', Sanudo 4 'leuce'; between Masinat and Bebie the *Via* gives 3 'liues', the *Memoria* 4 'liues' and Sanudo has dropped the passage.

<sup>193</sup> Abu'l-Feda, *Geography* (translated in Reinaud, 1848, II 1, p. 149-150).

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Qadi, el-Arish, el-Kharruba, el-Za'aqa and Rafah. The same post stations on the same road are still mentioned by Qalqashandi junior (1464 AD), Khalil el-Zahiri (before 1468 AD) and Abu'l-Mahasin (before 1470 AD), with only some minor changes: Abu'l-Mahasin mentions Bir Ifra instead of Bir Ghazi; Qalqashandi probably by mistake leaves out el-Qusair; Qalqashandi and Khalil el-Zahiri speak of Ma'n instead of Subaikhat Nakhlat Ma'n<sup>194</sup>. The itinerary of Khalil el-Zahiri for the part west of el-Ghurabi is apparently not trustworthy<sup>195</sup>.

Ibn Battuta tells in 1355 AD how he travelled in the summer of 1326 AD from Cairo to Gaza ('the first of the towns of Syria on the borders of Egypt') and passed successively through stations as el-Salhiya - after which he entered the sands -, el-Sawada, el-Warrada, el-Mutaileb, el-Arish and el-Kharruba, while Qatia is apparently the most important place. Every station had a serai for travellers and their riding animals; outside that serai were a public watering place and a shop where all the necessary things could be bought<sup>196</sup>. The station el-Mutaileb is situated here between el-Warrada and el-Arish, but the place in fact lay between Qatia and el-Sawada; Ibn Battuta probably mixed up the order, as he dictated his memoirs about thirty years after the events<sup>197</sup>.

The most noteworthy difference with the itineraries of the 7th-12th centuries AD is the fact that el-Farama has lost every importance and that the road from Rafah to Egypt does no longer pass there. The city of el-Salhiya, founded in 1246 AD, is the new entrance to the Egyptian Delta. The main stations remain Rafah, el-Arish and el-Warrada, but el-Baqqara disappears and Qatia becomes the most important place of the northwestern Sinai. Between Rafah and el-Arish lie the minor stations el-Za'aqa and Heus / el-Kharruba. el-Omari states that the place el-Kharruba used to be called el-Ushsh; it so becomes clear that the *Via* uses the older name Heus and the *Devise* the

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<sup>194</sup> el-Omari (translated in Hartmann, 1916a, p. 486-488). Qalqashandi junior and Khalil el-Zahiri (mentioned in Hartmann, 1910, p. 688-691). Abu'l-Mahasin, *Chronicle* (mentioned in Popper, 1955, I, p. 47); cf. Clédat, 1923b, p. 152-158.

<sup>195</sup> Compare the list in Hartmann, 1910, p. 688 and the translation in Daressy, 1929, p. 321, which mentions a station Mansura immediate west of el-Ghurabi. A similar problem seems to exist for the list of Abu'l-Mahasin (cf. the summary in Clédat, 1923b, p. 152 with a station Mansura west of el-Ghurabi), while the list of Popper apparently gives a corrected version.

<sup>196</sup> Ibn Battuta (translated in Gibb, 1958, I, p. 71-72); cf. Defrémery, 1969 [= 1854], I, p. 111-113.

<sup>197</sup> Cf. Gibb, 1958, I, p. 71, n. 5; Defrémery, 1969, I, p. 446.

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younger name Karrobler<sup>198</sup>. Between el-Arish and el-Warrada are the minor stations Bir el-Qadi and Bousser; the latter place does not occur in other sources and the name Bousser that normally betrays an Egyptian origin, is hard to explain in this context. Near the coast the ruins of the place el-Qass were still known. Among the stations between el-Warrada and Qatia the *Via* knows a place Nahlet Sabiha, the *Devise*, Qalqashandi and Khalil mention a place El Mahane / Ma'n, while el-Omari and Abu'l-Mahasin speak of Subaikhat Nakhlat Ma'n, a name that clearly exists out of the two former toponyms; the three names indicate the same place since already el-Omari noticed that it is often referred to with only one of the components of its name. Between el-Warrada and Qatia one knows therefore the places el-Sawada, el-Mutaileb and Subaikhat Nakhlat Ma'n. On the last track between Qatia and el-Salhiya there are el-Ghurabi, Habwa (probably identical with the modern Tell Habwa), el-Qusair and the Bir Ghazi of el-Omari, which might be identical with the Bir Ifra of Abu'l-Mahasin.

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<sup>198</sup> el-Omari (translated in Hartmann, 1916a, p. 16); cf. Hartmann, 1910, p. 691.

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**Synoptic table of the itineraries of the 13th-15th centuries AD**

[L = lieue, ca. 4 km]

| Yaqut<br>(1225) | Devisé<br>(ca. 1289-1291)<br>[French]                               | Via<br>(ca. 1291-1293)<br>[French]  | Abu'l-Feda<br>(before 1331) |
|-----------------|---|---|-----------------------------|
| (1) Rafah       | (1) le Repha(p)h<br>(5 L - 20 km)                                   | (1) (le) Rafah<br>(4 L - 16 km)   | (a) Rafah<br>(one day)      |
| (3) el-Za'aqa   | (2) le Zaheca<br>(5 L - 20 km)                                      | (2) la Zahque<br>(4 L - 16 km)  |                             |
| (4) el-Arish    | (3) le Karrobler<br>(4 L - 16 km)                                   | (3) Heus<br>(4 L - 16 km)   | (b) el-Arish<br>(one day)   |
| (4) el-Arish    | (4) (le) Hariss<br>(10 L - 40 km)                                   | (4) Larris<br>(3 L - 12 km)   |                             |
| (5) el-Warrada  | (5) la Oarrade<br>(5 L - 20 km)                                     | (5) Bir el Cani<br>(4 L - 16 km)  | (2 - c) el-Warrada          |
| ? (2) el-Qass   | (6) Bousser<br>(2 L - 8 km)   | (6) Sabaquet Bardoill<br>(7) la Aorade<br>(4 L - 16 km)                     |                             |
| (6) Qatia       | (6) la Soade<br>(4 L - 16 km)                                       | (8) la Saoede<br>(5 L - 20 km)  | (1) Qatia                   |
| (6) Qatia       | (7) El Monta(y)leb<br>(5 L - 20 km)                                 | (9) le Meteileb<br>(4 L - 16 km)  |                             |
| (6) Qatia       | (8) Elmahane - El Mahane<br>(3 L - 12 km)                           | (10) Nahlet Sabiha<br>(4 L - 16 km)   |                             |
| (6) Qatia       | (9) la Katye - El Katye<br>(5 L - 20 km)                            | (11) Catie<br>(4 L - 16 km)   |                             |
| (6) Qatia       | (10) El Gorabi<br>(4 L - 16 km)                                     | (-) la baherie de Tennis<br>(12) le Horabi -<br>le Gourabi<br>(5 L - 20 km) |                             |
| (6) Qatia       | (-) le lac de Tennis<br>(11) le Cosair - El Cosair<br>(9 L - 36 km) | (13) Cousser -<br>le Couseir<br>(4 L - 16 km)                               |                             |
| (6) Qatia       | (12) la Salechie  | (14) Birhysce<br>(4 L - 16 km)  |                             |
| (-) el-Khashabi |   | (15) la Salehie   |                             |
| Tot.: 7 days    | Tot.: 59 L - 236 km   | Tot.: 55 L - 220 km   |                             |

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| el-Omari (ca. 1345) till Abu'l-Mahasin (before 1470) | Ibn Battuta (1355) | Reconstruction                 |
|--|--------------------|--------------------------------|
| (15) Rafah   |                    | Rafah (16 km)                  |
| (14) el-Za'aqa                                       |                    | el-Za'aqa (16 km)              |
| (13) el-Kharruba                                     | (6) el-Kharruba    | el-Kharruba (16 km)            |
| (12) el-Arish  | (5) el-Arish       | el-Arish (12 km)               |
| (11) Bir el-Qadi                                     |                    | Bir el-Qadi (16 km)            |
|  |                    | Bousser (8 km)                 |
| (10) el-Warrada                                      | (3) el-Warrada     | el-Warrada (16 km))            |
| (9) el-Sawada  | (2) el-Sawada      | el-Sawada (20 km)              |
| (8) el-Mutaileb                                      | (4) el-Mutaileb    | el-Mutaileb (16 km)            |
| (7) Subaikhat Nakhlat Ma'n                           |                    | Subaikhat Nakhlat Ma'n (16 km) |
| (6) Qatia  | (7) Qatia          | Qatia (16 km)                  |
| (5) el-Ghurabi                                       |                    | el-Ghurabi (20 km)             |
| (4) Habwa  |                    |                                |
| (3) el-Qusair - el-Aqula                             |                    | el-Qusair (16 km)              |
| (2) Bir Ghazi / Bir Ifra                             |                    | Bir Ghazi (16 km)              |
| (1) el-Salhiya                                       | (1) el-Salhiya     | el-Salhiya                     |
|  |                    | Tot.: 220 km                   |

In 1481 AD rabbi Meshullam of Volterra went from Egypt to Palestine, passing by el-Salhiya, Bireru Diveidar (Bir el-Duwaidar), Qatia, Ba'er Da'ved (Bir el-Abd), Savedi (el-Sawada), Arar (Ru'us el-Adrab?), Mulhasin (Umm el-Hasan), el-Arish, 'Aziqa or 'Azan (el-Za'aqa), Khan Yunus and Gaza<sup>199</sup>. The reference to el-Sawada is somewhat puzzling if one considers that the place probably lay only some 4 km west of Umm el-Hasan, which would locate el-Sawada, Arar and Umm el-Hasan very close to each other, and one wonders whether Meshullam did not make some mistake.

<sup>199</sup> Meshullam of Volterra (mentioned in Cytryn-Silverman, 2001, p. 14.23); cf. Stillman, 1979, p. 277; Veronese, 1989, p. 60-63 (non vidi).

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In 1482 AD Joos van Ghistele travelled from Gaza to Cairo via Caen Jovene (Khan Yunus), Geraba (el-Kharruba), Larijs (el-Arish), Hemelessijn (Umm el-Hasan), Bierlehalt (Bir el-Abd?), Cattia (Qatia), Bierdodare (Bir el-Duwaidar), Acole (el-Aqula), Haouwe (Habwa) and Salahija (el-Salhiya)<sup>200</sup>.

The map of Bernhard von Breydenbach, drawn up between 1483 and 1486 AD, is not very trustworthy<sup>201</sup>. It gives from Gaza to Lughany (perhaps Khan Yunus) 20 miles (ca. 30 km<sup>202</sup>), to Allariff (el-Arish) 20 miles (ca. 30 km), to Zaceha (el-Za'aqa) 36 miles (ca. 54 km), to Cattia (Qatia) 46 miles (ca. 69 km) and to Salachia (el-Salhiya) 50 miles (ca. 75 km). Those small 'oppida' lie on the sandy road from Gaza to Cairo: *per hanc viam itur ex Gazera versus Chayrum per loca supra posita que sunt oppida parva et est tota via ista arenosa* ('following this road one goes from Gazera to Chayrum along the places drawn above this text, which are small towns, and that whole road is sandy'). Breydenbach also mentions the city of Larissa (el-Arish) near the coast and the 'Golfus de Larissa', north of the described road, which clearly indicates that he used different sources to draw up his map.

It is clear from the other sources that the names Allariff and Zaceha have been switched. The distance of 50 miles or 75 km between Qatia and el-Salhiya approaches the real distance, as does the combined distance of 82 miles or 123 km between el-Za'aqa / el-Arish and Qatia, but the individual figures for the tracks el-Za'aqa - el-Arish and el-Arish - Qatia are unacceptable. Since the distance of 46 miles or 69 km between el-Za'aqa and Qatia in fact approaches the distance between el-Warrada and Qatia, it is not impossible that Breydenbach's source also mentioned the station el-Warrada, which has been dropped.

In 1565 AD Johann Helffrich knows the stations Cannunis (Khan Yunus), Sacca (el-Za'aqa), Arisch (el-Arish), Nachile (Nakhla), Hemelesin (Umm el-Hasan),

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<sup>200</sup> *Tvoyage van Mher Joos van Ghistele* (Gaspar, 1998, p. 168-171); cf. Demaeckere, 1936, p. 77-79, who sometimes incorrectly abbreviates the passage.

<sup>201</sup> Breydenbach (Röhricht, 1901, pl. 3); some readings are based upon the text in Röhricht, 1898, p. 120, n. 5 and Hartmann, 1910, p. 688, n. 1; some of these differences are due to different editions of Breydenbach published in the 15th-16th centuries AD (cf. Davies, 1911, pl. 28 and 29, with two different extracts from the map); cf. Davies, 1911; Munier, 1929, p. 199, no. 2339; Fontaine, 1955, p. 60; Schneider, 1992.

<sup>202</sup> Since Arab and Christian authors use different miles (about 2 km or about 1,5 km respectively), it is not always clear whether a Christian text just copied a local Arab source or in fact 'recalculated' the miles. As a rule, though, I reckon 1,5 km to a mile in every Christian author.

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Bierlehali (Bir el-Abd?), Catie (Qatia), Bierdodare (Bir el-Duwaidar) and Salachia (el-Salhiya) on the road from Gaza to Cairo<sup>203</sup>.

Francesco Quaresmi travelled ca. 1616-1626 AD from Gaza to Cairo via Cunianus (Khan Yunus) (20 miles, ca. 30 km), Puteus deserti (25 miles, ca. 37,5 km), Aris (el-Arish) (50 miles, ca. 75 km), a nameless well (Umm el-Hasan?) (90 miles, ca. 135 km), another nameless well (Bir el-Abd?) (30 miles, ca. 45 km), Cathia (Qatia) (25 miles, ca. 37,5 km), a third nameless well (Bir el-Duwaidar?) (30 miles, ca. 45 km) and Salai (el-Salhiya) (50 miles, ca. 75 km)<sup>204</sup>. All the distances are definitely too high.

About 1655 AD Hadji Khalifa knows the stations Gaza, Khan Yunus, el-Za'aqa, el-Arish, Umm el-Hasan, Bir el-Abd, Qatia, Bir el-Duwaidar and el-Salhiya on the road from Gaza to Cairo<sup>205</sup>.

In 1661 AD Ferdinand von Troilo went from Gaza to Hanna (Khan Yunus) (8 hours), Zacca (el-Za'aqa) (8 hours), Aziz (el-Arish) (12 hours), Beresanni (Qabr el-Sa'i?) (6 hours), Melhesan (Umm el-Hasan) (6 hours), Pozzo Abde (Bir el-Abd) (8,5 hours), Calhia (Qatia) (9 hours), Pozzo Devedar (Bir el-Duwaidar) (15 hours through the desert) and Salathia (10 hours)<sup>206</sup>.

el-Khiyari, who wrote before 1671 AD, lists the stations Khan Yunus, el-Arish, Bir el-Abd, Qatia, Bir el-Duwaidar, el-Karreïn and el-Salhiya on the road from Gaza to Cairo<sup>207</sup>. The station el-Karreïn, which lies in the Delta, is incorrectly inserted in this part of the list.

About 1697 AD el-Nabulusi travelled from Khan Yunus to el-Za'aqa (where he noticed the tomb of Sheikh Zuweid), el-Arish, Bir el-Masa'id, Qabr el-Sa'i, Mahall el-Baraqa, Umm el-Hasan, Ru'us el-Adrab, Bir el-Abd, Qatia, through the sandy Raml el-Ghurabi further to Bir el-Duwaidar, el-Lawawin and el-Salhiya<sup>208</sup>.

By the end of the 15th century Rafah no longer existed as a road station, while its functions were apparently taken over by Khan Yunus, which was founded about 1389 AD. Of the places known in the itineraries of the previous centuries only el-

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<sup>203</sup> Johann Helffrich (mentioned in Hartmann, 1910, p. 697).

<sup>204</sup> Francesco Quaresmi (De Sandoli, 1989, p. 432).

<sup>205</sup> Hadji Khalifa (mentioned in Hartmann, 1910, p. 698).

<sup>206</sup> Troilo (mentioned in Hartmann, 1910, p. 699).

<sup>207</sup> el-Khiyari (mentioned in Hartmann, 1910, p. 701).

<sup>208</sup> el-Nabulusi (mentioned in Hartmann, 1910, p. 701); cf. von Kremer, 1850b, p. 824; Flügel, 1862, p. 672.



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Za'aqa, el-Arish, Qatia and el-Salhiya continued to exist. el-Kharruba, el-Sawada, el-Aqula and Habwa are no longer attested after the end of the 15th century AD, while new stations come into being such as Umm el-Hasan, Bir el-Abd and Bir el-Duwaidar, which gained some importance, but also smaller ones such as Nakhla, Bir el-Masa'id, Qabr el-Sa'i, Mahall el-Baraqa, Ru'us el-Adrab and el-Lawawin.

**Synoptic table of the itineraries of the 15th-17th centuries AD**

[M = Roman mile, ca. 1,5 km]

| Meshullam<br>(1481)<br>[Hebrew] | van Ghistele<br>(1482)<br>[Dutch] | Breydenbach<br>(1483-1486)<br>[Latin] | Helfrich<br>(1565)<br>[German] | Quaresmi<br>(ca. 1616-1626)<br>[Latin] |
|---------------------------------|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------------|--------------------------------|--|
| (Khan Yunus)                    | Caen Jovene                       | (1) Lughany<br>? (20 M - 30 km)       | Cannunis                       | Cunianus<br>(25 M - 37,5 km)           |
| 'Aziqa / 'Azan                  | Geraba                            | (3) Zaceha<br>? (36 M - 54 km)        | Sacca                          | ? Puteus deserti<br>(50 M - 75 km)     |
| (el-Arish)                      | Larijs                            | (2) Allariff<br>? (46 M - 69 km)      | Arisch<br>Nachile              | Aris<br>(90 M - 135 km)                |
| Mulhasin<br>Arar<br>? Savedi    | Hemelessijn                       |                                       | Hemelesin                      | ? nameless<br>(30 M - 45 km)           |
| Ba'er Da'ved                    | Bierlehalt                        |                                       | Bierlehali                     | ? nameless<br>(25 M - 37,5 km)         |
| (Qatia)                         | Cattia                            | (4) Cattia<br>(50 M - 75 km)          | Catie                          | Cathia<br>(30 M - 45 km)               |
| Bireru Diveidar                 | Bierdodare                        |                                       | Bierdodare                     | ? nameless<br>(50 M - 75 km)           |
| (el-Salhiya)                    | Acole<br>Haouwe<br>Salahija       | (5) Salachia                          | Salachia                       | Salai                                  |
|                                 |                                   | Tot.: 152 M - 228 km                  |                                | Tot.: 300 M - 450 km                   |

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| Hadji Khalifa (1655) | Troilo (1661) [German]   | el-Khiyari (before 1671) | el-Nabulusi (ca. 1697)    | Reconstruction                 |
|----------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Khan Yunus           | Hanna (8 hours)          | Khan Yunus               | Khan Yunus                | Khan Yunus                     |
| el-Za'aqa            | Zacca (12 hours)         |                          | el-Za'aqa - Sheikh Zuweid | el-Za'aqa (16 km)              |
| el-Arish             | Aziz (6 hours)           | el-Arish                 | el-Arish                  | el-Kharruba (16km)<br>el-Arish |
|                      | Beresanni (6 hours)      |                          | Bir el-Masa'id            | Bir el-Masa'id                 |
|                      |                          |                          | Qabr el-Sa'i              | Qabr el-Sa'i                   |
|                      |                          |                          | Mahall el-Baraqaat        | Mahall el-Baraqaat             |
|                      |                          |                          |                           | Nakhla                         |
| Umm el-Hasan         | Melhesan (8,5 hours)     |                          | Umm el-Hasan              | Umm el-Hasan                   |
|                      |                          |                          |                           | Arar                           |
|                      |                          |                          | Ru'us el-Adrab            | Ru'us el-Adrab                 |
|                      |                          |                          |                           | ? el-Sawada                    |
| Bir el-Abd           | Pozzo Abde (9 hours)     | Bir el-Abd               | Bir el-Abd                | Bir el-Abd                     |
| Qatia                | Calhia (15 hours)        | Qatia                    | Qatia                     | Qatia                          |
|                      |                          |                          | Raml el-Ghurabi           | Raml el-Ghurabi                |
| Bir el-Duwaidar      | Pozzo Devedar (10 hours) | Bir el-Duwaidar          | Bir el-Duwaidar           | Bir el-Duwaidar                |
|                      |                          |                          |                           | el-Aqula                       |
|                      |                          |                          |                           | Habwa                          |
|                      |                          |                          | el-Lawawin                | el-Lawawin                     |
| el-Salhiya           | Salathia                 | el-Salhiya               | el-Salhiya                | el-Salhiya                     |
|                      | Tot.: 8 days             |                          |                           |                                |

## DESCRIPTIONS OF THE NORTHERN SINAI COASTLINE IN THE 10TH-16TH CENTURIES AD

Alongside itineraries by land portulani and other descriptions of the coast of the northern Sinai provide some information about the region, which is, however, hard to interpret.

Shortly after 929 AD Qudama mentions Gaza as a harbour of the sea of Palestine, and Rafah, el-Farama and el-Arish as harbours of the sea of Egypt<sup>209</sup>.

In 1171 AD also el-Warrada apparently had its own harbour, but from the 13th century AD on the place had lost most of its importance<sup>210</sup>.

The portulanus of Pietro Visconti (1318 AD) is preserved in Venezia in the fund Correr, after which it is usually named. It mentions Gazara (Gaza), Dromo (Darum), Berto (sc. Rafah), Gulffo de Risso (Gulf of el-Arish) and Rassacaxera (Ras el-Qasrun)<sup>211</sup>.

Marino Sanudo, quoting about 1321 AD a *Descriptio ripariae marinae Soldano subjectae et priorum nominum de marina, terrarum, portuum ac insularum, succarum et milium, etc.*, gives a rather confusing account. The distances in general are much too high, the points of the compass often inaccurate and the exact order of the different sections is not always clear<sup>212</sup>:

a Gazara vero usque Darum milia sunt XV, per garbinum versus meridiem navigando.

a Daro ad caput Beroardi milia sunt XXX, a capite pelage Rixe per garbinum.

'From Gaza now to Darum it is 15 miles sailing south-south-west.

From Darum to the cape of Beroardum it is 30 miles, from the beginning of the sea of Rixa going south-west.'

Darum is situated 15 miles (ca. 22,5 km) south-south-west of Gaza. From Darum, i.e. (?) the beginning of the sea of Rixa (el-Arish), to Caput Beroardi, it is 30 miles (ca. 45 km), south-west. Caput Beroardi can probably be identified with Rafah<sup>213</sup>. The total distance between Gaza and Rafah is therefore 45 miles (ca. 67,5 km), while one expects only some 32 km. The points of the compass are correct.

<sup>209</sup> Qudama (translated in de Goeje, 1889, p. 195).

<sup>210</sup> el-Qadi el-Fadil (translated in Bouriant, 1900, p. 528); see s.v. el-Warrada.

<sup>211</sup> Portulanus of Correr (mentioned in Rey, 1884, p. 344.346).

<sup>212</sup> Marino Sanudo, 2, 4, 25 (Röhricht, 1898, p. 119-120); cf. Rey, 1884, p. 344-347.

<sup>213</sup> Cf. Rey, 1884, p. 344-345; Abel, 1940, p. 59.

## 1. *Itineraries and descriptions*

a capite Beroardi in fundum gulfi Rixe per syrocum navigando milia sunt XXX.

'From the cape of Beroardum to the end of the gulf of Rixa it is 30 miles sailing south-east.'

From Caput Beroardi till the 'fundus gulfi Rixe', i.e. the 'deepest' point of the Gulf of el-Arish, probably in the neighbourhood of el-Arish itself, it is 30 miles (ca. 45 km), south-east. The distance might be correct. One expects a direction south-west instead of a direction south-east; this odd point of the compass is probably a mere mistake.

ab illo capite a meridie per occidentem versus magistrum milia sunt XXX.

a predicto vero capite ad caput Staxi per garbinum navigando XXX milia computantur. dictum Staxum gulfum est, quod circumvolvitur per spatium XX milium.

'From that cape going west-north-west it is 30 miles.'

From the cape mentioned till the cape of Staxum it is 30 miles, sailing south-west. The Staxum mentioned is a gulf with a circumference of 20 miles.'

The next two tracks are troubling. The first track does not give a destination and the distance of twice 30 miles between el-Arish and Caput Staxi is unacceptable. Possibly the track is doubled with the same distance but with a different point of the compass. Therefore one can possibly reconstruct: From the 'fundus gulfi Rixe' to Caput Staxi, 30 miles (ca. 45 km), west-north-west. The 'Staxum' (or 'Stagnum' in another manuscript and in Cresques) is described as a gulf with a circumference of 20 miles (ca. 30 km) and probably corresponds with lake Bardawil. Caput Staxi is generally identified with Ras Straki<sup>214</sup> - 'Cape (O)straki(ne)', situated in the neighbourhood of the old Ostrakine. It is indeed not unlikely that Caput Staxi lay close to Ras Straki, but 'Staxi' is not a mere mistake for 'Straki'<sup>215</sup>, since the name Staxum was probably derived from 'stagnum' and indicates a lake, while 'Straki' apparently renders the name Ostrakine. The distance of 30 miles is 5 to 10 km too high; the point of the compass is correct.

a capite Staxi ad Rasagasaron versus garbinum per occidentem navigando milia sunt L.

'From the cape of Staxum to Rasagasaron it is 50 miles, sailing west-south-west.'

From the Caput Staxi to Rasagasaron it is 50 miles (ca. 75 km), west-south-west. Rasagasaron is generally identified with Ras el-Qasrun<sup>216</sup>. The distance is 30 to 40 km too high and the point of the compass is in fact still west-north-west and not west-south-west.

a Rasagasaron usque ad Faramiam versus garbinum per occidentem navigando milia sunt XXX.

'From Rasagasaron till Faramia it is 30 miles, sailing west-south-west.'

From Rasagasaron to Faramia (el-Farama) it is 30 miles (ca. 45 km), west-south-west. The distance and the point of the compass are acceptable.

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<sup>214</sup> Cf. Rey, 1884, p. 347; Röhricht, 1898, p. 120, n. 2; Abel, 1940, p. 59-60. See s.v. Ras Straki

<sup>215</sup> Against Fontaine, 1955, p. 74.

<sup>216</sup> Cf. Rey, 1884, p. 347; Röhricht, 1898, p. 120, n. 3; Abel, 1940, p. 60. See s.v. Ras el-Qasrun.

## *1. Itineraries and descriptions*

The Catalan atlas of Abraham Cresques, made in 1375 AD, lists from west to east Tenes (Tennis), Faramia (el-Farama), Ras Al Casero (Ras el-Qasrun), Stagnom (lake Bardawil), Larissa (el-Arish), Golfo de Larissa (Gulf of el-Arish), Berto (sc. Rafah), Darom (Darum) and Gatzara (Gaza), Jerusalem, Eschalon (Askalon), Beroardo (Caput Beroardi, sc. Rafah). For the toponyms east of el-Arish the order does not seem to be strictly geographical, while Berto and Beroardo probably refer to the same place<sup>217</sup>.

A Greek portulanus, written before 1534 AD, describes the Mediterranean coast between Tamiathis and Gaza<sup>218</sup>, but its phrasing is rather obscure. The toponyms mentioned in the relevant section are τὸ Ταμιάθι (Tamiathis), τὰ Πούλια (Poulia?), τὸ Παλαιὸν Τούνεσι (Old Tennis?), τὸ Τούνεσι ([Modern] Tennis?), τὰ Τζερμα (Tzerma?), τὸ Φαραόκαστρον (Pharaokastron, 'the camp of the Pharaoh', possibly linked with (el-)Fara(ma) or with Rasagasaron - Ras el-Qasrun?), ἡ Κάτια (Qatia), τὸ Ρεκάσαρι (Rekasari?) and τὸ Γάζιν (Gaza).

An atlas of the 16th century AD, kept in München, lists Gazara (Gaza), Daron (Darum), P. Berton (sc. Rafah), G. de Larissa (Gulf of el-Arish) and Larissa (el-Arish)<sup>219</sup>.

In general there seem to be only a few significant points on the coast of the northern Sinai, along the Gulf of el-Arish: Rafah, el-Arish, Ras Straki, Ras el-Qasrun, el-Farama - at least if these identifications are to be accepted. In the 10th century AD Rafah, el-Arish and el-Farama seem to be harbours, but it is not clear whether the younger maps still refer to harbours or only to distinguishing marks along the coast.

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<sup>217</sup> Abraham Cresques (Buchon, 1841, p. 110-111); cf. Munier, 1929, p. 196, no. 2316; Fontaine, 1955, p. 58-59.

<sup>218</sup> Greek portulanus (Delatte, 1947, p. 139-141).

<sup>219</sup> Atlas of München (mentioned in Rey, 1884, p. 344.346).

## SYNOPTIC CHRONOLOGICAL TABLES

### Chronological table for the places discussed in this gazetteer

The toponyms are listed according to the corresponding chapters in the gazetteer.

- 1 Predynastic till Second Intermediate period<sup>220</sup>
- 2 New Kingdom (1550-1070 BC)
- 3 Third Intermediate period (1070 - 664 BC)
- 4 Late period (673 / 664 - 323 BC)
- 5 Ptolemaic period (323-30 BC)
- 6 Roman period (30 BC - 284 AD)
- 7 Byzantine period (284-639 AD)
- 8 Arabic period (7th-11th century AD)
- 9 Arabic period (12th-17th century AD)
- 10 Modern period (18th-21 century AD)

### 2. Lake Serbonis and the Kasiotis

| Name             | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
|------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|----|
| Lake Serbonis    |   |   |   | x | x | x |   |   |   |    |
| Sabkhat Bardawil |   |   |   |   |   |   |   | x | x | x  |
| Kasiotis         |   |   |   |   |   | x |   |   |   |    |
| Djifar           |   |   |   |   |   |   |   | x | x |    |

### 3. The area between Raphia and Rinokoloura

| Name                           | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7  | 8 | 9 | 10 |
|--------------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|----|---|---|----|
| Brook of Egypt                 |   |   | x | x |   |   |    |   |   |    |
| Arza                           |   |   | x | x |   |   |    |   |   |    |
| The sealed harbour of Egypt    |   |   | x |   |   |   |    |   |   |    |
| Ienysos                        |   |   |   | x |   |   |    |   |   |    |
| el-Gora                        |   |   |   |   |   |   |    |   |   | x  |
| Twajjel el-Emir                |   |   |   |   |   |   |    |   |   | x  |
| Maqrunat Umm el-Arais          |   |   |   |   |   |   |    |   |   | x  |
| el-Masurah                     |   |   |   |   |   |   |    |   |   | x  |
| Krum el-Bahri /                |   |   |   |   |   | x |    |   |   | x  |
| Krum Matallat el-Sheikh Zuweid |   |   |   |   |   |   |    |   |   |    |
| Tell el-Baqar                  |   |   |   |   |   |   |    |   |   | x  |
| Tell Ouashi                    |   |   |   |   |   |   |    |   |   | x? |
| Krum Eid ibn Abed              |   |   |   |   |   |   |    |   |   | x? |
| Sadot                          |   |   |   |   |   |   | x? |   |   |    |
| Abu Tawilah                    |   |   |   |   |   |   |    |   |   | x  |

<sup>220</sup> A lot of sites from the earlier periods have been identified by the Israeli survey and have been listed with their site number on several maps, but they are not included in this gazetteer; cf. Oren, 1989, p. 391 for the Early Bronze Age / Pre- and Early Dynastic sites; Oren, 1990, p. 6-7 for the Middle Bronze Age I sites (ca. 2250-2150 BC); Oren, 1987, p. 79 for the Late Bronze Age / New Kingdom sites.

1. Itineraries and descriptions

|                                   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |    |    |    |
|-----------------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|----|----|----|
| Rasm el-Zaizeh                    |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |    |    | x? |
| Yamit                             |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |    |    | x  |
| The R-sites southwest of Rafah    | x |   |   |   |   |   |   |    |    |    |
| Tell Abu Shennar                  |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |    |    | x? |
| Tell Roumelat                     |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |    |    | x? |
| Tell el-Aslig                     |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |    |    | x? |
| el-Barmakia                       |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |    | x  |    |
| Tell el-Aheimer                   |   |   |   | x | x | x | x |    |    |    |
| R54                               |   |   | x |   |   |   |   |    |    |    |
| el-Seyaah                         |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |    |    | x? |
| Tell Emedian                      |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |    |    | x? |
| el-Za'aqa                         |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |    |    | x  |
| Sheikh Zuweid                     | x |   |   |   |   |   |   |    |    | x  |
| P3-s3-nfr                         |   |   |   |   | x |   |   |    |    |    |
| Bytl                              |   |   |   |   | x |   |   |    |    |    |
| Bitylion                          |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |    | x  |    |
| Tell el-Sheikh                    |   |   |   |   |   | x | x |    |    |    |
| Bethaphou                         |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |    | x  |    |
| Boutaphios                        |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |    | x  |    |
| el-Shadjaratain                   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   | x  | x  |    |
| Khasaha                           |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |    |    | x? |
| Tell Temilat (Tell Abu Selima)    |   | x | x | x | x | x |   |    |    |    |
| Tell el-Eqneiyin (Tell Jenein)    |   |   |   |   | x | x | x | x? |    |    |
| Tell Abu Ghanem                   |   |   |   |   |   | x |   |    |    |    |
| Minet el-Ahsein                   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |    |    | x? |
| Tell Mahiza'                      |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |    |    | x? |
| Tell el-Sitt                      |   |   |   | x | x |   |   |    |    |    |
| Sabkhat el-Sheikh                 |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |    |    | x  |
| Dikla                             |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |    |    | x  |
| Tell el-Qabr / Bir Gabr Amir      |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |    |    | x? |
| Tell Eziaza                       |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |    |    | x? |
| A335 / A346                       |   |   |   |   |   |   |   | x  | x  |    |
| el-Ushsh                          |   |   |   |   |   |   |   | x  |    |    |
| el-Kharruba                       |   |   |   |   |   |   |   | x  | x  |    |
| (Khirbet Umm) el-Kharruba /       |   |   |   |   |   |   |   | x  | x? |    |
| Khirbet el-Burdj                  |   | x |   |   |   |   |   |    |    |    |
| Haruvit                           |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |    |    | x  |
| The A-sites northeast of el-Arish | x |   |   |   |   |   |   |    |    |    |
| Abi Ishaq                         |   |   |   |   |   |   |   | x  |    |    |
| Lahaemmet                         |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |    |    | x  |
| el-Risah                          |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |    |    | x  |
| Sibil Ain                         |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |    |    | x  |
| el-Barra                          |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |    |    | x  |
| Khirbet el-Fath                   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |    |    | x  |

4. Rinokoloura

| Name | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
|------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|----|
|------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|----|

1. *Itineraries and descriptions*

|             |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |  |  |
|-------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|--|--|
| Rinokoloura | x | x | x | x |   |   |   |   |  |  |
| el-Arish    |   | x | x | x | x | x | x | x |  |  |
| Phakidia    |   |   |   |   |   | x |   |   |  |  |
| Laura       |   |   |   |   | x |   |   |   |  |  |
| Ariza       |   |   |   |   |   |   | x |   |  |  |

**5. Ostrakine**

| Name                                       | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|----|
| Ostrakine                                  |   |   |   |   |   | x | x |   |   |    |
| el-Felusiyat                               |   |   |   |   |   | x | x |   |   |    |
| el-Adad                                    |   |   |   |   |   |   |   | x |   |    |
| el-Warrada                                 |   |   |   |   |   |   |   | x | x |    |
| el-Makhlasa                                |   |   |   |   |   |   |   | x |   |    |
| Barasa el-M'kheizin / Barasa Aicha         |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   | x  |
| el-Khuinat                                 |   |   |   |   |   | x | x | x | x |    |
| el-Ratama                                  |   |   |   |   |   | x |   |   |   |    |
| Umm el-Shuqafa                             |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   | x? |
| el-Zaraniq                                 |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   | x  |
| Khirba (I)                                 |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   | x? |
| Ras Straki                                 |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   | x  |
| Ras el-Abid                                |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   | x  |
| Cape Mahatib                               |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   | x  |
| Djeziret el-Ghattafa / Djeziret el-Gleikha |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   | x  |
| Likleykha                                  |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   | x  |
| el-Mataria                                 |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   | x  |

**6. Kasion**

| Name                     | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8  | 9 | 10 |
|--------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|----|---|----|
| Kasion                   |   |   |   | x | x | x | x |    |   |    |
| el-Qass                  |   |   |   |   |   |   |   | x  |   |    |
| el-Qasr / Deir el-Nasara |   |   |   |   |   |   |   | x  |   |    |
| el-Qels                  |   |   |   | x | x | x | x | x? |   |    |
| Ras el-Qasrun            |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |    | x | x  |
| Ras el-Burun             |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |    |   | x  |
| el-Tha'ama               |   |   |   |   |   |   |   | x  |   |    |
| Haparsa                  |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |    |   | x  |
| Mat Iblis                |   |   |   | x |   |   |   |    |   |    |
| el-Zugbah                |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |    |   | x  |

**7. The coastal area between Kasion and Pelousion**

| Name                 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
|----------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|----|
| Pentaschoinon        |   |   |   |   |   |   | x |   |   |    |
| el-Uqsor (?)         |   |   |   | x |   |   |   |   |   |    |
| Aphnaion             |   |   |   |   |   |   | x |   |   |    |
| Aphthaia / Aphthites |   |   |   | x |   |   |   |   |   |    |
| Gerra                |   |   |   |   | x | x | x |   |   |    |
| Mahammediya          |   |   |   |   | x | x | x | x | x |    |



1. *Itineraries and descriptions*

|                                      |   |  |  |  |   |   |  |   |  |    |
|--------------------------------------|---|--|--|--|---|---|--|---|--|----|
| Anb Diab / el-Qels (II)              |   |  |  |  |   |   |  |   |  | X  |
| Skenai (ektos Gerrous)               |   |  |  |  |   | X |  |   |  |    |
| Chabriou Charax                      | X |  |  |  | X |   |  |   |  |    |
| Castra Alexandri                     | X |  |  |  | X |   |  |   |  |    |
| el-Udhaib / Umm el-Arab              |   |  |  |  |   |   |  | X |  |    |
| Tell el-Rabia                        |   |  |  |  |   |   |  |   |  | X  |
| el-Kenisa / el-Mallaha / Khirba (II) |   |  |  |  |   |   |  |   |  | X? |
| Menqa Etman                          |   |  |  |  |   |   |  |   |  | X  |
| Djebel Uabra                         |   |  |  |  |   | X |  |   |  |    |
| Abu Galada                           |   |  |  |  |   | X |  |   |  |    |

8. **The inland road south of Sabkhat Bardawil**

*The area west of el-Arish*

| Name                               | 1 | 2 | 3  | 4  | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
|------------------------------------|---|---|----|----|---|---|---|---|---|----|
| The A-sites west of el-Arish       | x | x | x? |    |   |   |   |   |   |    |
| Bir el-Masa'id                     |   |   |    |    |   |   |   |   | x | x  |
| el-Deheisha                        |   |   |    |    |   |   |   |   |   | x  |
| Sebil                              |   |   |    |    |   |   |   |   |   | x  |
| el-Dakar                           |   |   |    |    |   |   |   |   |   | x  |
| Zari'                              |   |   |    |    |   |   |   |   |   | x  |
| Bir el-Qadi                        |   |   |    |    |   |   |   |   | x |    |
| Abu Hawidat                        |   |   |    |    |   |   |   |   |   | x  |
| Themajel Djaber                    |   |   |    |    |   |   |   |   |   | x  |
| Abu Mazruh                         |   |   |    |    |   | x |   |   |   |    |
| el-Meidan                          | x |   | x? | x? |   |   |   |   |   | x  |
| Umm el-Ushush                      |   |   |    |    |   |   |   |   |   | x  |
| Qabr el-Sa'i                       |   |   |    |    |   |   |   |   | x |    |
| Bousser                            |   |   |    |    |   |   |   | x |   |    |
| Hadjar Bardawil (Sabkhat Bardawil) |   |   |    |    |   |   |   |   | x |    |
| Bir el-Generat                     |   |   |    |    |   |   |   |   |   | x  |
| Sabikah                            |   |   |    |    |   |   |   |   |   | x  |
| Mahall el-Baraqat                  |   |   |    |    |   |   |   |   | x |    |

*The area west of el-Felusiyat*

| Name             | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
|------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|----|
| Nakhla           |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   | x |    |
| Aitwegenai       |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   | x  |
| Bir el-Zubatiyya |   |   |   |   |   |   |   | x | x |    |
| Bir el-Mazar     | x | x |   | x |   | x | x |   |   | x  |
| Bir Matta        |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   | x  |
| Bir Kasiba (I)   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   | x  |
| el-Rodah         |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   | x  |
| Garif el-Gizlan  |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   | x  |
| Umm el-Hasan     |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   | x |    |
| el-Sawada        |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   | x |    |
| Abu Tilul        |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   | x  |
| el-Amrawiyyah    |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   | x  |

1. *Itineraries and descriptions*

|                              |  |   |   |   |    |    |   |   |   |    |
|------------------------------|--|---|---|---|----|----|---|---|---|----|
| Lake Huash / Umm el-Girdan / |  |   |   |   |    |    |   |   |   | X  |
| Tabam Umm el-Girdan          |  |   |   |   |    |    |   |   |   |    |
| Lebrash                      |  |   |   |   |    |    |   |   |   | X  |
| Sheradel                     |  |   |   |   |    |    |   |   |   | X  |
| Luliya                       |  |   |   |   |    |    |   |   |   | X  |
| Dawanir                      |  |   |   |   |    |    |   |   |   | X  |
| Umm                          |  |   |   |   |    |    |   |   |   | X  |
| Misfaq                       |  | X | X |   |    |    |   | X |   | X  |
| Nahal Yam                    |  |   |   |   |    |    |   |   |   | X  |
| Madba'a                      |  |   |   |   |    |    |   |   |   | X  |
| Arar                         |  |   |   |   |    |    |   |   | X |    |
| Ru'us el-Adrab               |  |   |   |   |    |    |   |   | X |    |
| el-Breidj                    |  |   |   |   |    | X  |   |   |   | X? |
| Bir Salamana                 |  | X | X |   | X? |    |   |   |   |    |
| el-Mutaileb                  |  |   |   |   |    |    |   |   | X |    |
| el-Baqqara                   |  |   |   |   |    |    | X |   |   |    |
| el-Sadat                     |  |   |   |   |    |    |   |   |   | X  |
| Bir el-Ganadil               |  |   |   |   |    |    |   |   |   | X  |
| Sabkhat el-Derwish           |  |   |   |   |    |    |   |   |   | X  |
| Mabrukah                     |  |   |   |   |    |    |   |   |   | X  |
| Bir el-Abd                   |  | X | X | X |    | X? |   |   | X | X  |

*The area west of Bir el-Abd*

| <b>Name</b>             | <b>1</b> | <b>2</b> | <b>3</b> | <b>4</b> | <b>5</b> | <b>6</b> | <b>7</b> | <b>8</b> | <b>9</b> | <b>10</b> |
|-------------------------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|-----------|
| Djebel Rua              |          |          |          |          |          |          |          |          |          | X         |
| Djebel Akhsum           |          |          |          |          |          |          |          |          |          | X         |
| Nadjah                  |          |          |          |          |          |          |          |          |          | X         |
| Abu Sa'dan              |          |          |          |          |          |          |          |          |          | X         |
| Khirba (III)            |          |          |          |          |          |          |          |          |          | X         |
| Bir el-Afein            |          |          |          |          |          |          |          |          |          | X         |
| Subaikhat Nakhlata Ma'n |          |          |          |          |          |          |          |          | X        |           |
| Hod el-Nahr             |          |          |          |          |          |          |          |          |          | X         |
| el-Nasr                 |          |          |          |          |          |          |          |          |          | X         |
| el-Rumiya               |          |          |          |          |          |          |          |          |          | X?        |
| el-Kifah                |          |          |          |          |          |          |          |          |          | X         |
| Anfushiya               |          |          |          |          |          | X        |          |          |          | X         |
| el-Faydah               |          |          |          |          |          |          |          |          |          | X         |
| Bewasmir                |          |          |          |          |          |          |          |          |          | X         |
| Nadjila                 |          |          | X        |          |          |          |          |          |          | X         |
| el-Ta'awun              |          |          |          |          |          |          |          |          |          | X         |
| el-Salam                |          |          |          |          |          |          |          |          |          | X         |
| Amm Ugbah               |          |          |          |          |          |          |          |          |          | X         |
| Rab'ah                  |          |          |          |          |          |          |          |          |          | X         |
| Djbarah                 |          |          |          |          |          |          |          |          |          | X         |
| Oghratina el-Seriri     |          |          |          |          |          |          |          |          |          | X         |
| Qatia                   |          |          |          |          |          | X?       |          | X        | X        | X         |
| Oqtahia                 |          |          |          |          |          | X        |          |          |          | X         |

1. Itineraries and descriptions

*The area of Qasr Ghet southeast of Qatia*

| Name          | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
|---------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|----|
| Qasr Ghet     |   |   |   |   | x | x | x |   |   |    |
| Awiti         |   |   |   |   | x |   |   |   |   |    |
| Autaioi       |   |   |   |   |   | x |   |   |   |    |
| el-Dheish     |   |   |   |   |   | x |   |   |   | x  |
| el-Farsh      |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   | x  |
| el-Hasua      |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   | x  |
| el-Sadjia     |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   | x  |
| el-M'zahamiya |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   | x  |
| el-Mahari     |   |   |   |   |   | x |   |   |   | x  |

*The area northwest of Qatia*

| Name             | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6  | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
|------------------|---|---|---|---|---|----|---|---|---|----|
| Khirbet el-Mard  |   |   |   |   |   |    |   |   |   | x? |
| el-Ghabai        |   |   |   |   |   |    |   |   |   | x? |
| Djebel Abu Darem |   |   |   |   |   |    |   |   |   | x  |
| Djebel Aenni     |   |   |   |   |   | x? |   |   |   |    |
| el-Karamah       |   |   |   |   |   |    |   |   |   | x  |
| Bir Abu Hamra    |   |   |   |   |   |    |   |   |   | x  |
| Hod el-Sufia     |   |   |   |   |   |    |   |   |   | x  |
| Rumani           |   | x |   | x | x | x  | x |   |   | x  |
| Bir Etmalir      |   |   |   |   |   |    |   |   |   | x  |
| el-Shoada        |   |   |   |   | x |    |   |   |   | x  |
| Bir el-Arais     |   |   |   |   |   |    |   |   |   | x  |
| Djebel Abu Ganid |   |   |   |   |   |    |   |   |   | x  |
| Bir Abu Diyuk    |   |   |   |   |   |    |   |   |   | x  |
| T267             |   |   |   |   |   |    |   | x |   |    |
| el-Bahria        |   |   |   |   |   |    |   |   |   | x  |
| Tell Abu Bassal  |   |   |   |   |   | x? |   |   |   |    |

*The area southwest of Qatia*

| Name           | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
|----------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|----|
| Bir Nagid      |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   | x  |
| Bir Abu Raml   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   | x  |
| Tell el-Dab'a' |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   | x? |
| Bir el-Dahaba  |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   | x  |
| Bir el-Nuss    |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   | x  |
| Djebel Chalra  |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   | x  |
| el-Kheit Nagar |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   | x  |
| el-Rehemi      |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   | x  |
| el-Morzugat    |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   | x  |
| el-Machar      |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   | x  |
| Djebel Marguni |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   | x  |
| el-Beda        |   | x |   |   |   |   |   |   |   | x  |
| el-Lagia       |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   | x  |
| el-Khasana     |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   | x  |

1. *Itineraries and descriptions*

|                 |    |  |  |  |  |    |  |  |   |    |
|-----------------|----|--|--|--|--|----|--|--|---|----|
| el-Uash         |    |  |  |  |  |    |  |  |   | X  |
| el-Shohat       |    |  |  |  |  |    |  |  |   | X  |
| Kheit Sala      |    |  |  |  |  |    |  |  |   | X  |
| Djebel Lissan   |    |  |  |  |  | x? |  |  |   | X  |
| el-Djesuha      |    |  |  |  |  |    |  |  |   | X  |
| Tell el-Naga    | x? |  |  |  |  |    |  |  |   |    |
| Tell el-Nisseya | x? |  |  |  |  |    |  |  |   | x? |
| Abu Zedl        | x? |  |  |  |  |    |  |  |   | x? |
| Abu Ghendi      | x? |  |  |  |  |    |  |  |   |    |
| Umm Negm        | x? |  |  |  |  |    |  |  |   |    |
| el-Ghurabi      |    |  |  |  |  | x  |  |  | x | x  |
| Bir Kasiba (II) |    |  |  |  |  |    |  |  |   | x? |
| Bir el-Goga     |    |  |  |  |  |    |  |  |   | x  |
| Bir el-Duwaidar |    |  |  |  |  |    |  |  | x | x  |
| Bir el-Djilbana |    |  |  |  |  |    |  |  |   | x  |
| el-Aqula        |    |  |  |  |  |    |  |  | x |    |

*Sites in the area west of Qatia without a specific location*

| Name           | 1  | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
|----------------|----|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|----|
| Umm el-Ghazlan |    |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   | x? |
| Abu Shamla     |    |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   | x? |
| Kathib Uaset   |    |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   | x? |
| Abu el-Ghazlan |    |   |   |   |   | x | x |   |   | x? |
| Umm el-Hera    |    |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   | x? |
| Abu Rati       |    |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   | x? |
| Kathib el-Aura | x? |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   | x? |
| Go el-Ahmar    |    |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   | x? |
| Ganub Za'u     | x? |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   | x? |
| Djebel el-Ekhz |    |   |   |   |   |   | x |   |   |    |
| Mardeit        |    |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   | x? |
| el-Cana        |    |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   | x? |

**9. The northwestern Sinai**

| Name              | 1 | 2   | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7  | 8  | 9 | 10 |
|-------------------|---|-----|---|---|---|---|----|----|---|----|
| Migdol / Magdolos |   |     |   | x |   |   | x  |    |   |    |
| Tell Kedwa (T21)  |   |     | x | x | x |   |    |    |   |    |
| Tell el-Heir      |   |     |   | x | x | x | x  | x  |   |    |
| Tcharou           | x | x   |   | x | x | x |    |    |   |    |
| Sele              |   |     |   |   |   |   | x  |    |   |    |
| Habwa I-V         | x | x   |   | x |   |   |    | x? |   |    |
| Tell Abu Seifa    |   | (x) |   | x | x | x | x? |    |   |    |
| Tell el-Ahmar (I) |   |     |   |   |   |   |    |    |   | x  |
| T4                |   | x   |   | x |   |   |    |    |   |    |
| Tell Ebeda (T116) |   | x   |   |   |   |   |    |    |   |    |
| Tell el-Ghaba     |   | x   | x | x |   |   |    |    |   | x? |
| Tell el-Mufariq   |   |     |   |   | x |   |    |    |   |    |
| Bir Hedeua        |   |     |   |   |   |   |    |    |   | x  |
| Djebel el-Adam    |   |     |   |   |   |   |    |    |   | x  |

1. *Itineraries and descriptions*

|                      |   |  |  |  |  |    |  |   |   |   |
|----------------------|---|--|--|--|--|----|--|---|---|---|
| T78                  | x |  |  |  |  |    |  |   |   |   |
| Habwa and Tell Habwa |   |  |  |  |  | x? |  | x | x |   |
| Tell el-Ahmar (III)  |   |  |  |  |  |    |  |   |   | x |
| Tell el-Semut        |   |  |  |  |  |    |  |   |   | x |
| Bir el-Burdj         |   |  |  |  |  | x? |  |   |   | x |
| Tell el-Burdj        | x |  |  |  |  |    |  |   |   |   |
| el-Qusair            |   |  |  |  |  |    |  |   | x |   |
| el-Lawawin           |   |  |  |  |  |    |  |   | x |   |
| el-Qantara           |   |  |  |  |  |    |  |   |   | x |
| Hittin / Hatein      |   |  |  |  |  |    |  |   | x |   |
| Bir Abu Helefy       |   |  |  |  |  |    |  |   |   | x |
| Bir Chenan           |   |  |  |  |  |    |  |   |   | x |
| Bir Abu Reida        |   |  |  |  |  |    |  |   |   | x |
| Ras el-Moyeh         |   |  |  |  |  |    |  |   |   | x |
| Bir Abu el-Uruq      |   |  |  |  |  |    |  |   | x | x |
| Bir el-Hoda          |   |  |  |  |  |    |  |   |   | x |

**10. Pelousion and the Pelousiac plain**

| Name                             | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6  | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
|----------------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|----|---|---|---|----|
| Sha-amile                        |   |   |   | x |   |    |   |   |   |    |
| Si'nu / Sa'nu                    |   |   |   | x |   |    |   |   |   |    |
| Sin                              |   |   |   | x |   |    |   |   |   |    |
| Senou (Snw) / Sounou (Swnw)      | x | x | x | x | x | x  |   |   |   |    |
| Senos                            |   |   |   | x |   |    |   |   |   |    |
| Stratopeda                       |   |   |   | x |   |    |   |   |   |    |
| Ptolemais in Pelousion           |   |   |   |   | x |    |   |   |   |    |
| Lychnos                          |   |   |   |   |   |    | x |   |   |    |
| Thylax                           |   |   |   |   |   |    | x |   |   |    |
| The alleged eastern border canal |   |   |   |   |   |    |   |   |   | x  |
| Tell el-Musallem                 |   |   |   |   |   | x? |   |   |   |    |
| Tell Abiad                       |   |   |   |   |   |    |   |   |   | x? |
| Tell el-Luli                     |   |   |   |   |   | x  | x |   |   |    |
| Tell Zemurt                      |   |   |   |   |   | x? |   |   |   |    |
| Tell of the skull (?)            |   |   |   |   |   |    |   |   |   | x? |
| Tell el-Fadda (west)             |   |   |   |   |   |    | x |   |   |    |
| Tell el-Gharza                   |   |   |   |   | x | x  |   |   |   |    |

**Chronological distribution of the sites in the northern Sinai dated to the Late and Graeco-Roman periods**

A toponym is only listed in the earliest period for which it is attested. If it is possible to identify an ancient toponym, it is grouped together with its Arab or present-day counterpart. The indication (§1-10) refers to the corresponding chapters in the gazetteer.

*Late period*

|   |  |
|---|--|
| Tell Temilat (Tell Abu Selima) (§3)             | New Kingdom till early Roman period                |
| Migdol / Magdolos (Assyrian) (§9)               | 7th century BC                                     |
| location unknown                                |  |
| Migdol / Magdolos (Saite) (§9)                  | 7th-6th centuries BC                               |
| Tell Kedwa (T21)                                | 7th-6th centuries BC                               |
| Tell el-Ghaba (§9)                              | 7th-6th centuries BC                               |
| Lake Serbonis (§2)                              | (6th-)5th century BC - 2nd century AD              |
| Sabkhat Bardawil                                | 12th-21st centuries AD                             |
| Ienysos (§3)                                    | 6th-5th centuries BC                               |
| location unknown                                |  |
| Kasion (§6)                                     | 5th century BC - 7th century AD                    |
| Kasiotis (§2)                                   | 2nd century AD                                     |
| el-Qels   | 6th century BC - 7th century AD                    |
| el-Qass   | 10th century AD - before the 13th century AD       |
| Mat Iblis (§6)                                  | 6th-5th (?) centuries BC                           |
| el-Meidan (§8)                                  | 6th-5th (?) centuries BC                           |
| Bir Salamana (neighbourhood) (§8)               | 6th-5th or 3rd-1st centuries BC                    |
| Bir el-Abd (§8)                                 | 6th century BC                                     |
| Migdol / Magdolos (Persian till Byzantine) (§9) | 6th century BC - 4th century AD                    |
| Tell el-Heir                                    | 5th (?) century BC - 7th century AD                |
| Tcharou / Sele (§9)                             | 4th century BC - 5th century AD                    |
| Tell Abu Seifa                                  | 6th (?) century BC - after the 4th cent. AD        |
| T4 (§9)   | 6th century BC                                     |
| Habwa I (later) (§9)                            | 6th-5th centuries BC; Graeco-Roman period          |
| R54 (§3)  | 5th-4th centuries BC                               |
| el-Uqsor (§7)                                   | 5th-4th centuries BC                               |
| Bir el-Mazar (§8)                               | 5th-4th centuries BC; 1st-2nd and 4th centuries AD |
| Rumani (§8)                                     | 5th-4th centuries BC; Graeco-Roman period          |
| Tell Kedwa (neighbourhood) (§9)                 | 5th-4th and 4th-3rd centuries BC                   |
| Barathra (§1)                                   | 4th-1st centuries BC                               |
| Rinokoloura (§4)                                | 4th century BC - 7th century AD                    |
| site near el-Arish                              | 2nd century BC - 8th (?) century AD                |

*1. Itineraries and descriptions*

|                       |                                 |
|-----------------------|---------------------------------|
| el-Arish              | 9th-20th centuries AD           |
| Chabriou Charax (§7)  | 4th century BC - 1st century AD |
| location unknown      |                                 |
| Castra Alexandri (§7) | 4th century BC - 2nd century AD |
| location unknown      |                                 |
| Habwa II (later) (§9) | 4th century BC                  |

*Ptolemaic period*

|                                     |   |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| Ekregma (§1)                        | 4th century BC - 2nd century AD                                   |
| P3-s3-nfr (§3)                      | 3rd century BC  |
| location unknown                    |   |
| Bytl (§3)                           | 3rd century BC  |
| (cf. Bitylion and Tell el-Sheikh?)  |   |
| Gerra (§7)                          | 3rd century BC - 7th century AD                                   |
| Mahammediya                         | late 1st century BC - 6th century AD                              |
| el-Shoada (§8)                      | 3rd (?) century BC  |
| Tell el-Mufariq (§9)                | 3rd-1st centuries BC  |
| Ptolemais in Pelousion (§10)        | 2nd century BC  |
| location unknown                    |   |
| Qasr Ghet (§8)                      | 2nd century BC - 3rd century AD (Nabataean)<br>and 4th century AD |
| Awiti (§8)                          | 1st century BC  |
| Tell el-Aheimer (§3)                | Graeco-Roman period   |
| Tell el-Eqneiyin (Tell Jenein) (§3) | Graeco-Roman period   |
| Tell el-Sitt (§3)                   | Graeco-Roman period   |
| Tell el-Gharza (§10)                | Graeco-Roman period   |

*Roman period*

|                                |                                     |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Ostrakine (§5)                 | 1st century BC - 7th century AD     |
| el-Felusiyat                   | 1st-7th centuries AD                |
| el-Khuinat                     | Roman and / or Byzantine period     |
| Autaioi (§8)                   | 1st century AD                      |
| Sadot (§3)                     | Roman period (?) (Nabataean)        |
| (Khirbet Umm) el-Kharruba (§3) | Roman period (?) (Nabataean)        |
| Krum el-Bahri (§3)             | Roman and / or Byzantine period (?) |
| Tell Abu Ghanem (§3)           | Roman and / or Byzantine period (?) |
| Bitylion (§3)                  | 4th-7th century AD                  |
| Tell el-Sheikh                 | Roman and Byzantine periods         |
| el-Ratama (§5)                 | Roman and / or Byzantine period     |
| Djebel Uabra (§7)              | Roman and / or Byzantine period     |
| Abu Galada (§7)                | Roman and / or Byzantine period     |
| Abu Mazruh (§8)                | Roman and / or Byzantine period     |
| el-Breidj (§8)                 | Roman and / or Byzantine period     |
| Anfushiya (§8)                 | Roman and / or Byzantine period     |
| Qatia (§8)                     | Roman and / or Byzantine period (?) |
| Oqtahia (§8)                   | Roman and / or Byzantine period     |
| el-Dheish (§8)                 | Roman and / or Byzantine period     |
| el-Mahari (§8)                 | Roman and / or Byzantine period     |

## *1. Itineraries and descriptions*

|                        |                                     |
|------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Djebel Aenni (§8)      | Roman and / or Byzantine period (?) |
| Tell Abu Bassal (§8)   | Roman and / or Byzantine period (?) |
| Djebel Lissan (§8)     | Roman and / or Byzantine period     |
| el-Ghurabi (§8)        | Roman and / or Byzantine period     |
| Abu el-Ghazlan (§8)    | Roman and / or Byzantine period     |
| Bir el-Burdj (§9)      | Roman and / or Byzantine period (?) |
| Tell el-Musallem (§10) | Roman and / or Byzantine period (?) |
| Tell el-Luli (§10)     | Roman and Byzantine periods         |
| Tell Zemurt (§10)      | Roman and / or Byzantine period (?) |

### *Byzantine period*

|  |                       |
|--|-----------------------|
| Bethaphou / Boutaphios (§3)<br>location unknown                            | 4th century AD        |
| Phakidia (§4)<br>location unknown  | 4th-7th centuries AD  |
| Pentascoion (§7)<br>el-Uqsor (?) (no information for the Byzantine period) | 4th-7th centuries AD  |
| Skenai (§7)<br>location unknown  | 4th-7th centuries AD  |
| Lychnos (§10)<br>location unknown  | 4th century AD        |
| Aphnaion (§7)<br>location unknown  | 5th-7th centuries AD  |
| Thylax (§10)<br>location unknown   | 5th or 6th century AD |
| Tell el-Fadda (west) (§10)   | 6th-7th centuries AD  |
| Djebel el-Ekhz (§8)  | Byzantine period      |
| Tell Habwa (§9)  | Byzantine period (?)  |



## 2. Lake Serbonis, the Kasiotis and the Djifar

### *Summary*

**Lake Serbonis - Sabkhat Bardawil**

**Kasiotis**

**Djifar**

### *Summary*

Lake Serbonis perhaps came into being in the 7th or early 6th century BC when geological events created a strip of land that separated a brackish lake from the Mediterranean. The central part of the lake lay between Rinokoloura and mount Kasion, but there were also extensions in western direction towards Pelousion. Possibly in the 5th or 4th century BC the lake broke through to the sea - via the 'Ekregma' or outlet - and became a marshy area that was called the 'Barathra' or pits and that formed a fearsome obstacle for ignorant travellers. By the end of the 1st century BC the Ekregma had become filled up, and in the 1st century AD lake Serbonis is considered only an insignificant swamp. It apparently kept on shrinking in the next centuries, since it does not occur anymore in the sources before the early 12th century AD, when Arab authors again mention a 'sabkhat' or salty swamp in the area. The lake itself possibly came into being again with an inundation that occurred shortly before 1169 AD. It was eventually named Sabkhat Bardawil after king Balduinus, who had died in that area in 1118 AD.

The area between Palestine and the Egyptian Delta did not receive a specific name in the ancient sources and apparently never became a separate nome or province. Ptolemaios does mention the Kasiotis region, which comprises the towns of Kasion, Ostrakine and Rinokoloura, and the Ekregma of lake Serbonis, but it seems to be a purely geographical indication without administrative value. In Arabic sources from the 9th till the 15th century AD the whole region between Rafah and the Egyptian Delta was called the Djifar.

## LAKE SERBONIS

Modern name: Sabkhat Bardawil

### Topographical situation

Lake Serbonis is mentioned for the first time by Herodotos during the Persian invasion of 525 BC (2). No earlier accounts refer to lakes or marshes in the northern Sinai<sup>221</sup>. The lake was probably formed by geological events that created a strip of land separating the Mediterranean from the lower areas more inland. According to geological studies the strip of land is the result of rather recent tectonic movements and the earliest archaeological finds there date from 5th century BC<sup>222</sup>, so the lake came into being perhaps only in the 7th or early 6th century BC.

For Herodotos (1-2) lake Serbonis is the most eastern point of Egypt along the Mediterranean. It lies next to mount Kasion, which probably formed the actual boundary. No mention is made of any marshes.

The geographer Eratosthenes (8) states that Egypt in ancient times was covered by the sea<sup>223</sup>, as far as the marshes near Pelousion, mount Kasion and lake Serbonis, so that the Mediterranean was connected with the Red Sea. The sea withdrew and the land was left bare, but lake Serbonis remained. Later the lake broke through to the sea - via an 'ekregma' or outlet - and became marshy. The theory about the flooded Egypt cannot be accepted, but maybe the story about lake Serbonis, which gradually lost the character of a lake and became marshy, does contain some truth. One can wonder whether Eratosthenes actually describes the tectonic movements that created the strip of land and the lake, which at that moment became situated above sea-level; in that case an 'outbreak' could actually have taken place somewhere in the 5th or 4th century BC. Since at present the water flows from the Mediterranean into the lake and not vice versa<sup>224</sup>, it is indeed odd that the expression 'ekregma' is used,

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<sup>221</sup> For the marshes at the northeastern border referred to by Iustinus 2, 3, 8-15 (Seel, 1972, p. 19-20) in the course of the Egyptian - Scythian conflict of possibly 622-620 BC, see s.v. Itineraries.

<sup>222</sup> Cf. Neev, 1978, p. 427-429; Oren, 1979b, p. 190; Oren, 1982a, p. 6.18; Bietak, Manfred, s.v. Schilfmeer, in LÄ, V, 1984, col. 631.

<sup>223</sup> Cf. already Herodotos, 2, 5.10-13 for the Mediterranean flooding Lower Egypt till Memphis and lake Moiris, but he does not mention the eastern extension of the water surface and explicitly states that the Mediterranean and the Red Sea did not touch.

<sup>224</sup> Cf. Willelmus Tyrensis, *Chronicon*, 20, 14 (Huygens, 1986, p. 928-929), quoted s.v. Sabkhat Bardawil, and the personal description of Chester, 1880, p. 157. Clédat, 1910a, p. 211-212 and p. 219 (cf. 1923b, p. 159) does not mention in what direction the water flows.

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for instead of a word based on ἐκρήγνυμι, 'break out', one rather expects something on the basis of ἐνρήγνυμι, 'break in'.

This ekregma is often mentioned and in some periods seems to have been the borderline between Egypt and Syria. Again according to Eratosthenes (48) the Ekregma is the northern point of the isthmus between the Red Sea and the Mediterranean. In 313 BC Ptolemaios had a conference with Antigonos Monophthalmos near the so-called Ekregma, which apparently formed the border between their possessions (49). In 55 BC the road from Syria to Egypt passed the Ekregma (23). In the time of Strabon (15) the Ekregma had become filled up, which possibly indicates the end of that part of the lake connected with it. The phrasing in Plinius (22) is not really clear; he probably mixes an older tradition, which considers the Ekregma the border with Syria, with the more recent situation, which makes Ostrakine the new border place, thus incorrectly locating the Ekregma east of Ostrakine. The geographer Ptolemaios (30) rightly places the Ekregma of lake Serbonis at maximum 10 km and maybe only at 3 km east of Kasion and about 31 km west of Ostrakine. In the so-called Invocation of Isis (51), finally, the Ekregma is mentioned immediately after Pelousion and the Kasion, with 'Isis, preserver' added as the name of the goddess; the place is present in this list not because of a certain 'economic' importance, but probably only because it used to be the border place between Egypt and Syria; the mention of 'Arabia' in the next line strengthens this point of view.

The lake Serbonis of Herodotos (1-2) therefore at some point apparently lost some of its water in the Mediterranean and its borders turned into a hazardous marshy area, often mentioned in the classical sources. Diodoros (11), probably quoting Hekataios of Abdera (4), describes the northeastern border of Egypt, which is protected by the branch of the Nile, the desert and the so-called Barathra or 'Pits'. These areas with quicksand are part of lake Serbonis and make it a dangerous place. Since the lake is surrounded by great dunes, a lot of sand is sometimes strewn over the water surface, making it very difficult to distinguish land and water. It is impossible to cross the quicksand on foot or by boat and people trapped in it are irrevocably lost. People who do not know the nature of the place, are easily trapped, but Diodoros really exaggerates when he states that whole armies wandering from the normal road have disappeared. In fact the only losses known are those of the Persians in 342 BC,

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because they were not familiar with the region. No great problems were apparently to be expected for careful travellers.

The region of lake Serbonis is considered dangerous because of its marshes, but Strabon also mentions how about 25-20 BC the whole area around mount Kasion was flooded, possibly due to a seaquake, and for Kees this was a regular phenomenon on that coast<sup>225</sup>. Strabon, though, describes it as a peculiar event and it was apparently not a daily risk people in the region had to reckon with<sup>226</sup>. Also the storm that destroyed the fleet of Demetrios Poliorketes between Gaza and the Kasion in the autumn of 306 BC (55), is often mentioned in this context as an example for the dangers of the northern Sinai. However, this storm took place at sea and the overland army of Antigonos passing by lake Serbonis at the same time was apparently not bothered by it. Storms still come up on the Sinai coast in the spring<sup>227</sup>, but they apparently only afflict the strip of land between the lake and the Mediterranean. So, once in a while indeed a natural disaster seems to occur in the region, but it would probably go too far to add floods and storms to the regular dangers of the northern Sinai.

According to Diodoros (11) (or Hekataios (4)) the lake is surprisingly deep. Nowadays indeed there are some spots where the lake never dries up and which therefore have a certain depth, but most of the lake seems to be shallow water. One can therefore wonder whether Diodoros in fact alludes to the story of Typhon, the Egyptian god Seth, which is said to be hiding deep in lake Serbonis, a story known from Herodotos (2) on. For Kees the presence of this Typhon in the northern Sinai can be explained by the Semitic god Baal-Saphon being worshipped on the Kasion<sup>228</sup>, but as Fauth rightly points out, Baal-Saphon / Zeus Kasios is the mythological opponent of Typhon and they can therefore be hardly identical<sup>229</sup>. In at least one Egyptian text the region in general is also linked with Seth. In the legend of the winged disk,

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<sup>225</sup> Strabon, 1, 3, 17 (C 58) and 16, 2, 26 (C 758); cf. Kees, Hermann, s.v. Σιρβωνίς λίμνη, in RE, III A 1, 1927, col. 287. See s.v. Kasion.

<sup>226</sup> Cf. Neev, 1978, p. 427-429, who links this testimony with the tectonic restlessness in the area in the early Roman period.

<sup>227</sup> Cf. Jarvis, 1938, p. 35.

<sup>228</sup> Kees, Hermann, s.v. Σιρβωνίς λίμνη, in RE, III A 1, 1927, col. 287. See s.v. Kasion.

<sup>229</sup> Fauth, 1990, p. 114-115. For the relation between Typhon, Baal-Saphon and Zeus Kasios, see also Carrez-Maratray, 2001, p. 87-100.

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mentioned on the walls of Edfu<sup>230</sup>, Horos of Behdet fights the followers of Seth in the sea and on the mountains in the marshland of Tcharou at the eastern border of Egypt. It has to be stressed, however, that no allusion is made to Seth actually hiding there in the neighbourhood. In the following episode Horos continues his chase in a sea; this sea is sometimes situated east of the Egyptian border or identified with the Red Sea<sup>231</sup>, but probably stands in general for the sea north of Egypt, and therefore cannot involve the northern Sinai. If Herodotos knew an Egyptian story where Seth himself is hiding in a lake near the eastern border<sup>232</sup>, such an account is not preserved, and there are only Greek sources linking Typhon or Seth with lake Serbonis. Apollonios of Rhodos (5) combines the account of Herodotos with the well-known fight of the Greek mythological monster Typhon against the Olympian gods. Ploutarchos (23) adds the detail that the Egyptians call those marshes the breath of Typhon. The *Etymologicum magnum genuinum* (41), stating that the lake still gives some warmth because of the burnt Typhon in it, possibly alludes to this same 'breath'. Maybe it refers to the fact that shallow water easily gets heated by the sun, but anyway no geological phenomena like hot springs are known for the region, and probably the element has no actual basis and is only part of the myth.

Herodotos' link (1-2) between lake Serbonis and the Kasion is followed by several other authors. In more vague topographical locations, especially in later sources as the scholia at Apollonios (6-7) and Dionysios (27-28) and the *Etymologicum magnum genuinum* (41), lake Serbonis as well as the Kasion are linked, however, with Pelousion, the major town in the area, but this is apparently only due to a rather inaccurate geographical generalization. Most sources from the late 4th century BC on agree that both lake Serbonis and its Barathra are situated between the Kasion and Syria<sup>233</sup>. In 306 BC the army of Antigonos Monophthalmos went from Gaza to the Kasion and passed the Barathra (55). In 217 BC Ptolemaios IV Philopator with his army left Pelousion for Raphia; he crossed the desert, first passing the Kasion and

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<sup>230</sup> Temple of Edfu, girdle wall, inner face of the west wall, second register, scene 11, decorated under Ptolemaios X Alexandros I (107-88 BC) (Chassinat, 1931, VI, p. 127-128); cf. PM, 1939, VI, p. 160-161 (308-311); translated in Fairman, 1935, p. 34-35 and Alliot, 1954, II, p. 751-754; cf. Griffiths, 1958, p. 75-85; Redford, 1986, p. 279-281. See also s.v. Tcharou.

<sup>231</sup> Cf. Roeder, 1915, p. 120.135; Kees, Hermann, s.v. Σιρβωνίς λίμνη, in RE, III A 1, 1927, col. 287.

<sup>232</sup> Gauthier, 1925, I, p. 175 mentions such a story, but he does not give a source and most likely it is just an interpretation on the basis of Herodotos.

<sup>233</sup> Cf. Kees, Hermann, s.v. Σιρβωνίς λίμνη, in RE, III A 1, 1927, col. 287; Abel, 1939, p. 213; Ball, 1942, pl. 2. Against Donne, William Bodham, s.v. Sirbonis lacus, in Smith, 1857, II, p. 1012.

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then the Barathra (53). In the 2nd century AD Aristeides (29) locates the lake east of the Kasion and the geographer Ptolemaios (30-31) confirms this position.

There is also some information about the eastern border of the lake. Eratosthenes (52) mentions lakes and Barathra in the region of Rinokoloura and mount Kasion, possibly naming respectively the eastern and the western tip of the area (cf. 47). The lake apparently shrunk the next five centuries, since for Aristeides (29) the lake seems to end somewhere west of the city of Ostrakine, which is situated some 36 km west of Rinokoloura. Ptolemaios (31), who renders the lake conventionally as a mere dot on the map and not as a surface, places lake Serbonis at the same eastern longitude as Ostrakine, but - quite surprisingly - 10' or about 83 stadia (ca. 15,5 km) south of that place; it is not impossible that this coordinate in fact refers to the southeastern corner of the lake and that the figure of 83 stadia so indicates the maximum breadth possible. The distance in Ptolemaios between Ekregma and Ostrakine, on the other hand, provides a minimum length of 167 stadia (ca. 31 km). These figures are more or less confirmed in other sources. According to Diodoros (11) (or Hekataios (4)) lake Serbonis is quite narrow and has a length of some 200 stadia (ca. 37 km). Strabon (15) mentions the same length and adds that it has a maximum breadth of 50 stadia (ca. 9 km). If one supposes a rectangular shape for the lake, both the maximum figures of Strabon (15) and Ptolemaios (30-31) imply a circumference of some 500 stadia (ca. 93 km). Plinius (22), however, states that lake Serbonis used to have a circumference of 150 miles (ca. 225 km). With a maximum breadth of 50 stadia or about 6 miles as in Strabon, this gives a length of some 69 miles (ca. 103,5 km), which approaches quite well the distance of 65 miles (ca. 97,5 km) given by Plinius between Pelousion and Ostrakine. This 'old' circumference is maybe also referred to in a scholion at Apollonios (6), stating that lake Serbonis extends from Syria till Pelousion; probably the marshes around Pelousion, fed by the Nile branch and also called Barathra according to Strabon, are included. The figure of Plinius seems to represent the dimensions of the whole marshy area between Pelousion and lake Serbonis as already described by Eratosthenes (8), while the figure of Strabon probably represents the dimension of lake Serbonis *stricto sensu*, extending somewhere between the Kasion and Ostrakine<sup>234</sup>. The fact that in the time of Plinius

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<sup>234</sup> For Müller, 1901, I 2, p. 682 and von Bissing, 1903, p. 164-166, however, there is a (nameless) lake extending between Pelousion and the Kasion; Kiepert, 1904, p. 98-100, on the other hand, thinks that lake Serbonis itself indeed extends from Pelousion till Ostrakine.

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the lake was only a 'palus modica', an insignificant swamp, implies that it apparently kept on shrinking. Except for some authors referring to older sources, there are no more descriptions of lake Serbonis after the 2nd century AD.

There is some ambiguity whether the water of the lake was salt or sweet. In the theory of Eratosthenes (8) lake Serbonis was a remnant of the sea, which had withdrawn, and therefore the water was apparently salty; in another context, though, he thinks that the water originates - through an underground system - from the Euphrates, which implies that it would be sweet. Ploutarchos (23), on the other hand, supposes that the lake is fed by the (salt) water of the Red Sea. According to Vitruvius (12) the lake contains so much salt that there is a crust of salt on the surface<sup>235</sup> and also for Basileios (36) it is a lake with much salt. A scholion at Dionysios Periegetes (28) speaks of 'sea (θάλασσα) Serbonis'. Aristeides (29) rightly states that it does not receive any water coming directly from the Nile, nor from any other river, but that anyway the rising of the water in the lake is linked with the rising of the Nile<sup>236</sup>; this last phenomenon is probably due to the general rising of the groundwater and might supply sweet water in the lake. Apparently it all depends on whatever side of the lake one looks. Nowadays the lake seems to be fed both by groundwater and by water from the Mediterranean, and also the present-day vegetation varies in that same sense: there is hardly any vegetation at the northern side of the lake, near the Mediterranean, because of the salt, while the southern shores have big areas of rushes and reeds, which require sweet water<sup>237</sup>.

The most remarkable feature of the present-day area is the narrow strip of land that separates Sabkhat Bardawil from the Mediterranean. It runs over more than 80 km from el-Felusiyyat (Ostrakine) in the east via el-Qels (Kasion) to Mahammediya (Gerra) in the west and is sometimes only a few meters broad; at some places the water of the Mediterranean enters the lake via 'boghaz' or inlets, which are not easy to cross<sup>238</sup>; on the whole, the accounts of modern explorers show that it was not a save road to walk on<sup>239</sup>. A similar strip of land was already known by Strabon (15), who

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<sup>235</sup> The salt probably comes from the water from the Mediterranean, but because of the constant evaporation in the lake, this becomes a vast saltpan; cf. Chester, 1880, p. 155.

<sup>236</sup> Against Ascherson, 1887, p. 180 and Chuvin, 1986, p. 41, who think that the lake was connected with the Pelousiac branch of the Nile.

<sup>237</sup> See s.v. Sabkhat Bardawil.

<sup>238</sup> For the origin of such 'boghaz', cf. Description, Le Père, 1822, XI, p. 236.

<sup>239</sup> Cf. Chester, 1880, p. 150-158; Clédat, 1910a, p. 209-220 and 1923b, p.159-160.

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mentions a μικρὰ δίοδος, 'a small passage', along the sea, all the way to the Ekregma. It is hard to decide, however, whether - as some scholars think - this passage was the ancient main road followed by most armies and travellers<sup>240</sup> or if - coming from the east - they all passed south of lake Serbonis and joined the coast again at the Kasion, which is often mentioned in the sources as an intermediary road station. If the ancient and the modern passages would be comparable, there is little doubt that because of the dangers involved hardly anybody - and certainly no major armies - would have taken the road along the coast<sup>241</sup>. But the passages are not identical, at least not along the whole track. Strabon (15) only mentions a passage leading up to the Ekregma, probably situated a few kilometres east of the Kasion, and since the area between Pelousion and the Kasion probably did not belong to lake Serbonis *stricto sensu*, there is no reason to suppose an ancient narrow strip of land between the two places, as there is one now between Mahammediya and el-Qels. For the track between el-Qels and el-Felusiyat, on the other hand, the matter must remain open. The sources do not mention any ancient settlement on the track between Kasion and Ostrakine, so the absence of archaeological remains on the narrow strip of land there is not surprising and cannot be used as an argument against the existence of a main road, especially not because whatever traces there might have been, they now will be covered with water. Since the Ekregma in 313 BC was the borderline between Egypt and Syria (49) and the place in 55 BC was definitely situated on the main road (23), it is not impossible that there was indeed an accessible road along the coast. Another faint piece of evidence might be the location of lake Serbonis in Ptolemaios (31) some 83 stadia south of Ostrakine; if this point indicates the southeastern corner and if the lake really has a maximum breadth of 50 stadia as Strabon (15) states, this would leave at least some 33 stadia (ca. 6 km) between the northeastern corner of the lake and the city, plus a certain distance between the city and the coastline, leaving enough room for a safe passageway, at least at the beginning of the track. So there are some elements indicating that a passage along the coast was indeed possible there, but the evidence is not conclusive. At times when the passage was as hazardous as nowadays, travellers will definitely have made the small detour south of lake Serbonis and joined the coast again at the Kasion; when the lake had shrunk enough to allow a free passage along

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<sup>240</sup> Cf. Brugsch, 1875, map; Oren, 1982a, p. 2 and many others.

<sup>241</sup> Figueras, 1999, p. 211-212 suggests that Alexander the Great in 332 BC took the road along the strip of land, so that he could be supplied by his ships, but no such thing is ever mentioned in the sources, and certainly the water in front of the coast was too shallow to allow such operations.



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the coast, this shorter road may have been more in use<sup>242</sup>. For the track between Kasion and Pelousion the shortest road all the way along the coast was probably most of the time accessible.

To conclude, one gets the impression that lake Serbonis came into being in the 7th to 6th century BC because of some tectonic movements lifting the area along the Mediterranean and creating a lake or a lagoon mainly east of mount Kasion. The lake gradually lost its water via the Ekregma and through evaporation, creating a marshy area, which was hardly inhabited. Both the marshes and the lake apparently kept on shrinking, despite the flooding of about 25-20 BC, allowing in the Roman and Byzantine period the creation of Ostrakine and the other settlements between Kasion and Pelousion.

### **Administrative situation**

From Herodotos (1-2) on lake Serbonis is considered the most eastern part of Egypt along the Mediterranean, while the Kasion next to the lake for him apparently formed the actual border with (Koile) Syria. In the late 4th century BC the borderline had apparently moved to the nearby Ekregma, as it is clear from the events of 313 BC (49). Although this traditional concept continued to exist, the political border of Egypt varied along the circumstances, while also the geographical border changed according to the world view of the authors. For a lot of geographers the eastern Nile branch formed the Egyptian border and so Strabon locates the lake in Phoenicia (15) or near the Idumaeans in Judaea (16). Plinius (22) apparently gives the area between Pelousion and the lake the name of Arabia and makes Ostrakine the new border place.

### **Identifications<sup>243</sup>**

Lake Serbonis lay in the same area as present-day Sabkhat Bardawil, but both lakes have varied often in dimensions. While Sabkhat Bardawil extends from Mahammediya (Gerra) over el-Qels (Kasion) to el-Felusiyat (Ostrakine), this situation corresponds more or less with the swampy area between Pelousion and the lake,

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<sup>242</sup> Cf. Gardiner, 1920, p. 114.

<sup>243</sup> The Barathra of lake Serbonis have to be distinguished from the Barathra of Pelousion, despite the remarks of Berger, 1880, p. 267, n. 1; only references to the Barathra of the lake are discussed in this chapter. Tsafirir, 1994, p. 74, referring to Strabon, 17, 1, 21 (C 803), incorrectly mixes them up.

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mentioned in some (early) sources, but lake Serbonis itself lay between el-Qels and el-Felusiyat, which still is the most important part of Sabkhat Bardawil.

There are no stringent reasons to doubt Ptolemaios' location (30) of the Ekregma at the maximum distance of 10 km east of Kasion and at about 31 km west of Ostrakine. It is impossible, however, to identify the Ekregma with one of the 'boghaz' or inlets known in the 19th and 20th centuries AD<sup>244</sup>.

Some identifications with Egyptian and other toponyms have been proposed, but none of them is convincing. In the well-known story of the 12th dynasty, Sinuhe on his flight reached the Walls of the Ruler, which he passed unseen at night; at dawn he reached Peten and he finally halted at 'Isle-of-Kem-Wer' (Iw-n-Km-Wr), where he almost died of thirst<sup>245</sup>. Clédat, adopting the obsolete reading 'Lake-of-Kem-Wer' (Šy-n-Km-Wr) in B 21<sup>246</sup>, identifies the toponym with lake Serbonis<sup>247</sup>. It is generally accepted, though, that Sinuhe fled through the Wadi Tumilat and that 'Isle-of-Kem-Wer' lies in the neighbourhood of the Bitter Lakes or of lake Timsah<sup>248</sup>, and the suggestion of Clédat has nothing to recommend it.

The identification of lake Serbonis or the barathra with the Sea of reeds of the exodus story<sup>249</sup> is no longer accepted<sup>250</sup>, nor its identification with the 'Gulf of the Sea of Egypt' mentioned in *Isaias*<sup>251</sup>.

Clédat thinks that lake Serbonis is shown on the Karnak scenes of Sethos I next to Tcharou<sup>252</sup>, but this location is too far west to be acceptable.

'The H[ ]-waters of Baal' in the New Kingdom text P.Anastasi III do not refer to lake Serbonis, as Helck suggests, but belong in the neighbourhood of Piramesse<sup>253</sup>.

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<sup>244</sup> Against Clédat, 1910a, p. 214 (followed by Lesquier, 1918, map and Kees, Hermann, s.v. Σιρβωνίς λίμνη, in RE, III A 1, 1927, col. 287), who identifies the Ekregma with el-Qels (see s.v. el-Qels), but on his map 1923a, pl. locates it near el-Felusiyat, as do Brugsch, 1875, map, Abel, 1939, p. 532 and 1940, pl. 7, Ball, 1942, p. 105, Jones, 1949 [= 1932], map 14 and Kirsten, 1968, map 1.

<sup>245</sup> Sinuhe, B 16-22 (Koch, 1990, p. 17-20; translation in Lichtheim, 1973, I, p. 224).

<sup>246</sup> Cf. Gauthier, 1925, I, p. 46 and 1928, V, p. 121.202; Goedicke, 1992, p. 29 still adopts this reading, rejected by Gardiner, Lichtheim and Koch.

<sup>247</sup> Clédat, 1919a, p. 198, 1919b, p. 215, 1923a, p. 67 and 1923b, p. 146; cf. Gauthier, 1928, V, p. 121.202; Abel, 1933, I, p. 435; Burton, 1972, p. 126; Lloyd, 1976, II, p. 42.

<sup>248</sup> Cf. Müller, 1893, p. 39-43; Kütthmann, 1911, p. 33-35; Gardiner, 1914, p. 206-207; Goedicke, 1957, p. 78; Schlott-Schwab, 1981, p. 92-93.97-98; Goedicke, 1992, p. 28-29 (with the suggestion of Clédat rejected p. 28, n. 4).

<sup>249</sup> Cf. Brugsch, 1875, p. 29-33 and map; Jarvis, 1938, p. 32-34; Dothan, 1969b, p. 135-136; Norin, 1977, p. 21-40; Redford, 1998, p. 48, n. 17 and many others.

<sup>250</sup> Cf. Cazelles, 1987 [= 1955], p. 191.206; Bietak, Manfred, s.v. Schilfmeer, in LÄ, V, 1984, col. 630-631; Hoffmeier, 1997, p. 184.210.

<sup>251</sup> *Isaias*, 11, 15; cf. Cazelles, 1987 [= 1955], p. 209.

<sup>252</sup> Clédat, 1923a, p. 69-70. For the Karnak relief, see s.v. The New Kingdom northern Sinai itinerary.

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In the demotic topographical onomasticon P.Cairo 31169 of the 4th-2nd centuries BC Daressy reads the toponym T3-ḥny-p3-snb, 'le lac de la muraille', which he links with one of the marshes near Gerra, in the neighbourhood of lake Serbonis. Zauzich, however, prefers the reading T3-ḥny-Snfr, 'der Kanal des Snofru' and correctly locates it in the Delta<sup>254</sup>. Further in the list the toponym T3-ḥny-ṯḳrt<sup>1</sup>(?) refers according to Chuvin to the mouth of the Pelousiac branch or to lake Serbonis<sup>255</sup>. The term ḥny or ḥnt can indeed indicate a canal just as well as a lake<sup>256</sup>, but the order of the toponyms in this part of the papyrus is not clear and the identification has to remain open.

Strabon (17), quoting Poseidonios (9), describes the Dead Sea, but calls it by mistake lake Serbonis<sup>257</sup>.

Because Damiette and Pelousion have often been confused by early scholars, also lake Serbonis has incorrectly been located near the former place<sup>258</sup>.

### Orthographic variants

The tradition for unknown reasons varies between the spelling 'Serbon-' and 'Sirbon-', the first variant apparently being the oldest. There are three different forms used without any difference in meaning. The form 'Se/irbonis' occurs for the first time in Herodotos (1-2), 'Se/irbonitis' in Poseidonios (10) / Strabon (18), and 'Sirbon' - the spelling 'Serbon' does not occur - in Plinius (22). The name is almost always followed by the noun λίμνη, 'lake'; a scholion at Dionysios (28) instead uses the expression ἄλμη, 'sea', as a poetic variant and Latin authors write 'lacus' (22), 'palus' (37, 38) or 'unda' (39)<sup>259</sup>.

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<sup>253</sup> P.Anastasi III, 2, 8 (Gardiner, 1937, p. 22; Caminos, 1954, p. 74); cf. Helck, 1971, p. 450, n. 30; Bietak, 1975, p. 203.

<sup>254</sup> P.Cairo dem. 31169, 2, 14. Cf. Spiegelberg, 1908, I, p. 271; Daressy, 1911a, p. 161-162; Gauthier, 1927, IV, p. 29; Zauzich, 1987a, p. 84-85.88 and handout; DBL, 2005, p. 134. See also s.v. Gerra.

<sup>255</sup> P.Cairo dem. 31169, 3, 18. Cf. Chuvin, 1986, p. 49; his reading is corrected in DBL 2005, p. 135. For other readings or interpretations of this passage, cf. Spiegelberg, 1908, I, p. 273; Daressy, 1911a, p. 161 and 1911b, p. 6; Müller, 1911, col. 197; Gauthier, 1927, IV, p. 29; Cazelles, 1987 [= 1955], p. 216.218; Cheshire, 1985, p. 21; Zauzich, 1987a, handout. See s.v. The topographical onomasticon P.Cairo dem. 31169.

<sup>256</sup> Cf. Björkman, 1974, p. 50-51.

<sup>257</sup> For the mistake and its different explanations, cf. Berger, 1880, p. 267, Reinhardt, 1928, p. 70-71, Jones, 1930, p. 293, Hornblower, 1981, p. 148, n. 186, Theiler, 1982, II, p. 66.

<sup>258</sup> Rightly rejected by d'Anville, 1766, p. 90.

<sup>259</sup> Cf. also the descriptions of Plinius ('palus modica') (22) and Priscianus ('lacus ingens') (39).

## Etymology

Since the Egyptian name of the lake is not known, the etymology of the name Serbonis is not clear<sup>260</sup>. Plutarchos (23) adds the detail that the Egyptians call those marshes the breath of Typhon, and - as pointed out by Willy Clarysse in a personal communication - perhaps the name Serbonis contains the Egyptian words 'šy', 'lake', and 'bin', 'bad, evil'<sup>261</sup>, and refers to the presence of this 'bad' god. Already van Senden explicitly linked 'Serbon' with Typhon, and - without further reference - mentions the association of Serbon with the Indian (!) god Serbal > Serba > Siwa<sup>262</sup>

Ekregma, 'outlet'<sup>263</sup>, and Barathra, 'pits', are common Greek nouns here used as toponyms. The name 'Ekregma' is explained by Eratosthenes (8), when he describes how lake Serbonis after its formation broke through (ἐκτραγῆναι) to the sea, which - in his theory - had sunk to a lower level. The name 'Barathra' fits quite well the pits of quicksand in the marshes of lake Serbonis.

## Homonyms

Places with the name Barathron or Barathra are quite common in Greek sources, but in Egypt only the Barathra of lake Serbonis and those of Pelousion<sup>264</sup> are known, probably belonging to the same big marshy area in the northern Sinai.

## Analysis of the sources

*Typhon*

*Lake Serbonis in the 4th century BC*

*Lake Serbonis in the Ptolemaic period*

*Lake Serbonis in the Roman and Byzantine periods*

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<sup>260</sup> The suggestion of Gruppe, 1889, p. 491 that the name can be linked with Sirbis (Σίρβις), an old name of the Xanthos river in Lycia (cf. Strabon, 14, 3, 6 - C665), has nothing to recommend it.

<sup>261</sup> For the Bohairic ⲄⲠⲚ / Egyptian bin, cf. Westendorf, 1965, p. 24-25; Vycichl, 1983, p. 28. See also the toponym ΤΙΛΑΒΩΝΙΣ in the Pathyrites, in demotic T3-*iw(y.t)-bin.t* (cf. Calderini, 1986, IV 4, p. 411; Vleeming, 1987, p. 211; Vandorpe, 1988, p. 16-17). Crum, 1939, p. 39 knows the expression ⲄⲠⲄ ⲄⲠⲚ, 'be evil', but there are some grammatical problems to reconstruct an etymology of 'Serbonis' as '(the) lake that is evil'.

<sup>262</sup> van Senden, 1851, I, p. 321-322.

<sup>263</sup> For the term 'ekregma' in the Egyptian irrigation system, cf. Bonneau, 1993, p. 84-87. Clédat, 1923b, p.159 (cf. Abel, 1933, I, p. 386) is wrong linking the word Ekregma with the noise made by the passing water; also the translation 'the breaking (of the waters)' in Figueras, 1988, p. 61 is unacceptable.

<sup>264</sup> Cf. Strabon, 16, 2, 33 (C 760); 17, 1, 21 (C 803), who is the only one to use the name Barathra for the well-known marshes near Pelousion.

## 2. Lake Serbonis, the Kasiotis and the Djifar

### Typhon

In Herodotos' geographical description of Egypt (1) lake Serbonis is the most eastern point of Egypt along the Mediterranean. It lies next to mount Kasion, which for Herodotos probably formed the actual boundary<sup>265</sup>:

αὐτίς δὲ αὐτῆς ἐστὶ Αἰγύπτου μῆκος τὸ παρὰ θάλασσαν ἐξήκοντα σχοῖνοι, κατὰ ἡμεῖς διαιρέομεν εἶναι Αἴγυπτον ἀπὸ τοῦ Πλινθινήτεω κόλπου μέχρι Σερβωνίδος λίμνης, παρ' ἣν τὸ Κάσιον ὄρος τείνει· ταύτης ὦν ἄπο οἱ ἐξήκοντα σχοῖνοί εἰσι.

'Further, the length of the seacoast of Egypt itself is sixty schoinoi, that is of Egypt, as we judge it to be, reaching from the Gulf of Plinthine to lake Serbonis, which is next to mount Kasion; between these there is this length of sixty schoinoi.'

Herodotos (2) describes the border region of Palestine and Egypt during the invasion of Kambyses of 525 BC. He mentions lake Serbonis and adds that Typhon - the Egyptian god Seth<sup>266</sup> - is said to be hidden there<sup>267</sup>:

ἀπὸ δὲ Ἰηνύσου αὐτίς Συρίων μέχρι Σερβωνίδος λίμνης, παρ' ἣν δὴ τὸ Κάσιον ὄρος τείνει ἐς θάλασσαν, ἀπὸ δὲ Σερβωνίδος λίμνης (ἐν τῇ δὴ λόγος τὸν Τυφῶ κεκρύφθαι), ἀπὸ ταύτης ἤδη Αἴγυπτος. τὸ δὴ μεταξὺ Ἰηνύσου πόλιος καὶ Κασίου τε ὄρεος καὶ τῆς Σερβωνίδος λίμνης, ἐδὸν τοῦτο οὐκ ὀλίγον χωρίον, ἀλλὰ ὅσον τε ἐπὶ τρεῖς ἡμέρας [ἰδδόν], ἀνυδρόν ἐστι δεινῶς

'then they are Syrian again from Ienysos as far as lake Serbonis, beside which mount Kasion stretches seawards; from this lake Serbonis (where Typhon, it is said, was hidden), the country is Egypt. Now between the city of Ienysos and mount Kasion and lake Serbonis there lies a wide territory for as much as three days' journey, wondrous waterless.'

Apollonios of Rhodos (5) tells how Typhon in the Kaukasos was struck by the lightning of Zeus and heavily wounded still lies under water in lake Serbonis<sup>268</sup>:

1213 ἵκετο δ' αὐτῶς  
οὔρεα καὶ πεδίον Νυσηίου, ἔνθ' ἔτι νῦν περ  
1215 κείται ὑποβρύχιος Σερβωνίδος ὕδασι λίμνης.

'and in such plight he reached the mountains and plain of Nysa, where to this day he lies whelmed beneath the waters of lake Serbonis.'

Lake Serbonis is situated near the 'mountains and plains of Nysa', possibly a reference to the *Hymnus Homericus ad Bacchum*, 9, where Nysa is linked with a mountain 'far from Phoenicia, near the streams of Egypt' (τηλοῦ Φοινίκης, σχεδὸν Αἰγύπτιοι ῥοάων)<sup>269</sup>.

A scholion at the passage of Apollonios (7), which mentions the verses of the *Hymnus*, locates lake Serbonis near Pelousion<sup>270</sup>:

ἡ δὲ Σερβωνίς λίμνη διάκειται περὶ τὸ Πηλούσιον τῆς Αἰγύπτου.  
'Lake Serbonis lies near Pelousion in Egypt.'

<sup>265</sup> Herodotos, 2, 6, 1.

<sup>266</sup> For the Egyptian Typhon, cf. also Herodotos, 2, 144, 2 and 156, 4.

<sup>267</sup> Herodotos, 3, 5, 2-3.

<sup>268</sup> Apollonios of Rhodos, *Argonautica*, 2, 1213-1215.

<sup>269</sup> For this Nysa, cf. Hermann, Albert, s.v. Nysa, in RE XVII 2, 1937, col. 1657-1660.

<sup>270</sup> Scholion at Apollonios of Rhodos, *Argonautica*, 2, 1214 (Wendel, 1935, p. 210).

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In Apollonios the story about Typhon combines Herodotos' account about the Egyptian god Seth in lake Serbonis with the well-known fight of the Greek mythological monster Typhon against the Olympian gods<sup>271</sup>. A second scholion at the same passage (6) relates a similar story. Chased by Zeus the wounded Typhon went to Syria and Pelousion and finally sank in lake Serbonis, which is said to extend from Syria till Pelousion<sup>272</sup>:

οὔτος, φησί, πληγείς ὑπὸ Διὸς ὡς εἶχεν <εἰς τοὺς> περὶ Συρίαν τόπους καὶ Πηλοῦσιον παρεγένετο διωκόμενος [ὑπὸ Διός], ὅπου βυθισθεὶς κείται ἐν τῇ Σερβωνίδι λίμνῃ. διήκει δὲ αὕτη ἀπὸ Συρίας μέχρι Πηλουσίου. περὶ δὲ τοῦ τὸν Τυφῶνα ἐν αὐτῇ κείσθαι καὶ Ἡρόδωρος ἱστορεῖ.

'When (Typhon), as (Apollonios) tells, was struck by Zeus, he came in that state to places near Syria and Pelousion, chased after by Zeus; there he lies crashed in lake Serbonis. This lake stretches from Syria till Pelousion. Also Herodoros (sic?) tells that Typhon lies in this lake.'

Although Jacoby considers the whole passage a fragment of Herodoros of Herakleia (3), who wrote about 400 BC, the phrasing makes it clear that only the last sentence, which repeats that Typhon lies in the lake, comes from Herodoros (or actually Herodotos?<sup>273</sup>). Especially the mention of Pelousion as a geographical point of reference does not fit the situation of the 5th century BC, and I am inclined to ascribe the description of the lake not to Herodoros, but to an anonymous later source.

Also the *Etymologicum magnum genuinum* (41) comments on this passage of Apollonios. Struck by Zeus' lightning, the burnt Typhon sank deep into lake Serbonis, which is situated in Egypt near Pelousion. Apparently another source is added at the end of the lemma, this time situating the lake between Arabia and Egypt and stating that it still gives some warmth because of the burnt Typhon in it<sup>274</sup>:

πληγέντα δὲ αὐτὸν φασιν ἀπελθεῖν καιόμενον ἐν τῇ Σερβωνίδι λίμνῃ - Σερβωνίς δὲ λίμνη ἐν Αἰγύπτῳ πλησίον τοῦ Πηλουσίου - καὶ εἰς τὸ βάθος αὐτῆς ἐμπεσεῖν καὶ δῦναι συνεχόμενον ὑπὸ τῆς ἐκκαύσεως. ἔστι δὲ ἡ λίμνη μεταξὺ Ἀραβίας καὶ Αἰγύπτου θερμότητα τινα ἀναπέμπουσα ἀπὸ τοῦ Τυφῶνος καιομένου ἐν αὐτῇ.

'It is said that he withdrew, struck and burned, into lake Serbonis - lake Serbonis in Egypt near Pelousion - and that he sank into its depth, tortured by the burning. This is the lake between Arabia and Egypt that radiates a certain heat because of the burned Typhon in it.'

A similar phrasing occurs in the *Etymologicum magnum auctum* (43)<sup>275</sup>, but most of the geographical information about lake Serbonis has dropped out:

πληγέντα δὲ αὐτὸν φασὶ καιόμενον ἀπελθεῖν ἐν τῇ Σερβωνίδι λίμνῃ ἐν Αἰγύπτῳ, καὶ εἰς τὸ βάθος αὐτῆς ἐμπεσεῖν καὶ δῦναι, συνεχόμενον ὑπὸ τῆς ἐκκαύσεως· ἡ δὲ λίμνη θερμότητα τινα ἀναπέμπει, ὡς τοῦ Τυφῶνος καιομένου ἐν αὐτῇ

<sup>271</sup> Cf. Sepp, 1863, II, p. 534; Berger, 1880, p. 267, n. 1; Schmidt, Johannes, s.v. Typhoeus, Typhon, in Roscher, 1916-1924, V, col. 1447.

<sup>272</sup> Scholion at Apollonios of Rhodos, *Argonautica*, 2, 1211 (Wendel, 1935, p. 209-210); Herodoros of Herakleia, FGrHist no. 31, F 61.

<sup>273</sup> Robert, 1873, p. 95 thinks that the name Ἡρόδωρος has to be corrected in Ἡρόδοτος, referring to Herodotos, 3, 5, 3 (2), and indeed he has a strong case (cf. Carrez-Maratray, 2001, p. 91, n. 13); see also Müller, 1848, II, p. 39, F 52 (who only mentions this last sentence) and Rosén, 1987, p. 256.270.

<sup>274</sup> *Etymologicum magnum genuinum*, s.v. Τυφῶνα (Wendel, 1935, p. 209, n.).

<sup>275</sup> *Etymologicum magnum auctum*, 772, 44-48, s.v. Τυφῶς (Gaisford, 1848, col. 2163).

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'It is said that he withdrew, struck and burned, into lake Serbonis in Egypt, and that he sank into its depth, tortured by the burning. The lake radiates a certain heat because of the burned Typhon in it.'

### *Lake Serbonis in the 4th century BC*

Diodoros (11), probably quoting Hekataios of Abdera (4), describes the northeastern border of Egypt, which is protected by the branch of the Nile, the desert and the so-called Barathra or 'Pits' that form part of Lake Serbonis. This lake half way Koile Syria and Egypt is quite narrow, but surprisingly deep and has a length of some 200 stadia (ca. 37 km). It is a dangerous place because of the Barathra, which are areas with quicksand. Since the lake is surrounded by great dunes, a lot of sand is strewn over the water surface with constant south winds, making it very difficult to distinguish land and water. It is impossible to cross the quicksand on foot or by boat, and people trapped in it are irrevocably lost<sup>276</sup>:

(4) τῶν δὲ πρὸς τὴν ἀνατολὴν νεύοντων μερῶν τὰ μὲν ὁ ποταμὸς ὠχύρωκε, τὰ δ' ἔρημος περιέχει καὶ πεδία τελευτώδη τὰ προσαγορευόμενα Βάραθρα. ἔστι γὰρ ἀνά μέσον τῆς Κοίλης Συρίας καὶ τῆς Αἰγύπτου λίμνη τῷ μὲν πλάτει στενὴ παντελῶς, τῷ δὲ βάθει θαυμάσιος, τὸ δὲ μῆκος ἐπὶ διακοσίους παρήκουσα σταδίου, ἣ προσαγορεύεται μὲν Σερβωνίς, τοῖς δ' ἀπίροις τῶν προσπελαζόντων ἀνεπίστους ἐπιφέρει κινδύνους. (5) στενοῦ γὰρ τοῦ ρεύματος ὄντος καὶ ταινία παραπλησίου, θινῶν τε μεγάλων πάντη περικεχυμένων, ἐπειδὰν νότοι συνεχεῖς πνεύσωσιν, ἐπισείεται πλήθος ἄμμου. (6) αὕτη δὲ τὸ μὲν ὕδωρ κατὰ τὴν ἐπιφάνειαν ἄσημον ποιεῖ, τὸν δὲ τῆς λίμνης τύπον συμφυῆ τῇ χέρσῳ καὶ κατὰ πᾶν ἀδιάνγνωστον. διὸ καὶ πολλοὶ τῶν ἀγνοούντων τὴν ιδιότητα τοῦ τόπου μετὰ στρατευμάτων ὄλων ἠφανίσθησαν τῆς ὑποκειμένης ὁδοῦ διαμαρτόντες. (7) ἡ μὲν γὰρ ἄμμος ἐκ τοῦ κατ' ὀλίγον πατουμένη τὴν ἔνδοσιν λαμβάνει, καὶ τοὺς ἐπιβάλλοντας ὥσπερ προνοία τινὶ πονηρᾷ παρακρούεται, μέχρι ἂν ὅτου λαβόντες ὑπόνοιαν τοῦ συμβησομένου βοηθήσωσιν ἑαυτοῖς, οὐκ οὔσης ἔτι φυγῆς οὐδὲ σωτηρίας. (8) ὁ γὰρ ὑπὸ τοῦ τέλματος καταπινόμενος οὔτε νήχεσθαι δύναται, παραιρουμένης τῆς ἰλύος τὴν τοῦ σώματος κίνησιν, οὔτ' ἐκβῆναι κατισχύει, μηδὲν ἔχων στερέμνιον εἰς ἐπίβασιν· μεμιγμένης γὰρ τῆς ἄμμου τοῖς ὕγροῖς, καὶ διὰ τοῦτο τῆς ἑκατέρων φύσεως ἠλλοιωμένης, συμβαίνει τὸν τόπον μήτε πορευτὸν εἶναι μήτε πλωτόν. (9) διόπερ οἱ τοῖς μέρεσι τούτοις ἐπιβάλλοντες φερόμενοι πρὸς τὸν βυθὸν οὐδεμίαν ἀντίληψιν βοηθείας ἔχουσι, συγκατολισθανούσης τῆς ἄμμου τῆς παρὰ τὰ χεῖλη. τὰ μὲν οὖν προειρημένα πεδία τοιαύτην ἔχοντα τὴν φύσιν οἰκείας ἔτυχε προσηγορίας, ὀνομασθέντα Βάραθρα.

'(4) As for the parts of the country facing the east, some are fortified by the river and some are embraced by a desert and a swampy flat called the Barathra. For between Koile Syria and Egypt there lies a lake, quite narrow, but marvellously deep and some two hundred stadia in length, which is called Serbonis and offers unexpected perils to those who approach it in ignorance of its nature. (5) For since the body of the water is narrow, like a ribbon, and surrounded on all sides by great dunes, when there are constant south winds great quantities of sand are strewn over it. (6) This sand hides the surface of the water and makes the outline of the lake continuous with the solid land and entirely indistinguishable from it. For this reason many who were unacquainted with the peculiar nature of the place have disappeared together with whole armies, when they wandered from the beaten road. (7) For as the sand is walked upon it gives way but gradually, deceiving with a kind of malevolent cunning those who advance upon it, until, suspecting some impending mishap, they begin to help one another only when it is no longer possible to turn back or escape. (8) For anyone who has been sucked in by the mire cannot swim, since the slime prevents all movement of the body, nor is he able to wade out, since he has no solid footing; for by reason of the mixing of the sand with the water and the consequent change in the nature of both it comes about that the place cannot be crossed either on foot or by boat. (9) Consequently those who enter upon these regions

<sup>276</sup> Diodoros, 1, 30, 4-9; Hekataios of Abdera, FGrHist no. 264, F 25.

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are borne towards the depths and have nothing to grasp to give them help, since the sand along the edge slips in with them. These flats have received a name, appropriate to their nature as we have described it, being called Barathra.'

People who do not know the nature of the place, are easily trapped, but Diodoros really exaggerates when he states that whole armies wandering from the normal road have disappeared. In fact the only losses known are the Persian ones in 342 BC, because they were not familiar with the region (54)<sup>277</sup>:

ὁ δὲ τῶν Περσῶν βασιλεὺς ... ἀθροίσας πᾶσαν τὴν δύναμιν προῆγεν ἐπὶ τὴν Αἴγυπτον. κατανήσας δ' ἐπὶ τὴν μεγάλην λίμνην καθ' ἣν ἔστι τὰ καλούμενα Βάραθρα, μέρος τῆς δυνάμεως ἀπέβαλε διὰ τὴν ἀπειρίαν τῶν τόπων. περὶ δὲ τῆς κατὰ τὴν λίμνην φύσεως καὶ τοῦ περὶ αὐτὴν παραδόξου συμπτώματος προειρηκότες ἐν τῇ πρώτῃ βύβλῳ τὸ διλογεῖν περὶ τῶν αὐτῶν παρήσομεν. διελθὼν δὲ τὰ Βάραθρα μετὰ τῆς δυνάμεως ὁ βασιλεὺς ἦκεν πρὸς τὸ Πηλούσιον.

'The king of the Persians ... assembled all his army and advanced against Egypt. As he came to the great marsh where are the Barathra, as they are called, he lost a portion of his army through his lack of knowledge of the region. Since we have discoursed earlier on the nature of the marsh and the peculiar mishaps which occur there in our first book, we shall refrain from making a second statement about it. Having passed through the Barathra with his army the king came to Pelousion'.

Anyway, if one was careful, no great problems were apparently to be expected.

Ioannes Tzetzes (59) in the 12th century AD probably refers to Diodoros, when he states that the so-called Barathra are sandy and inaccessible plains in Egypt, where people passing by get trapped<sup>278</sup>:

τὰ ἐν Αἰγύπτῳ πεδία τὰ προσαγορευόμενα Βάραθρα, διὰ τὸ ἀμμώδη καὶ δύσβατα εἶναι, καὶ συναρπάζειν καὶ ἀπολύειν τοὺς παροδεύοντας.

'the plains in Egypt that are called Barathra because they are sandy and inaccessible and because they seize passers-by and do away with them.'

In 313 BC Ptolemaios, probably camping in Pelousion, had a conference with Antigonos Monophthalmos near the so-called Ekregma of lake Serbonis, which apparently formed the border between their possessions (49)<sup>279</sup>:

αὐτὸς δὲ παρήλθεν ἐπὶ τὸ καλούμενον Ἐκρηγμα κάκει συνελθὼν εἰς λόγους Ἀντιγόνῳ πάλιν ἀπήλθεν, οὐ συγχωρῶντος Ἀντιγόνου τὰ ἀξιούμενα.

'(Ptolemaios) himself went to Ekregma, as it is called, where he conferred with Antigonos, returning again since Antigonos would not agree to his demands.'

In 306 BC Antigonos and his army, attacking Egypt, were on their way to the Kasion, but it was very difficult to advance through the desert because of the numerous swamps and especially the so-called Barathra (55)<sup>280</sup>:

αὐτὸς δὲ στρατοπεδεύων περὶ Γάζαν καὶ σπεύδων φθάσαι τὴν τοῦ Πτολεμαίου παρασκευὴν τοῖς μὲν στρατιώταις παρήγγειλε δέχ' ἡμερῶν ἔχειν ἐπισίτισιν, ἐπὶ δὲ ταῖς καμήλοις ταῖς ἀθροισθείσαις ὑπὸ τῶν Ἀράβων ἐπέθηκε σίτου μυριάδας μεδίμωνν τρισκαίδεκα καὶ χόρτου πλήθος τοῖς τετράποσι· τά τε βέλη κομίζων τοῖς ζεύγεσι

<sup>277</sup> Diodoros, 16, 46, 5-6. There is no reason to describe these losses as 'mythical', as Griffith, 1890, p. 36 does.

<sup>278</sup> Ioannes Tzetzes, *Exegesis in Homeri Iliadem* (Hermann, 1812, p. 10).

<sup>279</sup> Diodoros, 19, 64, 8.

<sup>280</sup> Diodoros, 20, 73, 3.



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προῆγε διὰ τῆς ἐρήμου μετὰ κακοπαθείας διὰ τὸ πολλοὺς εἶναι τῶν τόπων τελματώδεις καὶ μάλιστα περὶ τὰ καλούμενα Βάραθρα.

'(Antigonos) self, since he was encamped at Gaza and was eager to forestall the preparations of Ptolemaios, ordered his soldiers to provide themselves with ten days' rations, and loaded on the camels, which had been gathered together by the Arabs, one hundred and thirty thousand measures of grain and a good stock of fodder for the beasts; and, carrying his ordnance in wagons, he advanced through the wilderness with great hardship because many places in the region were swampy, particularly near the so-called Barathra.'

One can wonder whether the army took the narrow strip of land between the Mediterranean and lake Serbonis to get to the Kasion or went south of the lake. One could indeed argue that Antigonos was in a hurry and therefore took the shortest road along the coast, or that perhaps the area south of lake Serbonis was even less accessible. It seems rather odd, however, that an army of almost one hundred thousand people would go this way - creating a train of maybe even 10 km - and this especially with stormy weather, which is known to make the strip of land a dangerous spot to cross. In my view, therefore, Antigonos probably followed the road south of lake Serbonis, went to the Kasion and continued along the coast to Pelousion.

### *Lake Serbonis in the Ptolemaic period*

The 3rd century geographer Eratosthenes (8)<sup>281</sup>, quoted by Strabon (14), states that Egypt in ancient times was covered by the sea as far as the marshes near Pelousion, mount Kasion and lake Serbonis - indicating the most eastern region of Egypt -, so that the Mediterranean was connected with the Red Sea. The sea withdrew and the land was left bare, but lake Serbonis remained. Later the lake broke through to the sea - via an 'ekregma' - and became marshy<sup>282</sup>:

... τὴν τε Αἴγυπτον τὸ παλαιὸν θαλάττη κλύζεσθαι μέχρι τῶν ἐλῶν τῶν περὶ τὸ Πηλοῦσιον καὶ τὸ Κάσιον ὄρος καὶ τὴν Σιρβωνίδα λίμνην· ... ἐνδούσης δὲ τῆς θαλάττης ἀνακαλυφθῆναι, μείναι δὲ τὴν Σιρβωνίδα λίμνην, εἶτ' ἐκραγῆναι καὶ ταύτην, ὥστε ἐλώδη γενέσθαι.

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<sup>281</sup> There is some discussion whether the fragment comes from Eratosthenes himself or from Straton of Lampsakos (before 268 BC) quoted by Eratosthenes. Jones, 1917, p. 185, Reinhardt, 1928, p. 69, Aujac, 1969, I 1, p. 146, Fraser, 1972, I, p. 528-529 and II, p. 759, n. 70 and Feisel, 1984, p. 560, n. 79 choose for Straton, but the passage is not included in Wehrli, 1969b, p. 31-32.68-69, F 91 as part of the fragment. The grammatical context might indeed point to Straton, but the Egyptian examples are not commented upon in Strabon, 1, 3, 5 (C 50-51), who discusses Straton's views, and are well paralleled in the work of Eratosthenes.

<sup>282</sup> Strabon, 1, 3, 4 (C 50); Eratosthenes, F I B 15 (Berger, 1880, p. 60-61). Cf. also Strabon, 1, 2, 31 (C 38) and 1, 3, 13 (C 55-56) [= Eratosthenes, F I B 18-19 (Berger, 1880, p. 68-69)]. This description of lake Serbonis is possibly alluded to in Strabon, 16, 2, 44 (C 764) - Eratosthenes, F I B 17 (Berger, 1880, p. 68), discussing the Dead Sea: Ἐρατοσθένης δὲ φησι τάναντία, λιμναζούσης τῆς χώρας, ἐκρήγμασιν ἀνακαλυφθῆναι τὴν πλείστην ('But Eratosthenes says, on the contrary, that the country was a lake, and that most of it was uncovered by outbreaks'); cf. Berger, 1880, p. 267, n. 1 and Reinhardt, 1928, p. 69-70.

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'... and that in ancient times Egypt was covered by the sea as far as the bogs about Pelousion, mount Kasion, and lake Sirbonis; ... and when the sea retired, these regions were left bare, except that the lake Sirbonis remained; then the lake also broke through to the sea, and thus became a bog.'

In the first half of the 1st century BC also Poseidonios (10), quoted by Strabon (18), supposes that Lower Egypt was covered by the sea till lake Serbonis<sup>283</sup>:

ἡ δὲ κάτω Αἴγυπτος καὶ τὰ μέχρι τῆς λίμνης τῆς Σιρβωνίτιδος πέλαγος ἦν.  
'And Lower Egypt and the parts extending as far as lake Sirbonis were sea.'

Eratosthenes (52), quoted by Strabon (56), thinks that the water of the Euphrates, which goes to the lakes near Arabia, continues underground till Koile Syria, is pressed up in the region of Rinokoloura and mount Kasion and there forms the lakes (sc. lake Serbonis?) and the 'barathra'<sup>284</sup>:

Ἐρατοσθένης δὲ τῶν λιμνῶν μνησθεὶς τῶν πρὸς τῇ Ἀραβίᾳ, φησὶ τὸ ὕδωρ ἀπορούμενον διεξόδων ἀνοίξαι πόρους ὑπὸ γῆς καὶ δι' ἐκείνων ὑποφέρεσθαι μέχρι Κοιλοσύρων· ἀναθλίβεσθαι δὲ εἰς τοὺς περὶ Ῥινοκόλουρα καὶ τὸ Κάσιον ὄρος τόπους καὶ ποιεῖν τὰς ἐκεῖ λίμνας καὶ τὰ βάραθρα.

'Eratosthenes, when he mentions the lakes near Arabia, says that when the water is deprived of exits it opens up underground passages and through these flows underground as far as the country of Koile Syria, and that it is pressed up into the region of Rinokoloura and mount Kasion and forms the lakes and the barathra there.'

In another context Eratosthenes (48), again quoted by Strabon (50), discusses the limits of the continents. Some people suppose that continents are separated by an isthmus like the one between the Red Sea and the Ekregma of lake Serbonis<sup>285</sup>:

ἔξης δὲ περὶ τῶν ἡπείρων εἰπὼν γεγονέναι πολὺν λόγον, ... τοὺς δὲ τοῖς ἰσθμοῖς τῷ τε μεταξὺ τῆς Κασπίας καὶ τῆς Ποντικῆς θαλάσσης καὶ τῷ μεταξὺ τῆς Ἐρυθρᾶς καὶ τοῦ Ἐκρήγματος, τούτους δὲ χερρονήσους αὐτὰς λέγειν, ...

'Next, after saying that there has been much discussion about the continents, ... while others divide them by the isthmuses (the isthmus between the Caspian and the Pontic Seas, and the isthmus between the Red Sea and the Ekregma), and that the latter call the continents peninsulas, ...'

For Herodotos the northern end of the isthmus was the Kasion, but for Eratosthenes it was apparently the nearby Ekregma. This might imply that the Ekregma still in the 3rd century BC formed the border between Egypt (Africa) and Syria (Asia), as it most likely did already in 313 BC.

A similar delineation of the continents is given by Agathemeros (13), but instead of the Kasion or the Ekregma he mentions lake Serbonis itself as the northern end of the isthmus<sup>286</sup>:

<sup>283</sup> Strabon, 17, 1, 35 (C 809); Poseidonios, F 64 (Theiler, 1982, I, p. 69); cf. *Chrestomathiae ex Strabonis Geographicorum*, 17, 24 (Müller, 1861, II, p. 632) (21): ὅτι ἐκ πολλῶν τεκμηρίων ὑπολαμβάνουσιν οἱ παλαιοὶ τὴν κάτω Αἴγυπτον ἕως Σιρβωνίδος λίμνης καὶ Μοίριδος λίμνης καὶ Ἀμμωνιακῆς πᾶσαν πέλαγος εἶναι ('on the basis of a lot of indications the old scholars suppose that Lower Egypt till lake Sirbonis, lake Moiris and the Ammoniake was all sea').

<sup>284</sup> Strabon, 16, 1, 12 (C 741); Eratosthenes, F III B 36 (Berger, 1880, p. 264-265). Cf. also the further unknown anonymous Greek geographer in Hudson, 1712, IV, quoted in Reland, 1714, p. 509 (47), who locates the lake between mount Kasion and Rinokoloura: μέσον δὲ τοῦ Κασίου ὄρους καὶ τῶν Ῥινοκοροῦρων ἢ Σιρβωνίς λίμνη ('lake Sirbonis between mount Kasion and Rinokoroura').

<sup>285</sup> Strabon, 1, 4, 7 (C 65); Eratosthenes, F II C 22 (Berger, 1880, p. 163-164).

<sup>286</sup> Agathemeros, 3 (Müller, 1861, II, p. 472).

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ὄροι ἠπείρων· ... Λιβύης δὲ καὶ Ἀσίας ὁ Νεῖλος, οἱ δὲ ἰσθμὸν τὸν ἀπὸ Σερβωνίδος λίμνης καὶ Ἀραβίου κόλπου.

'Borders of the continents: ... between Libye and Asia the Nile, according to others the isthmus between lake Serbonis and the Arabian gulf.'

In 217 BC Ptolemaios IV Philopator left Pelousion with his army for Raphia (53). He crossed the desert, passing by the Kasion and the so-called Barathra<sup>287</sup>:

προῆγε ποιούμενος τὴν πορείαν παρὰ τὸ Κάσιον καὶ τὰ Βάραθρα καλούμενα διὰ τῆς ἀνύδρου.

'(Ptolemaios) moved on marching, skirting the Kasion and the so-called Barathra, through the desert.'

In 55 BC Aulus Gabinius hesitated to invade Egypt because of the dangerous road to Pelousion. The itinerary went through a sandy region without any water and passed by the Ekregma and the swamps of lake Serbonis. Ploutarchos (23) adds that the Egyptians call those marshes the breath of Typhon, possibly referring to the warmth that is said to come from the lake because of the burnt Typhon in it<sup>288</sup>. For Ploutarchos the lake is apparently fed by the water of the Red Sea, on the spot where the isthmus is the narrowest<sup>289</sup>:

ἐπεὶ δὲ τοῦ πολέμου μᾶλλον ἐφοβοῦντο τὴν ἐπὶ τὸ Πηλούσιον ὁδόν, ἅτε δὴ διὰ ψάμμου βαθείας καὶ ἀνύδρου παρὰ τὸ Ἐκρηγμα καὶ τὰ τῆς Σερβωνίδος ἔλη γινομένης αὐτοῖς τῆς πορείας, ἃς Τυφῶνος μὲν ἐκπνοᾶς Αἰγύπτιοι καλοῦσι, τῆς δ' Ἐρυθρᾶς θαλάσσης ὑπονόστησις εἶναι δοκεῖ καὶ διήθησις, ἣ βραχυτάτῳ διορίζεται πρὸς τὴν ἐντὸς θάλασσαν ἰσθμῷ.

'But more than the war the march to Pelousion was feared, since their route lay through deep sand, where there was no water, as far as the Ekregma and the marshes of lake Serbonis; these the Egyptians call the blasts of Typhon, although they appear to be a residual arm of the Red Sea, helped by infiltration, where the isthmus between them and the Mediterranean is at its lowest.'

Gabinius finally decided to enter Egypt and sent his officer Marcus Antonius ahead, who occupied 'the narrows' and took Pelousion<sup>290</sup>:

πεμφθεὶς μετὰ τῶν ἱππέων ὁ Ἀντώνιος οὐ μόνον τὰ στενὰ κατέσχευε, ἀλλὰ καὶ Πηλούσιον ἔλῳν, πόλιν μεγάλην, καὶ τῶν ἐν αὐτῇ φρουρῶν κρατήσας, ἅμα καὶ τὴν ὁδὸν ἀσφαλῆ τῷ στρατεύματι καὶ τὴν ἐλπίδα τῆς νίκης ἐποίησε τῷ στρατηγῷ βέβαιον.

'Antonius was therefore sent with the cavalry, and he not only occupied the narrows, but actually took Pelousion, a large city, and got its garrison into his power, thus rendering its march safer for the main army and giving its general assured hope of victory.'

The identification of these 'narrows' (τὰ στενὰ) is not evident. In other sources no real parallels occur: Diodoros uses the adjective στενός, 'narrow', to describe lake Serbonis (11), and Aristeides mentions the 'narrow, sandy passages through Arabia to Egypt' (στεναὶ καὶ ψαμμώδεις δι' Ἀράβων ἐπ' Αἴγυπτον πάροδοι)<sup>291</sup>, which

<sup>287</sup> Polybios, 5, 80, 2.

<sup>288</sup> Abel, 1933, I, p. 386 incorrectly links the breath of Typhon and the Ekregma.

<sup>289</sup> Ploutarchos, *Antonius*, 3, 3 (916 F - 917 A). The translation of Clédat, 1923b, p. 160 ['le long de l'Ecregme par lequel le marais Sirbonide se décharge dans la mer'] is not correct.

<sup>290</sup> Ploutarchos, *Antonius*, 3, 3 (917 A); cf. Perrin, 1920, IX, p. 145: 'he not only occupied the narrow pass'; Flacelière, 1977, p. 100: 'non seulement il s'empara des défilés'.

<sup>291</sup> Aristeides, 26 (14), 100 (Keil, 1898, II, p. 121); discussed s.v. Itineraries.

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perhaps alludes to the narrow passable tracks which are left between lake Serbonis, the Mediterranean and the huge sandy dunes more to the south. Figueras supposes that 'the narrows' of Ploutarchos refer to the strip of land between lake Serbonis and the Mediterranean<sup>292</sup>, but I am not really convinced. The account of Ploutarchos gives the impression that Antonius was ordered to occupy 'the narrows', but that he surpassed this command and took Pelousion at his own initiative. At that time no Egyptian fortresses are known east of Gerra, so it seems rather odd to consider a primary military goal the occupation of a strip of land that was not defended, and that one could easily pass by going south of the lake. I rather suppose that 'the narrows' were situated in the immediate neighbourhood of Pelousion, so that Antonius could take the city in a single strike, and would like to identify them with the network of channels around the Pelousiac mouth constructed as a defence line already in the 4th century BC<sup>293</sup>.

### *Lake Serbonis in the Roman and Byzantine periods*

Vitruvius (12) probably describes lake Serbonis when he mentions marshy lakes near the Egyptian Kasion, which contain so much salt that there is a crust of salt on the surface<sup>294</sup>:

Casio ad Aegyptum lacus sunt palustres, qui ita sunt salsi, ut habeant insuper se salem congelatum.

'At the Casium in Egypt there are marshy lakes which contain so much salt that it cakes over them.'

During Strabon's stay in Alexandria, ca. 25-20 BC, the sea about Pelousion and mount Kasion rose, flooded the country and made an island of the mountain; the road to Phoenicia passing by the Kasion became navigable<sup>295</sup>:

ἡμῶν δ' ἐπιδημούντων ἐν Ἀλεξανδρείᾳ τῇ πρὸς Αἰγύπτῳ, περὶ Πηλοῦσιον καὶ τὸ Κάσιον ὄρος μετεωρισθὲν τὸ πέλαγος ἐπέκλυσε τὴν γῆν καὶ νῆσον ἐποίησε τὸ ὄρος, ὥστε πλωτὴν γενέσθαι τὴν παρὰ τὸ Κάσιον ὁδὸν τὴν εἰς Φοινίκην.

'And when we were residing in Alexandria near Egypt, the sea about Pelousion and mount Kasion rose and flooded the country and made an island of the mountain, so that the road by the Kasion into Phoenicia became navigable.'

The events were apparently not really disastrous for the population there, since Strabon does not mention any great losses or destructions, only the minor

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<sup>292</sup> Figueras, 1988, p. 61-62 and 2000, p. 27.40.101.

<sup>293</sup> Cf. e.g. Diodoros, 16, 46, 7-8, where troops followed 'a narrow and deep channel' (διὰ στενῆς τινος καὶ βαθείας διώρυγος) to attack Pelousion in 342 BC.

<sup>294</sup> Vitruvius, *De architectura*, 8, 3, 7.

<sup>295</sup> Strabon, 1, 3, 17 (C 58).

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inconvenience that the road was no longer usable, and the consequences were probably only momentary. It is difficult to say which area exactly was covered with water. One gets the impression that especially the tract between Pelousion and the Kasion was involved, and not the eastern part of the northern Sinai, which was anyway already covered by lake Serbonis. Maybe Strabon referred to the marshy area near Pelousion, mount Kasion and lake Serbonis already mentioned by Eratosthenes (8). Indeed, even if just this area is flooded, the Kasion, which lies west of lake Serbonis, immediately becomes an island. Strabon does not mention here what caused this flood, but maybe he refers to this event when he describes how sometimes in the neighbourhood of the Kasion a wave from the sea falls upon the shore, caused by undersea movements of the surface of the earth<sup>296</sup>:

τοιαῦτα δὲ καὶ περὶ τὸ Κάσιον συμβαίνει τὸ πρὸς Αἰγύπτῳ, σπασμῶ τινι ὄξει καὶ ἀπλῶ περιπιπτούσης τῆς γῆς καὶ εἰς ἐκάτερον μεταβαλλομένης ἅπαξ, ὥστε τὸ μὲν μετεωρισθὲν αὐτῆς μέρος ἐπαγαγεῖν τὴν θάλατταν, τὸ δὲ συνηζήσαν δέξασθαι, τραπομένης δὲ τὴν ἀρχαίαν πάλιν ἔδραν ἀπολαβεῖν τὸν τόπον, τοτὲ μὲν οὖν καὶ ἐξαλλάξεως τινος γενομένης τοτὲ δ' οὐ.

'Like occurrences take place in the neighbourhood of the Kasion situated near Egypt, where the land undergoes a single quick convulsion, and makes a sudden change to a higher or lower level, the result being that, whereas the elevated part repels the sea and the sunken part receives it, yet, the land makes reverse change and the site resumes its old position again, a complete interchange of levels sometimes having taken place and sometimes not.'

In the description of Phoenicia Strabon (15) places lake Serbonis between Gaza and the Kasion, quite parallel to the sea. The lake has a length of about 200 stadia (ca. 37 km) and a maximum breadth of 50 stadia (ca. 9 km)<sup>297</sup>. It leaves a small passage till the so-called Ekregma, which has become filled up. While the region south of Gaza was barren and sandy, the things got even worse further on and a similar situation continues to the Kasion - probably referring to the road south of lake Serbonis - and further on to Pelousion<sup>298</sup>:

καὶ αὕτη μὲν οὖν ἡ ἀπὸ Γάζης λυπρὰ πᾶσα καὶ ἀμμώδης· ἔτι δὲ μᾶλλον τοιαύτη ἡ ἐφεξῆς ὑπερκειμένη, ἔχουσα τὴν Σερβωνίδα λίμνην παράλληλον πῶς τῇ θαλάττῃ μικρὰν δίοδον ἀπολείπουσαν μεταξὺ μέχρι τοῦ Ἐκρήγματος καλουμένου, μήκος ὅσον διακοσίων σταδίων, πλάτος δὲ τὸ μέγιστον πενήκοντα· τὸ δ' Ἐκρηγμα συγκέχωσται. εἶτα συνεχῆς ἄλλη τοιαύτη ἡ ἐπὶ τὸ Κάσιον, κάκειθεν ἐπὶ τὸ Πηλούσιον.

'Now the whole of this country from Gaza is barren and sandy, but still more so is the country that lies next above it, which contains lake Sirbonis, a lake which lies approximately parallel to the sea and, in the interval, leaves a short passage as far as the Ekregma, as it is called; the lake is about two

<sup>296</sup> Strabon, 16, 2, 26 (C 758). The context of this passage refers to Poseidonios, but the mention of the Kasion comes from Strabon himself, cf. Theiler, 1982, I, p. 66, F 58 and II, p. 65.

<sup>297</sup> Clédat, 1910a, p. 214, n. 3 incorrectly thinks that the figures give the dimensions of the strip of land till the Ekregma and not of the lake itself; in 1923a, p. 67, however, he gives the right interpretation.

<sup>298</sup> Strabon, 16, 2, 32 (C 760); cf. *Chrestomathiae ex Strabonis Geographiconum*, 16, 35 (Müller, 1861, II, p. 627) (19): ὅτι τὸ Πομπηίου τοῦ Μάγνου σῶμα ἐν τῷ Κασίῳ λόφῳ κεῖται περὶ Σερβωνίδα λίμνην πλησίον Πηλουσίου πόλεως ('the tomb of Pompeius Magnus lies on the Kasion hill in the neighbourhood of lake Serbonis near the city of Pelousion'). The interpretation of the last sentence by von Bissing, 1903, p. 164-166 as ἄλλη τοιαύτη ἡ ἐπὶ τὸ Κάσιον (λίμνη) ('another lake like that near the Kasion') has rightly been rejected by Kiepert, 1904, p. 98.

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hundred stadia in length and its maximum breadth is about fifty stadia; but the Ekregma has become filled up with earth. Then follows another continuous tract of this kind as far as the Kasion, and then one comes to Pelousion.'

Strabon (16) continues with the description of Judaea. Near the Kasion one finds the (Nabataean) Idumaeans and lake Serbonis. The greater part of the area near the sea is occupied by the lake and the region extending to Jerusalem<sup>299</sup>:

τῆς δ' Ἰουδαίας τὰ μὲν ἐσπέρια ἄκρα τὰ πρὸς τῷ Κασίῳ κατέχουσιν Ἰδουμαῖοί τε καὶ ἡ λίμνη. ... πρὸς θαλάττην δὲ ἡ Σιρβωνίς τὰ πολλὰ κατέχει καὶ ἡ συνεχὴς μέχρι καὶ Ἱεροσολύμων.

'As for Judaea, its western extremities towards the Kasion are occupied by the Idumaeans and by the lake. ... The greater part of the region near the sea is occupied by lake Sirbonis and by the country continuous with the lake as far as Jerusalem.'

Strabon (17), quoting Poseidonios (9), describes the Dead Sea, but calls it by mistake lake Serbonis<sup>300</sup>:

ἡ δὲ Σιρβωνίς λίμνη πολλὴ μὲν ἐστι ...  
'Lake Sirbonis is large ...'

In a rather vague passage Strabon, paraphrasing Artemidoros of Ephesos, mentions two marsh lakes in the neighbourhood of Pelousion, east of the Nile branch, in Arabia. Clédat and Behr think that lake Serbonis is one of them, but since those two lakes are probably linked with the Barathra of Pelousion, it is more likely to identify lake Serbonis with one of the other lakes in that area outside the Delta, also mentioned by Strabon<sup>301</sup>:

πρώτην δ' ἐκ τοῦ Πηλουσίου προελθοῦσιν εἶναι διώρυγα τὴν πληροῦσαν τὰς κατὰ τὰ ἔλη καλουμένας λίμνας, αἱ δύο μὲν εἰσιν, ἐν ἀριστερᾷ δὲ κείνται τοῦ μεγάλου ποταμοῦ ὑπὲρ τὸ Πηλούσιον ἐν τῇ Ἀραβίᾳ· καὶ ἄλλας δὲ λέγει λίμνας καὶ διώρυγας ἐν τοῖς αὐτοῖς μέρεσιν ἔξω τοῦ Δέλτα.

'The first canal, as one proceeds from Pelousion, he says, is the one which fills the so-called marsh lakes, which are two in number and lie on the left of the great river above Pelousion in Arabia; and he also speaks of other lakes and canals in the same regions outside the Delta.'

For Plinius (22) Idumaea and Palestine start at the Ekregma of lake Serbonis, which according to some authors has a circumference of 150 miles (ca. 225 km), but which in his time was only an insignificant swamp. He refers to Herodotos (1-2), who linked the lake with the Kasion, but Plinius himself associates lake Serbonis rather with Ostrakine than with the Kasion, which is mentioned earlier in his account<sup>302</sup>:

<sup>299</sup> Strabon, 16, 2, 34 (C 760). Jacoby, FGrHist no. 87, F 70 ascribes the passage to Poseidonios, but the fragment is not accepted as such by Theiler, 1982, I, F 59-60, F 133 and II, p. 64-65.

<sup>300</sup> Strabon, 16, 2, 42 (C 763); Poseidonios, F 60 (Theiler, 1982, I, p. 67); cf. *Chrestomathiae ex Strabonis Geographicorum*, 16, 40-41 (Müller, 1861, II, p. 628) (20): ὅτι ἡ Σιρβωνίς λίμνη ... - ἀνεδόθη ἡ νῦν λίμνη Σιρβωνίς καλουμένη, θειώδης οὖσα καὶ ἀσφαλτώδης ('lake Sirbonis ... - the lake that is now called Sirbonis, rose full of sulphur and asphalt').

<sup>301</sup> Strabon, 17, 1, 24 (C 804); Artemidoros of Ephesos, F 88 (Stiehle, 1856, p. 219-220); cf. Clédat, 1924, p. 60; Behr, 1981, p. 407.

<sup>302</sup> Plinius, *Naturalis historia*, 5, 14, 68. The interpretation of Kiepert, 1904, p. 99, Ball, 1942, p. 81, Rackham, 1942, II, p. 271 and Figueras, 1988, p. 60, that lake Serbonis at this point 'emerges' or 'comes into view', is not acceptable. There is also no reason to suppose the existence of a second Ekregma,

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Ostracine Arabia finitur, a Pelusio LXV p. mox Idumaea incipit et Palaestina ab emersu Sirbonis lacus, quem quidam CL circuitu tradidere: Herodotus Casio monti adplicuit; nunc est palus modica.

'With Ostracine Arabia ends, 65 miles from Pelusium. Then begins Idumaea and Palestine, starting from the outlet of lake Sirbonis, for which some writers record an circumference of 150 miles: Herodotus approaches it to mount Casium; now it is an insignificant swamp.'

Plinius probably mixes an older tradition, which considers the Ekregma the border with Syria, with the more recent situation, which makes Ostrakine the new border place, and so incorrectly locates the Ekregma east of Ostrakine.

Dionysios Periegetes (24) evokes the different regions of Egypt and - after describing Upper and Middle Egypt - he mentions the people living on the coast near the sea all the way till lake Serbonis, apparently the most eastern point of Egypt, referring to a tradition going back to Herodotos<sup>303</sup>:

252 ἡδ' ὅσοι νοτερῆσιν ἐπ' ἡμόνεσσι θαλάσσης  
253 παραλίην ναίουσιν ἕσω Σερβωνίδα λίμνην.

'and the people that live on the coast along the damp shores of the sea all the way till lake Serbonis'

The work of Dionysios has been translated into Latin by Avienus (37)<sup>304</sup>:

371 notiam pars vergit in oram,  
372 et modus est olli Serbonidis alta paludis.

'A part (of Egypt) extends to the damp coast, and the heights of lake Serbonis are its border.'

With 'Serbonidis alta paludis', 'the heights of lake Serbonis', Avienus probably alludes to the Kasion and so inserted here an element that Dionysios mentioned some lines further on.

Another Latin translation by Priscianus (39) considers the 'Serbonis unda' a huge lake<sup>305</sup>:

240 et quicumque maris vivunt prope litora vasti,  
241 qua lacus est ingens liquidae Serbonidis undae.

'and those people who live along the coast of the vast sea, next to which the huge lake lies of the clear Serbonis sea.'

The scholion at the passage of Dionysios (28) briefly calls 'sea' Serbonis a lake of Pelousion in Egypt<sup>306</sup>:

Σερβωνίδος δὲ ἄλμης· τοῦ Πηλουσίου λίμνη τῆς Αἰγύπτου.

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against Müller, 1901, I 2, p. 682 and Kees, Hermann, s.v. Σερβωνίς λίμνη, in RE, III A 1, 1927, col. 287.

<sup>303</sup> Dionysios Periegetes, 252-253 (Brodersen, 1994, p. 58); some manuscripts (followed by a scholion (28) and by Müller, 1861, II, p. 116) read ἕσω Σερβωνίδος ἄλμης ('till sea Serbonis'). Cf. Dionysios Periegetes, *Paraphrasis*, 242-253 (Müller, 1861, II, p. 412) (26): καὶ ὅσοι πρὸς τὰ νότια μέρη ἐπὶ τοῖς αἰγιαλοῖς τῆς θαλάσσης τὴν Αἰγυπτιακὴν παραλίαν ἕως τῆς Σερβωνίτιδος λίμνης κατοικοῦσιν ('and the people who live in the eastern parts on the beaches of the sea at the Egyptian coast all the way till lake Serbonis').

<sup>304</sup> Avienus, *Descriptio orbis terrae*, 371-372 (Van de Woestijne, 1961, p. 35). Since 'palus' in this passage is the translation of the Greek λίμνη, I prefer the translation of 'lake' instead of 'swamp' or 'fen', which is more appropriate in Plinius (22), where 'palus modica' stands in opposition to 'lacus'.

<sup>305</sup> Priscianus, *Periegesis*, 240-241 (Van de Woestijne, 1953, p. 50).

<sup>306</sup> Scholion at Dionysios Periegetes, 253 (Müller, 1861, II, p. 441).

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'Serbonis sea: a lake of Pelousion in Egypt.'

Dionysios Periegetes in another context mentions the Kasion, and the *Paraphrasis* of this passage (25) locates the mountain east of Pelousion in the neighbourhood of lake Serbonis<sup>307</sup>:

... τοῦ Κασίου ὄρους, ὃ ἔστιν ὑπὲρ τὸ Πηλούσιον πρὸς τῇ Σερβωνίδι λίμνῃ.

'... of mount Kasion, which lies at the other side of Pelousion near lake Serbonis.'

The scholion at this passage (27) situates the lake near Pelousion<sup>308</sup>:

τὸ Κάσιον ἔστι δεξιᾷ χειρὶ τοῦ Νείλου τῆς θάλασσαν ἐκροίας, ἐγγὺς τοῦ Πηλουσίου. τὸ δὲ Πηλούσιον πρὸς τῇ Σερβωνίδι λίμνῃ.

'The Kasion lies at the right-hand side of the mouth of the Nile into the sea, near Pelousion. Pelousion lies near lake Serbonis'

For Eustathios (44) in the 12th century AD Serbonis is apparently not only the name of the lake, but also of a region. He probably refers to Herodotos (2), stating that there are some people saying that Typhon is hidden there. The lake is situated near mount Kasion, which lies in the neighbourhood of Pelousion<sup>309</sup>:

... καὶ οἱ περὶ που τὴν παραλίαν τὴν πρὸς τῇ Σερβωνίδι· λίμνῃ δὲ αὕτη καὶ χώρα, περὶ ἣν φασι τὸν Τυφῶνα κεκρύφθαι, πλησίον οὔσαν τοῦ πρὸς τῷ Πηλουσίῳ Κασίου ὄρους.

'... and the people who live along the coast near lake Serbonis; this is a lake and a region, in which it is said that Typhon lies hidden, in the neighbourhood of mount Kasion near Pelousion.'

Because Pelousion - according to Dionysios - lies east of the Nile, it does not belong to Libye, but to Asia. Eustathios (45) adds that with this point of view the same goes for lake Serbonis, because it lies east of the Pelousiac branch<sup>310</sup>:

καὶ ἡ Σερβωνίς τοίνυν λίμνη τούτῳ τῷ λόγῳ κεχώρισται τῆς Λιβύης, ὡς ἀνατολικωτέρα τοῦ Πηλουσιακοῦ στόματος, ὅπερ, ὡς λέλεκται, τῆς Ἀσίας ἐστί.

'According to that reasoning also lake Serbonis does not belong to Libye because it lies east of the Pelousiac mouth, which is, as has been said, part of Asia.'

The work ascribed to Nikephoros Blemmides (46) is a 16th century forgery making a synopsis of Dionysios and some scholia. The people living along the coast till lake Serbonis are considered Egyptians<sup>311</sup>:

καὶ ὅσοι πρὸς τὰ ἀνατολικά μέρη «ἐν» αἰγιαλοῖς τῆς θαλάσσης τὴν Αἰγυπτιακὴν παραθαλασσίαν οἰκοῦσιν ἕως τῆς Σερβωνίδος λίμνης, Αἰγύπτιοι καὶ αὐτοὶ καλοῦνται.

'and the people who live in the eastern parts on the beaches of the sea at the Egyptian coast all the way till lake Serbonis, also they are called Egyptians.'

The so-called Invocation of Isis (P.Oxy. XI, 1380) (51) mentions the Ekregma immediately after Pelousion and the Kasion. The name of the goddess added is 'Isis, preserver'<sup>312</sup>:

ἐπὶ τοῦ Ἐκ[κρήγματος] Ἴσιν σώζουσαν

'at the Ekregma Isis preserver'

<sup>307</sup> Dionysios Periegetes, *Paraphrasis*, 112-129 (Müller, 1861, II, p. 410).

<sup>308</sup> Scholion at Dionysios Periegetes, 116 (Müller, 1861, II, p. 436).

<sup>309</sup> Eustathios, *Commentarii in Dionysium*, 248 (Müller, 1861, II, p. 260).

<sup>310</sup> Eustathios, *Commentarii in Dionysium*, 262 (Müller, 1861, II, p. 263).

<sup>311</sup> Pseudo-Nikephoros Blemmides, 247-269 (Müller, 1861, II, p. 459).

<sup>312</sup> P.Oxy. XI, 1380, 75-76.



## 2. Lake Serbonis, the Kasiotis and the Djifar

For Chuvin Isis has to protect against the dangerous currents of lake Serbonis<sup>313</sup>, but in this Invocation it is not necessary at all that the epithet used is intrinsically linked with the toponym<sup>314</sup>, and anyway, except for the remark in Strabon that the flooded road along the Kasion became navigable, it would be the only allusion to any navigation on the lake. Other scholars suppose the existence of a special place of worship for Isis at the Ekregma<sup>315</sup>, but the reference to the Ekregma in the Invocation by itself is not enough evidence for such a shrine or temple. The Ekregma seems to be present in this list not because of its economic or religious importance, but only because it used to be the border place between Egypt and Syria, a point of view strengthened by the mention of 'Arabia' in the next line.

Aristeides (29) refutes Ephoros who states - explaining the rising of the Nile - that water from the Libyan and Arab mountains seeps underground and inundates Egypt, which lies in between. One of the arguments that Aristeides uses, is the position of lake Serbonis, which lies east of Pelousion and the Kasion - considered one of the Arab mountains -, and apparently west of Ostrakine. It does not receive any water coming directly from the Nile nor from any other river, since the whole region aside from the lake is arid, but anyway the rising of the water in the lake is linked with the rising of the Nile. So Ephoros is left the choice: if he accepts that lake Serbonis lies outside the mountains, he has to adjust his theory; if not, he has to show how - within his theory - the lake can be fed<sup>316</sup>:

(74) ... ἡ δ' αὖ Σερβωνίς λίμνη περιφανῶς ἔξω τῶν ὄρων τούτων ἐστίν· ὑπερελθόντι γὰρ Πηλούσιον καὶ τῶν ὄρων τῶν συγκλειόντων τὴν Αἴγυπτον θάτερον ἐστὶ πρὸς Ὀστρακίνην βαδίζοντι, ἥπερ ἐστὶ μέση μάλιστα τῆς ἀνύδρου τῆς Ἀραβικῆς. εἰ μὲν οὖν καὶ εἰς ταύτην ἐκ τῶν ἀνωθεν τόπων ἔρχεται τοῦ Νείλου τις ἀπόρρους, οὐδὲν δέομαι λέγειν· ὅτι δ' ἐκφεύγει τοὺς ὄρους τοὺς Ἐφόρου δῆλον ἔξ ὧν εἶπον. (75) ὥστε δυοῖν θατέρω περιπίπτει· εἰ μὲν γὰρ (οὐ) δέχεται τοῦτον τὸν λόγον οὐδ' εἰς ἔλεγχον τίθησιν, ὅς δείκνυσιν αὐτὴν ἔξω τῆς κοίλης χώρας οὔσαν, τί οὐ καὶ κατὰ πᾶσαν τὴν γῆν ταύτην τοῦτ' ἔδειξε γιγνόμενον, εἴπερ παρὰ τῆ θέρμη μόνη τὸ αἴτιόν ἐστιν; εἰ δ' οὐκ ἀξιόι ζητεῖν ἑτέρωθι ταῦτον τοῦτο τῷ μὴ τὴν αὐτὴν εἶναι φύσιν τῆς χώρας, ἔξω τῶν ὄρων τούτων ἐστὶν ἡ λίμνη· ὥστε πῶς αὖξεται; οὐκοῦν πρὶν ὃ τὸ πρῶτον προῦκειτο σκέψασθαι, πῶς ὁ Νεῖλος αὐξάνεται, δεύτερον δεῖ ζητεῖν, πῶς ἡ λίμνη κατὰ τούτους τοὺς λόγους. (76)... (78) ... ἀλλὰ τί φήσομεν περὶ τῆς ἔξω τοῦ Κασίου ταύτης ἥς ἐμνήσθη ἀρτίως; οὐ γὰρ δήπου καὶ ταύτην ἔργον εἶναι τοῦ ποταμοῦ, ἀλλ' ὅμως μετέχει τοῦ πράγματος· οὐ μὴν οὐδ' ὑπ' ἄλλου φαίης ἂν αὐτὴν κεχώσθαι ποταμοῦ, ἀνυδρος γὰρ ἐστὶν παρὰ τὴν λίμνην ἅπασα.

<sup>313</sup> Chuvin, 1986, p. 51-52.

<sup>314</sup> Cf. also Bricault, 1996, p. 67 for a text from Pompeii with the same epithet for Isis.

<sup>315</sup> Nesbitt, 1999 (draft), p. 2, n. 4 (who thinks that travellers who had survived the desert, there expressed their gratitude); Figueras, 2000, p. 11.122.181 (who links the shrine with the dangers of the road at that particular point).

<sup>316</sup> Aristeides, 36 (48), 74-75.78 (Keil, 1898, II, p. 287-288); cf. the translation of Behr, 1981, p. 208-213.407.461.

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'... But on the other hand lake Serbonis is clearly outside these mountains. For it is located beyond Pelousion and one of the two mountains which enclose Egypt as you go toward Ostrakine, which is right in the middle of the waterless district of Arabia. I do not need to say whether an effluent of the Nile even reaches this lake from the southern regions. But it is clear from what I have stated that the lake eludes Ephoros' boundaries. Therefore his argument falters on one or the other of these two points. For if he accepts this statement, which shows that the lake is outside of the porous land, and does not refute it, why did he not also show that this same phenomenon occurs in every land, if the cause lies with heat alone? But if he thinks that this same phenomenon should not be sought elsewhere because the nature of the land is not the same, the lake still remains outside these mountains. Therefore how does it increase? Before considering the first proposition, how the Nile increases, the second proposition must be investigated, how the lake increases according to this argument. ... But what shall we say about this land outside of the Kasion, which I just now mentioned? For this land is obviously also not the creation of the river, but nonetheless shares its circumstances. Moreover, you would not say that it has been deposited by another river, for the whole region aside from the lake is arid.'

Ptolemaios (30-31) places the Ekregma of lake Serbonis (Ἐκρηγμα Σιρβωνίδος λίμνης) at 63° 50' - 31° 10', in the Kasiotis region, at maximum 10 km east of Kasion and about 31 km west of Ostrakine. In another context he lists seven Egyptian lakes, including lake Serbonis (ἡ Σιρβωνίς λίμνη), which is situated at 64° 15' - 31°<sup>317</sup>. It so lies at the same eastern longitude as Ostrakine (64° 15' - 31° 10'), but 10' or about 83 stadia (ca. 15,5 km) south of that place. This is rather surprising since Ostrakine probably lay near the eastern corner of the lake, but it is quite conventional to render even a lake of a certain size as a mere point on a map, and as an average it is not impossible that the lake extended till some 83 stadia south of the coastline between Ekregma and Ostrakine, a figure approaching to some extent the maximal breadth of 50 stadia in Strabon (15). On the east-west axis the lake extended at least between these two places, which implies a minimal distance of some 167 stadia (ca. 31 km), which quite acceptably corresponds with the length of 200 stadia (ca. 37 km) in Diodoros (11) and Strabon (15).

The contents of the fragmentary and clumsily written P.Oxy. XLII, 3011<sup>318</sup>, considered part of a novel or a 'Königsnovelle' and palaeographically dated to the third century AD, is rather puzzling. The 'brother' (l. 9) of a certain Amenophis(?) (l.

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<sup>317</sup> Ptolemaios, 4, 5, 6.11 (Müller, 1901, I 2, p. 682.692). Ball, 1942, p. 105 transposes 63° 50' - 31° 10' into the 'Greenwich system' as 33° 15' - 31° 10'; 64° 15' - 31° corresponds with 33° 40' - 31°; cf. Ball, 1942, pl. 2.3.

<sup>318</sup> Cf. Parsons, P. J., P.Oxy. XLII, 1974, p. 41-43 and pl. 5, no. 3011; Thissen, Heinz-Josef, s.v. Graeco-ägyptische Literatur, in LÄ, II, 1977, col. 876 and 878, n. 40; Quaegebeur, 1986, p. 101; Kussl, 1991, p. 7.178-179; Stephens, 1995, p. 470; LDAB, 1998, 4855; Morgan, 1998, p. 3385; Verreth, 1999a, p. 223-224. I would like to thank Willy Clarysse, who brought this text to my attention and made some valuable suggestions. Because the name Αμενοφ[ ] or Αμενοφ[ ] also occurs in P.Freib. IV, 47, 10, this very fragmentary literary text has been linked with P.Oxy. XLII, 3011, but the identification is not certain at all.

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21) describes a road that takes three days to go and has a width of two cubits (ca. 1 m), while the water there is up to the knees (l. 3-8). This road, which eventually seems to lead to Memphis (?) (l. 2), is apparently situated in the neighbourhood of the Mediterranean (l. 12) and is said to be used by Hermes and Isis in search of the body of Osiris (l. 15-21):

[..λουφ|..|..|.....|..] πρὸς τὴν Μεμφε[ι]δα(?) αὕτη δὲ ἔχει ἡμε[ρῶν] τρεῶν πόρον. τὸ | [δὲ] πλάτος τῆς ὁδοῦ | [ἐστίν] πηχῶν δύο. | τὸ δὲ ὕδωρ ἐστὶν μέ[χρι] τῶν γονάτων. | [λιπιπὸν] οὖν, ἀδελφε, | ἀνδραγάθησον, ἐπι[θου] με καὶ διαπέρα[σον] τὴν θάλασσαν, | πάντα εὐθέως ἐλ[θὼν] ὡς ἂν σοι λέγω. | ταύτη δὲ τῇ ὁδῷ ὁ μέγας θεὸς Ἑρμῆς καὶ | ἡ μυριώνυμος θεὰ | εἴσιν πλανωμένη | ε..|..|..|ση ζητοῦσα τὸν βασιλέα τῶν | θεῶν Ὁσιριν. ὁ δὲ Ἀμενῶφειν(?) [ταῦτα ἀκούσας μεγάλως] ἐχάρη.

"... towards Memphis (?). This (road) involves a journey of three days (?). The width of the road is two cubits (ca. 1 m). The water is up to the knees. Therefore, brother, be a man, put me on (your shoulders) (?) and cross the sea, in all things advancing (?) at once as soon as I will tell you. By this road the great god Hermes and the thousand-named goddess Isis [went?], when she was wandering in search of the king of the gods, Osiris." Amennophein(?) (Amenophis?), hearing this, rejoiced greatly.'

Although the identification of the road in question remains hypothetical, one automatically recalls the μικρὰ δίοδος mentioned by Strabon (15), 'the small passage' between lake Serbonis and the Mediterranean, which - coming from the east - leads up to the Ekregma somewhat east of mount Kasion. Modern accounts of travellers indeed mention that the strip of land along the present-day Sabkhat Bardawil is often only a few meters wide, and that one sometimes has to wade through a 'boghaz' or inlet. In the Roman and Byzantine periods it was possible to cover the distance between Rinokoloura in the east and Pelousion in the west in three days, but because the track along the strip of land apparently made heavy going, the three days mentioned in the papyrus might cover only part of that distance. One gets the impression that Amenophis(?) wants to return from Syria to Egypt, but that the usual road south of lake Serbonis for some reason is not accessible. Someone recommends the alternative road north of the lake, although it does not seem evident to take this narrow and flooded track. The fact, however, that the gods Hermes and Isis have used it with success in ancient times, proves that the road is safe, and so Amenophis(?) is reassured. The exact meaning of the clause 'put me on (your shoulders) and cross the sea' (l. 10-12), on the other hand, is difficult to understand.

Some other elements in the text might perhaps confirm a location in the northern Sinai. If the name of the person addressed to in the papyrus is correctly read as Amenophis, he may be mentioned in some other Greek texts with an Egyptian background. In documentary sources and possibly also in the literary text of 'The oracle of the potter' the Greek transcription Amenophis reflects the Egyptian name

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Imn-(m-)Ipt (Amenemope, 'Amon in Ipet'), which occurs as a personal name, as the name of a king of the 21st dynasty and as the name of a god. In the work of Manethon, however, the name Amenophis incorrectly renders the Egyptian name Imn-ḥtp (Amenhotep - Amenos, 'Amon is pleased'), apparently referring to the kings Amenhotep of the 18th dynasty and to the prophet Amenhotep son of Hapou, who lived under Amenhotep III<sup>319</sup>. If the name Amenophis in the papyrus in fact stands for Amenhotep, one might refer to a story of Manethon, found in Flavius Iosephos<sup>320</sup>. A king Amenophis (Amenhotep III?) granted the Delta city of Auaris to the lepers of Egypt; they called in the shepherds, who had been expelled from Egypt to Jerusalem and now invaded the country again. Amenophis crossed the Nile with a large army, according to Iosephos in the neighbourhood of Pelousion, but as soon as he met the enemy, he returned to Memphis and fled to Ethiopia<sup>321</sup>. The story, however, does not tell whether the king waited for the enemy near Pelousion or in southern Palestine. Having returned from Ethiopia thirteen years later, Amenophis defeated the shepherds and the lepers, and pursued the remainder of their army to the Syrian frontier<sup>322</sup>. If the papyrus alludes to one of these expeditions, the sudden retreat to Memphis may be referred to.

According to the text of the papyrus the road has been used by the gods Hermes (Thoth) and Isis in search of the body of Osiris. Also the magical P.Oxy. VI, 886, dated to the third century AD, mentions Isis being joined by Hermes on this journey, but the text does not provide any geographical information<sup>323</sup>. According to Ploutarchos Isis went from Egypt to Byblos, where she found Osiris' coffin, but no further itinerary is given<sup>324</sup>. According to one of the versions of the story, she apparently returned to Egypt by sea and founded the city of Pelousion, which might provide a mythological link with the northern Sinai<sup>325</sup>. In the so-called Invocation of Isis (P.Oxy. XI, 1380, 73-76.93) Isis is also linked with Pelousion, mount Kasion, the

<sup>319</sup> Cf. Quaegebeur, 1986, p. 97-106.

<sup>320</sup> Manethon (FGrHist 609, F 10a; Waddell, 1940, F 54); Flavius Iosephos, *Contra Apionem*, 1, 26-31 (227-287). For a similar account, see also Chairemon of Alexandria (FGrHist 618, F 1) in Flavius Iosephos, *Contra Apionem*, 1, 32-33 (288-303).

<sup>321</sup> Flavius Iosephos, *Contra Apionem*, 1, 26 (245) and 1, 29 (274).

<sup>322</sup> Flavius Iosephos, *Contra Apionem*, 1, 27 (251), 1, 28 (266) and 1, 29 (277).

<sup>323</sup> P.Oxy. VI, 886, 5-10 (= PGM II, XXIVa, 5-10): ὁ δὲ τρόπος ἐστὶν τὰ περιῖ | τὰ γράμματα κθ' | δι' ὧν ὁ Ἑρμῆς κὲ ἡ Ἴσις | ζητοῦσα ἑαυτῆς τὸν ἀδελφὸν κὲ ἄνδρα Ὀσίρειν ('the method is concerned with the 29 letters used by Hermes and Isis when searching for her brother and husband Osiris'); cf. Rusch, Adolf, s.v. Thoth, in RE, VI A 1, 1936, col. 371 and Kurth, Dieter, s.v. Thot, in LÄ, VI, 1986, col. 520, n. 192.

<sup>324</sup> Ploutarchos, *De Iside et Osiride*, 15 (357A); cf. Griffiths, 1970, p. 319-322.

<sup>325</sup> Ploutarchos, *De Iside et Osiride*, 17 (357E); cf. Griffiths, 1970, p. 334-335.

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Ekregma of lake Serbonis and Rinokoloura, but is difficult to assess why Isis is said to be worshipped at those places. In a prophetic dream, referring to the invasion of Egypt by Antiochos IV in 168 BC, Isis and Thoth apparently cross the Mediterranean between Syria and Alexandria, but the story is more likely a political allegory, than an adaptation of the Osiris-myth<sup>326</sup>.

The general description in the papyrus, therefore, seems to match the situation of the northern Sinai, and the road mentioned in P.Oxy. XLII, 3011 may well refer to the track along the strip of land between lake Serbonis and the Mediterranean. We can only hope that new fragments of the same account will confirm this hypothesis.

Basileios (36) in the 4th century AD, but probably using older sources, mentions lake Serbonis, which he situates between Egypt and Palestine in the Arabian desert, as an example for a lake that contains much salt and earth<sup>327</sup>:

... οὐδ' ἂν ὅτι μάλιστα τὸ ἄλμυρόν καὶ γεῶδες τινες παραπλήσιον ἔχωσι τῇ μεγάλῃ θαλάσσει, ὡς ἦ τε Ἀσφαλτίτις λίμνη ἐπὶ τῆς Ἰουδαίας καὶ ἡ Σερβωνίτις ἢ μεταξὺ Αἰγύπτου καὶ Παλαιστίνης τὴν Ἀραβικὴν ἔρημον παρατείνουσα.

'... même si quelques-uns d'entre eux sont, comme la vaste mer, aussi chargés de sel et de terre, qu'il est possible; tel, le lac Asphaltique en Judaea et le lac Serbonis, qui s'étend entre l'Égypte et la Palestine, le long du désert d'Arabia.'

Stephanos of Byzantion (40) locates lake Serbonis near the Kasion. He mentions the forms Σίρβων (genitive Σίρβωνος) and Σιρβώνιος, which are not known from other sources<sup>328</sup>:

Σίρβων καὶ Σιρβωνίς, λίμνη πλησίον τοῦ Κασίου. τὸ κτητικὸν Σιρβώνιος ἀπὸ τῆς Σίρβωνος γενικῆς, ὡς Κιθαιρώνιος καὶ Ἀργανθώνιος.

'Sirbon and Sirbonis, a lake near the Kasion. The adjective is Sirbonios, based upon the genitive case Sirbonos, like Kithaironios and Arganthonios.'

<sup>326</sup> O.Hor 1, 12-14 (Ray, 1976, p. 7-14; cf. p. 155-158): 'Isis, the great goddess of this portion of Egypt and the land of Syria, is walking upon the face (of) the water of the Syrian sea. Thoth stands before her (and) takes her hand, (and) she reached the harbour (at) Alexandria. She said, "Alexandria is secure [against (?) the] enemy. ..."'.  
<sup>327</sup> Basileios, *Homiliae in hexaameron*, 4, 4 (Giet, 1968, p. 260). Cf. the Latin translation of Eustathius, *In hexaameron sancti Basilii Latina metaphrasis*, 4, 4 (Migne, PL 53, 1847, col. 906) (38): *quamvis certae paludes salsugine maris infectae sint, sicut illa quae vocitatur Asfaltitis in partibus iudaeae, vel Serbonitis, quae inter Aegyptum Palaestinamque iacens, deserta contingit Arabiae* ('although some marshes are infected by salt, such as the one that is called Asfaltitis in the region of Judaea, or the Serbonitis that lies between Egypt and Palestine and that reaches the desert of Arabia').

<sup>328</sup> Stephanos of Byzantion, *Ethnica*, s.v. Σίρβων (Meineke, 1849, p. 572), possibly via Herodianos *De prosodia catholica*, 1 (Lentz, 1867, I, p. 22, 29-23, 1) [Σίρβων λίμνη πλησίον τοῦ Κασίου ('lake Sirbon near the Kasion')] (32), *De prosodia catholica*, 4 (Lentz, 1867, I, p. 96, 17) [Σιρβωνίς· λίμνη πλησίον <τοῦ> Κασίου, ἢ καὶ Σίρβων ('Sirbonis: a lake near the Kasion, also called Sirbon')] (33), *De prosodia catholica*, 5 (Lentz, 1867, I, p. 117, 8) [Σιρβώνιος ('Sirbonios')] (34) and Περὶ κλίσεως ὀνομάτων (Lentz, 1868, II, p. 728, 34) [Σίρβων Σίρβωνος ('Sirbon Sirbonos')] (35). Robert, 1946, p. 65-66 warns not to rely on Stephanos with reference to ethnika, because he often makes them up himself.

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He also locates the Barathra near the Kasion, which suggests that the Barathra and the lake probably lay close to each other (58)<sup>329</sup>:

Βάραθρον, τόπος κοῖλος καὶ ὄρυγμα καλούμενος, ἀφ' οὗ βαραθρίτης. ἔστι καὶ Βάραθρα πλησίον τοῦ Κασίου, τὸ ἐθνικὸν Βαραθρεὺς.  
'Barathron, a hollow place also called oryigma ('pit'), from which barathrites. There are also Barathra near the Kasion; the ethnic is Barathreus.'

The Medaba mosaic shows a lake, rather rectangular in shape and apparently man-made, between Thmouis and Tenesos and connected with the Saitic branch of the Nile. It has sometimes been identified with lake Serbonis, but its position west of the Pelousiac branch enfeebles this point of view<sup>330</sup>. The mosaic does not show any lake near its appropriate place in the northern Sinai<sup>331</sup>.

The *Souda* (42) lists the lemma Σερβωνίτις λίμνη, without any further comment<sup>332</sup>. It is not clear which source is quoted, since the expression as such only occurs as a variant in Herodotos (2) and in the *Paraphrasis* of Dionysios Periegetes (26).

## SABKHAT BARDAWIL

Ancient name: Lake Serbonis

### Topographical situation

From the 3rd century AD on the sources are silent about lake Serbonis or any marshes in the area and maybe the region became less bothered by those swamps. Anyway, at the same time the area between Pelousion and the Kasion became more densely populated; Gerra existed already in the 3rd century BC, but Skenai, Aphnaion and Pentaschoinon are new settlements in that area and the recent excavations at Tell el-Farama and Tell el-Kana'is show that Pelousion extended considerably. East of lake

<sup>329</sup> Stephanos of Byzantion, *Ethnica*, s.v. Βάραθρον (Meineke, 1849, p. 158), possibly via Herodianos, *De prosodia catholica*, 13 (Lentz, 1867, I, p. 388, 1-3) [ἔστι καὶ Βάραθρα πλησίον τοῦ Κασίου ('There are also Barathra near the Kasion')] (57).

<sup>330</sup> Cf. Jacoby, 1905, p. 43. Donner, 1983, p. 87 and n. 55 suggests that it might be the lake round Tenesos, but its appropriate position would have been north of Tenesos, and not south as on the mosaic.

<sup>331</sup> Against O'Callaghan, R. T., s.v. Madaba, in *DB, Suppl. V*, 1957, col. 696, who identifies the water surface at the northern Sinai not as the Mediterranean, but as a large lake Serbonis.

<sup>332</sup> *Souda*, Σ 245, s.v. Σερβωνίτις (Adler, 1935, IV, p. 342).

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Serbonis Ostrakine, which probably came into being in the late 1st century BC, became a wealthy city, judging from the archaeological remains in el-Felusiyat. This expansion is hard to imagine unless the geological situation had turned for the better.

The authors of the 9th-10th centuries AD often stress the sandy, waterless character of the area, but they never refer to any swamps. The account of Waqidi even explicitly mentions a desert north of the inland road, where lake Serbonis used to be<sup>333</sup>. The fact, though, that there was a road along the coast and another one more inland, might indicate that the area in between was still avoided and probably was not completely accessible.

At the latest in the early 12th century AD (**2, 9-10**) the region was considered again a 'sabkhat' or a salty swamp, but caravans apparently could cross it without any problems. The lake itself maybe only came into real existence again in the 12th century AD. Shortly before 1169 AD<sup>334</sup> a bank along the Mediterranean was broken and a flood created a 'stagnum' or lake, which had a circumference of 10 miles (ca. 15 km) (**1**). After some time, but anyway before 1256 AD (**2**), it was named Sabkhat Bardawil after king Balduinus I (**2, 7, 9-10**). Since he had died in 1118 AD probably at a point some 28 to 36 km west of el-Arish, which was probably afterwards named Hadjar Bardawil ('Stone of Balduinus') after the memorial there (**3-5**), it is not unlikely that the lake has to be looked for in that area. The Arabic name was apparently not widely spread among Latin geographers and historians, who continue to speak of a 'stagnum' or just leave it nameless (**8, 11**). In the meantime the lake apparently kept on growing and in 1321 AD it had already a circumference of 20 miles (ca. 30 km) (**6**). The 18th century maps of Pococke and Robert de Vaugondy<sup>335</sup> show a coastline full of bays, indentations and small 'islands', but not a real, single lake; the detailed map of Paoletti of 1903 still mentions between el-Farama and el-Arish - from west to east and all separate from each other - a nameless Sabkhat, two very small 'lakes', a Sabkhat el-Derwish more inland, a large Sabkhat Bardawil and finally a lake el-Zaraniq, which is rich in fish since it is connected with the Mediterranean; Paoletti even adds that caravans did not take the road south of Sabkhat

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<sup>333</sup> Waqidi (translated in Butler, 1978 [= 1902], p. 195-196, n. 3). See s.v. Itineraries.

<sup>334</sup> This event is most likely linked with the tectonic restlessness in the area in the Mamluke period (1250-1517), as described in Neev, 1978, p. 427-429; cf. Oren, 1982a, p. 25, who states that el-Felusiyat near lake Bardawil was flooded 'at the end of the Byzantine period' because of tectonic movements.

<sup>335</sup> Pococke, 1743(?) in Tzachou-Alexandri, 1995, p. 16; Robert de Vaugondy, 1757, pl. 96 in Clédât, 1910, p. 233.

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Bardawil in order to avoid the dunes, but in summertime actually crossed the Sabkhat on foot<sup>336</sup>. This map of Paoletti is the more surprising since at least from the early 19th century AD on most maps, although varying in details, show one large lake called Sabkhat Bardawil consisting out of two parts, one west and one east of el-Qels, with a length of more than 80 km, starting from Mahammediya in the west and reaching almost el-Arish in the east. Most likely the map of Paoletti shows the area at a very dry moment<sup>337</sup>, while the other maps represent a wetter period. In fact, the area seems to be in motion even now, with a continuous struggle between sandy dunes and shallow water<sup>338</sup>. That is probably the main reason why the region has remained largely uninhabited in the Arab period, except at some wells on the road south of Sabkhat Bardawil.

From 1875 on most maps show a 'boghaz' or inlet at el-Zaraniq near el-Felusiya<sup>339</sup>, but on some maps between 1893 and 1910 there is another inlet half way el-Felusiya and el-Qels<sup>340</sup>. Clédat also knows an inlet immediately west of el-Qels, dug only in 1909<sup>341</sup>. Some very recent maps even show three inlets: the traditional one in the east, one halfway el-Felusiya and el-Qels and the last one about half way el-Qels and Mahammediya. So also in this respect the area is still changing<sup>342</sup>.

Already Willelmus Tyrensis (1) in the 12th century AD mentioned the abundance of fish in the lake and even now people continue to fish there<sup>343</sup>. He also tells that the presence of the lake made the region more fertile. The vegetation near Sabkhat Bardawil, though, seems to vary. The northern part of the lake is said to be almost devoid of lacustrine vegetation because of the salt, but also marine vegetation

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<sup>336</sup> Paoletti, 1903, p. 105.

<sup>337</sup> Cf. Clédat, 1923a, p. 68. For other 'dry moments', cf. van Senden, 1851, I, p. 73, according to whom the lake was completely dry ca. 1849; also Boettger, 1879, p. 196 and Chester, 1880, p. 154 tell how before 1878 the lake was partially dried up by the silting up of its single communication with the sea; according to Ascherson, 1887, p. 180-181 the lake was also dry in 1887.

<sup>338</sup> Cf. Pisanty, 1981, p. 38.

<sup>339</sup> Cf. also Ascherson, 1887, p. 180; Chester, 1880, p. 157; Müller, 1901, I 2, p. 682; Kiepert, 1904, p. 100; Clédat, 1910a, p. 216-218, n. 1 and p. 219.

<sup>340</sup> Cf. also Ascherson, 1887, p. 180, who heard of a boghaz there about 1877, and Clédat, 1923a, p. 78, who noticed that the boghaz had moved between 1910 and 1914.

<sup>341</sup> Cf. Clédat, 1910a, p. 211-212, p. 216-218, n. 1, the map p. 213 and map A.

<sup>342</sup> For a geographical study of the inlets in the period 1968-1978, cf. Pisanty, 1981, p. 35-73; Klein, 1987, p. 263-273 [Hebrew].

<sup>343</sup> Cf. Clédat, 1910a, p.211-212.219; Jarvis, 1938, p. 33; Ben-Tuvia, 1987, p. 441-446 [Hebrew].



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was lacking<sup>344</sup>. The southern shores of the lake, on the other hand, have big areas of rushes and reeds<sup>345</sup>.

### Identifications

The dimensions of both lake Serbonis and Sabkhat Bardawil probably varied a lot in the course of time, but it is most likely that the central part of Sabkhat Bardawil, between el-Felusiyat and el-Qels, corresponds with the old lake Serbonis. The western tail end of Sabkhat Bardawil in the neighbourhood of Mahammediya can perhaps be linked with the Barathra of Pelousion<sup>346</sup>.

The strip of land between the lake and the Mediterranean, nowadays running from el-Felusiyat via el-Qels to Mahammediya, existed already in antiquity, since a similar passage is mentioned by Strabon north of lake Serbonis, but according to this account it only extended from the eastern tail end of the lake till the Ekregma east of the Kasion. The present-day inlets constantly change in location and number and cannot be used to identify the Ekregma or 'Outlet' of the classical sources.

van Senden incorrectly distinguishes lake Serbonis and Sabkhat Bardawil and identifies the latter with a lake between el-Arish and Rafah, while locating the grave of Balduinus in Sheikh Yehud. There is little doubt that actually Sabkhat el-Sheikh and Sheikh Zuweid are referred to<sup>347</sup>.

According to Tadmor 'the sealed harbour of Egypt', mentioned for the year 716 BC in two Assyrian texts, 'fits well' the bay (sic) of Sabkhat Bardawil, but there is little evidence to strengthen this hypothesis<sup>348</sup>.

### Etymology

The term 'sabkhat' refers to a kind of swamp with salt water<sup>349</sup> and is often just translated as 'lake' ('lac', 'Meer') or 'lagoon'. As stated by Sibt ibn el-Djeuzi (2), Abu'l-Feda (7) and Abu'l-Mahasin (10), Sabkhat Bardawil is named after king Balduinus I

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<sup>344</sup> Chester, 1880, p. 155-156.

<sup>345</sup> Jarvis, 1938, p. 32-33.

<sup>346</sup> See s.v. Lake Serbonis.

<sup>347</sup> van Senden, 1851, I, p. 81-83. See s.v. Sabkhat el-Sheikh and s.v. Sheikh Zuweid.

<sup>348</sup> Tadmor, 1958, p. 78, n. 197. See s.v. The sealed harbour of Egypt.

<sup>349</sup> Cf. Sepp, 1863, II, p. 534 ('Salzwüste'); de Slane, 1872, p. 11; Griffith, 1890, p. 35-36 ('salt-plain'); Wehr, 1979, p. 458 s.v. *sabaka* ('smooth wet saline plane; shallow salt lake, salt swamp').

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who died in 1118 AD, probably at some 28 to 36 km west of el-Arish; his intestines were buried at a place called Hadjar Bardawil and it is maybe via this memorial that the salt region and the lake that came into being in its neighbourhood, received the name of Sabkhat Bardawil. In an itinerary of the late 13th century AD (3-5) the spot where Balduinus died, has rather incorrectly received the name of the lake itself.

### Analysis of the sources

In 1115/1116 AD Balduinus I captured a caravan coming from Egypt in a 'sabkhat' in the northern Sinai, an event that eventually led to a truce that had to protect merchants in the area. Sibte ibn el-Djeuzi, who wrote before 1256 AD, adds that the sabkhat in his own time was named Sabkhat Bardawil after that king Balduinus (2), but he does not explain why that name was actually given<sup>350</sup>. A similar story is told by Abu'l-Mahasin in the 15th century AD (9-10)<sup>351</sup>.

On 16 October 1169 AD king Amalricus left Askalon with an army and a fleet to attack Egypt (1). In the road stations water supplies were available and the men were spared with moderate marches. Only nine days later they arrived in el-Farama, because they were delayed by the unexpected presence of a 'stagnum' or lake caused by a flood that had happened recently. A bank had broken and the sea, entering through a small opening, had taken possession of the whole area behind the bank. People following the coast had to make a detour of 10 miles (ca. 15 km) or even more before they reached the coast again. The lake itself, however, is a blessing for the region, since it was filled with an abundance of fish, which could supply all places in the region, and it made the area more fertile. Willelmus is astonished by this new phenomenon and does not yet know a name for the lake, which probably made part of the Sabkhat Bardawil of the later sources<sup>352</sup>:

septimo igitur decimo Kalendas Novembris ab urbe predicta egredientes, per mansiones competentes, ubi aquarum non deesset commoditas, et ne peditum phalanges supra vires gravarentur itineribus moderatis, Pharamiam urbem antiquissimam nona demum die perveniunt. mediam autem hanc viam maritimam oram sequi volentibus fortuitus quidam casus nuper reddiderat productiorem. evictis namque verbere assueto et pene continuo assultu quibusdam arenarum aggeribus, qui medii inter planiora quedam loca et fretum

<sup>350</sup> Sibte ibn el-Djeuzi (translated in Recueil, 1884, III, p. 558-559).

<sup>351</sup> Abu'l-Mahasin, *Annals* (translated in Recueil, 1884, III, p. 498; cf. p. 488).

<sup>352</sup> Willelmus Tyrensis, *Chronicon*, 20, 14 (Huygens, 1986, p. 928-929); cf. the translation of Babcock, 1943, II, p. 362-363.

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vicinum interponebantur, mare, violenter fractis obicibus, viam sibi evicerat et liberum sibi introitum ad illam ulteriorem vendicaverat planiciem. quo licentia influens liberiore stagnum effecerat, ore quidem angusto sed intus campos obtinens patientiores, ubi ab illa die marinis influxionibus tanta solet piscium includi multitudo, ut non solum finitimis, verum etiam remotis urbibus uberiores et inauditas piscium prestat commoditates. occupatis igitur salo restagnante locis mari vicinioribus, volentibus secus equorea transire littora <et> in Egyptum descendere obiectum est dispendium, quod stagnum circuire et miliaribus decem vel eo amplius digredi, antequam ad littus iterum redeatur, quadam necessitate compellat. hec autem gratia miraculi et de novo facte irruptionis inseruimus, et quod pars solitudinis, prius obnoxia solis ardoribus, nunc subiecta fluctibus natantium facta familiaris, navigiis patens piscatorum implet retia et preter solitum facta fecundior fructus reddit prius incognitos.

'The army marched forth from the city (sc. Askalon) on the seventeenth day before the Kalendae of November (sc. 16 October). In order that the infantry forces might not be unduly wearied, they advanced by easy stages and made frequent use of stopping places where there was no lack of water. On the ninth day the ancient city of Pharamia was reached. They wished to follow the shore road, but a recent occurrence made it necessary to take the longer inland route. For some of the dykes between the plain and the neighbouring sea had been broken down by the constant lashing of the waves, and the waters had forced a passage through the opposing barriers. Now unchecked, they overflowed the road into the plain beyond, where they formed a pond which, although narrow at first, broadened out within the field into a much wider expanse. This influx of the sea brought in with it such a quantity of fish that thenceforth a supply of that kind of food in abundance never dreamed of before was afforded not only to the cities in the vicinity but even to places more remote. Since the sea had inundated the country along the coast, travellers who had intended to go to Egypt by the shore route were obliged to make a detour of ten miles or even more around this pond before they could return to the road. These details have been given because of the novelty of this marvellous occurrence and also because, by the constant inflow of the sea, this desert region, which was formerly exposed to the intense heat of the sun, was now covered with water and frequented by boatmen. This region, now become very productive, was filled with the nets of fishermen and yielded a harvest heretofore unknown.'

A project for a crusade containing an itinerary composed before 1289 AD is found in three different documents: the French *Via ad terram sanctam*, written ca. 1291-1293 (3); the Latin *Memoria terre sancte*, written ca. 1300-1321 (4); the Latin work of the Italian geographer Marino Sanudo (6), written in 1321 AD and based upon the *Memoria*. They describe the road from Rafah to Cairo, each with some minor variants. Between Bousser and el-Warrada, a track of 2 'liues' (ca. 8 km) long, lies Sabkhat Bardawil, the spot where king Balduinus I died in 1118 AD<sup>353</sup>:

(3) par un leu ou le roi Baudoin morut, et celui leu s'apele Sabaquet Bardoill

'passing by a place where king Baudoin died, and that place is called Sabaquet Bardoill'

(4) per quemdam locum ubi mortuus est rex Balduinus, et vocatur Sabaquet Bardoil

'passing by a certain place where king Balduinus died, and that is called Sabaquet Bardoil'

(6) per locum vocatum Sabaquet Baridoil, ubi mortuus est rex Balduinus.

'passing by a place called Sabaquet Baridoil, where king Balduinus died'

It is clear that the author did not realize that the name he gave to the place where the king died, in fact was the name of the lake in the neighbourhood.

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<sup>353</sup> *Via ad terram sanctam* (Kohler, 1904, p. 432); *Memoria terre sancte* (Kohler, 1904, p. 455); Marino Sanudo, 3, 14, 12 (Röhrich, 1898, p. 121). See s.v. Hadjar Bardawil.

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Marino Sanudo (5) also quotes a *Descriptio ripariae marinae*, and mentions a 'gulf' Staxum or Stagnum, which has a circumference of 20 miles (ca. 30 km) and is probably to be linked with Sabkhat Bardawil<sup>354</sup>. Caput Staxi ('cape of the Lake') lies between the 'gulfus Rixe' (Gulf of el-Arish) and Rasagasaron (Ras el-Qasrun), and although the distances of 30 and 50 miles given in this passage are much too high, it is not impossible that this 'cape of the Lake' in fact is identical with the Ras Straki near the ancient Ostrakine, as Abel suggests<sup>355</sup>:

a predicto vero capite ad caput Staxi per garbinum navigando XXX milia computantur. dictum Staxum gulfum est, quod circumvolvitur per spatium XX milium. a capite Staxi ad Rasagasaron versus garbinum per occidentem navigando milia sunt L.

'From the cape mentioned till the cape of Staxum it is 30 miles, sailing south-west. The Staxum mentioned is a gulf with a circumference of 20 miles. From the cape of Staxum to Rasagasaron it is 50 miles, sailing west-south-west'

Abu'l-Feda (7), who wrote before 1331 AD, states that Sabkhat Bardawil is situated in the midst of the sand on the road from Egypt to Syria and is named after king Balduinus<sup>356</sup>.

The Catalan atlas of Abraham Cresques (8), made in 1375 AD, lists a 'Stagnom' or 'Lake' between Ras Al Casero (Ras el-Qasrun) in the west and Larissa (el-Arish) in the east<sup>357</sup>.

Near the hill of el-Qeis (el-Qass) - situated by the 15th century author Maqrizi between el-Sawada and el-Warrada - are some salty grounds. Here the Beduin extract salt, which they bring to Gaza and Ramla in Palestine<sup>358</sup>. Although the location between el-Sawada and el-Warrada rather corresponds with the area of el-Felusiyat, where also used to be some salt production, Maqrizi most likely refers to mount Kasion and the former area of lake Serbonis near that mountain.

The description of the northern Sinai coast on the map of Breydenbach (1486) (11) is hard to interpret. In the east lies the city of 'Larissa' (el-Arish), south of the 'Golfus de Larissa' (Gulf of el-Arish). West of the bay there is the obscure legend

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<sup>354</sup> Robert de Vaugondy, 1757, pl. 96 in Clédat, 1910a, p. 233 incorrectly makes the difference between 'G. de Staxi' in the east and 'Stan' (Stagnum) and 'l. Serbonis' in the west.

<sup>355</sup> Marino Sanudo, 2, 4, 25 (Röhricht, 1898, p. 120); cf. Abel, 1940, p. 59-60. See s.v. Descriptions of the northern coastline.

<sup>356</sup> Abu'l-Feda, *Annals* (translated in de Slane, 1872, p. 11).

<sup>357</sup> Abraham Cresques (Buchon, 1841, p. 111); cf. Fontaine, 1955, p. 59.

<sup>358</sup> Maqrizi (translated in Bouriant, 1900, p. 520). See also s.v. el-Qass.

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'Campus de gallo'<sup>359</sup>, followed further to the west by a nameless gulf or lake connected with the eastern branch of the Nile, close to the sea<sup>360</sup>. Maybe this lake represents the Sabkhat Bardawil, but the possibility cannot be ruled out the lake of Tennis is meant. Neither of the identifications perfectly matches the situation of the map, so it is better to leave the matter open.

In October 1533 AD Greffin Affagart (**12**) travelled in nine days from Qatia to Gaza, 'dedans une grande plaine de déserts, laquelle est en yver toute couverte d'eaue, en aucuns lieux d'un pied, aux autres de deux, aux autres de troys piedz de hault'; in summer time the water dries up so that people are walking 'sur le sel', but in the winter the area is covered with water again. Greffin Affagart does not mention Sabkhat Bardawil nominatim, but there is little doubt that he indeed describes the lake<sup>361</sup>.

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<sup>359</sup> Cf. 'Capo Gallo', north of Ostrakine, inserted on the basis of a 'Tabula nautica', on the map of Pococke, 1743(?) in Tzachou-Alexandri, 1995, p. 16.

<sup>360</sup> Breydenbach (Röhricht, 1901, pl. 3).

<sup>361</sup> Greffin Affagart (Chavanon, 1902, p. 61).

## KASIOTIS

### Topographical situation

Ptolemaios (1), our only relevant source of information about the Kasiotis, locates the region between Pelousion and Gerra in the west and the Judaeen border in the east, and mentions four toponyms in the area: Rinokoloura, Ostrakine and probably also Kasion are villages or towns, while the Ekregma of lake Serbonis is the former outlet between the lake and the Mediterranean, which used to be the border between Egypt and Syria<sup>362</sup>. The Mediterranean and the uninhabited desert south of the road between these two countries can be considered respectively the northern and the southern border of the area<sup>363</sup>. Ptolemaios does not add explicitly lake Serbonis to his list, but it is clear that the larger part of the region is covered by that lake and its marshes, or consists of grounds once covered by them.

Hieronymus (2) probably refers to the population of the Kasiotis region, when he states that the people of Ostrakine, Rinokoloura and Kasion spoke Syrian in the early 5th century AD.

The adjective Kasiotikos, which probably refers to the Kasiotis region, has been used to qualify boats, mirrors, construction activities, clothes and knots<sup>364</sup>.

### Administrative situation

Ptolemaios (1) mentions the Kasiotis in Egypt<sup>365</sup>, but without any links with the division of the Egyptian nomes he discusses further in his work, and it is clear that he did not consider it a proper nome<sup>366</sup>. Some scholars, however, do consider the Kasiotis an administrative unit that was in use till the 4th century AD, when it was incorporated in the province Augustamnica<sup>367</sup>. This is a mere hypothesis, not

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<sup>362</sup> Pape, 1911, p. 633 makes a mistake when he calls the Kasiotis a region in Marmarica, at the western end of Egypt.

<sup>363</sup> For Clédat, 1923a, p. 80, n. 1 the Kasiotis extended some 80 km south of the Mediterranean till it reached the desert of Tih (cf. 1923a, map), but most likely only the immediate coastal area was meant.

<sup>364</sup> See s.v. Kasion.

<sup>365</sup> Gauthier, 1935, p. 171 incorrectly thinks that the Kasiotis does not belong to Egypt.

<sup>366</sup> Cf. Lesquier, 1918, p. 385; Martin, 1996, p. 65-66, n. 152. If the Kasiotis was a proper nome, the ending would have been *Κασιώτης* (νομός).

<sup>367</sup> Clédat, 1923a, p. 80, n. 1 and p. 91.162 (who considers it a Ptolemaic or even a Saite creation); Abel, 1939, p. 534-535.547 and 1940, p. 233; Jones, 1971, p. 314.

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confirmed by any source. Neither are there any arguments to consider Kasion the capital of this region<sup>368</sup>, because the Kasiotis is apparently named after the mountain and not after the settlement<sup>369</sup>. Since it would be odd to create an administrative unit consisting only out of three villages or towns, without any relationship with the major city of Pelousion in the immediate neighbourhood, I consider the Kasiotis of Ptolemaios a purely geographical indication without administrative value<sup>370</sup>.

The name Kasiotis as such appears for the first time only in the 2nd century AD, but since the adjective Kasiotikos, known from the 3rd century BC on, has probably been derived from this toponym<sup>371</sup>, it is most likely that the name was known at least from the Ptolemaic period on, its use not being influenced by the changing Egyptian - Syrian borderline<sup>372</sup>.

### Identifications

Some scholars and maps use the name Kasiotis to indicate the whole northern Sinai from Raphia to Pelousion<sup>373</sup> and often consider it a synonym for the Arab Djifar<sup>374</sup>. Most likely, however, the name only refers to the central part of that area, extending from the neighbourhood of mount Kasion to Rinokoloura.

In the well-known story of the 12th dynasty, Sinuhe on his flight halted at the 'Isle-of-Kem-Wer' (Iw-n-Km-Wr), where he almost died of thirst<sup>375</sup>. Clédat, adopting the obsolete reading 'Lake-of-Kem-Wer' (Šy-n-Km-Wr) in B 21, identifies the place with lake Serbonis. Because version B has the foreign determinative, while versions R, AOS and C have the canal determinative, Clédat supposes that in version B not the lake, but the area around it is referred to, which he identifies with the Greek Kasiotis.

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<sup>368</sup> Against Le Quien, 1740, II, col. 545-546; De-Vit, 1868, II, p. 153; Clédat, 1923b, p. 166.

<sup>369</sup> See § Etymology.

<sup>370</sup> Cf. also Figueras, 2000, p. 60.73.177. Thomas, 1982, II, p. 17.26-27 considers the administrative indication Κάτω Χώρα, 'Lower Egypt', as the area comprised by the Delta and the lands to the east and the west of the Nile branches, which therefore would include the Kasiotis.

<sup>371</sup> See s.v. Kasion.

<sup>372</sup> Against Abel, 1939, p. 534-534. It cannot be excluded that the name Kasiotis existed already in the time of Herodotos.

<sup>373</sup> Cf. Gauthier, 1935, p. 171 explicitly including Pelousion; Jones, 1971, p. 342-343.492, explicitly including Gerra, Aphnaion and Pentaschoinon (cf. Foti Talamanca, 1974, p. 29, n. 62; Martin, 1996, p. 38-39, n. 78 and p. 82-84 with a map p. 97).

<sup>374</sup> Cf. Daressy, 1931a, p. 221. See s.v. Djifar.

<sup>375</sup> Sinuhe, B 16-22 (Koch, 1990, p. 17-20; translation in Lichtheim, 1973, I, p. 224); cf. Clédat, 1923a, p. 67, n. 2. See s.v. Lake Serbonis.

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The use of different determinatives here, however, has to be considered a mere graphic variation, and because also the identification with lake Serbonis is not to be accepted, every possible link with the Kasiotis vanishes.

### Etymology

The female adjective 'Kasiotis' probably goes with a word as γῆ or χώρα. This region is most likely named after mount Kasion, which lies in the centre of the area and apparently formed the most important landmark there<sup>376</sup>. Some scholars think that the region is named after the settlement Kasion near that mountain<sup>377</sup>, but this would hardly explain the dimensions of the area. Bonnet supposes that the region is especially dedicated to the cult of Zeus Kasios<sup>378</sup>, but there are no indications that this god was worshipped in the area east of Kasion.

### Homonyms

A Kasiotis region named after the Syrian mount Kasion is sporadically attested in sources from the 2nd to the 12th century AD<sup>379</sup>.

### Analysis of the sources

According to P.Oxy. IV, 709, which is palaeographically dated about 50 AD, the praefectus Aegypti on the annual conventus in Pelousion is expected to deal with the nomes Tanites, Sethroites and Arabia, and most scholars look for the name of a fourth nome in the damaged word [...][αν<sup>380</sup>:

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<sup>376</sup> Cf. Weber, 1974, p. 205.

<sup>377</sup> Clédat, 1923a, p. 80; Martin, 1996, p. 83.

<sup>378</sup> Bonnet, 1987, p. 128.

<sup>379</sup> Ptolemaios, 5, 14, 12 (Müller, 1901, I 2, p. 972) [Κασιώτιδος δὲ πόλεις αἶδε ('these are the cities of the Kasiotis')]; Libanios, *Oratio* 11, 53 (Foerster, 1903, p. 454) [ὁ Κάσος ... τὴν Κασιῶτιν ᾤκισε ('Kasos ... founded the Kasiotis')]; Anna Comnena, *Alexias*, 13, 12, 24 (Leib, 1945, III, p. 136) [τό τε θέμα τῆς Κασιώτιδος πάσης χώρας, ἧς μητρόπολις ἐστὶν ἡ Βέρροια, ὃ κατὰ τὴν τῶν βαρβάρων φωνὴν Χάλεπ λέγεται ('tout le territoire du thème de Kasiotis, dont la métropole est Berroia, et que l'on appelle Chalep en lange barbare')]; cf. Pape, 1911, p. 633; Schwabl, Hans, s.v. Zeus. II - Nachträge, in RE, Suppl. XV, 1978, col. 1177. The designation 'Cassia' for the region near the Syrian mount Kasion in Licentius, *Carmen ad Augustinum*, 66 (Shanzer, 1991, p. 114.120) is apparently a poetical invention.

<sup>380</sup> P.Oxy. IV, 709, 1-6; cf. Wilcken, 1908a, p. 374-379; Chrest. Wilck. 32; Jur. Pap. 82a; Thomas, 1982, II, p. 18-27.35; Haensch, 1997, p. 325-327.346. The translation in Figueras, 2000, p. 313 is not correct.



## 2. Lake Serbonis, the Kasiotis and the Djifar

- 1 [.....]σιον [.] τὸ λογιστήριον περὶ δὲ τοῦ?  
 [διαλογισμοῦ ἐστάθη ἵνα τῇ [.....]  
 [ὁ ἡγεμῶν τὸν ἀνάπλου ποιήσῃται καὶ  
 [πρῶτον?] εἰς Πηλούσιον ἀπελθὼν διαλο-  
 5 γίσσῃται Τανίτην Σεθροίτην Ἀραβίαν  
 [..]αν ἐν Μένφει γενόμενος ὁμοίως  
 Θηβαίδαν Ἑπτὰ νομοὺς Ἀρσινοίτην,  
 8 τοὺς δὲ λοιποὺς τῆς Κάτωι χώρας π[άλιν?]  
 9 εἰς Ἀλεξάνδρειαν. ...

'[ ] the auditor's office [about the con]ventus has been decreed, in order that on the [ ] the praefectus sets sail and [first?] goes to Pelousion and holds the conventus for the Tanites, the Sethroites, the nome Arabia [ ] arriving in Memphis equally for the Thebais, the Seven nomes, the Arsinoites, and the other nomes of the Lower region [again?] in Alexandria. ...'

The supplement [Αὐ]αν or [Α]αν, proposed by the editors, has convincingly been rejected by Gauthier, who himself suggested the supplement [Κασ]αν, referring to the region of mount Kasion<sup>381</sup>. The expected term, however, to indicate this region is not 'Kasia', but 'Kasiotis'; moreover, there is no proof that this area was ever a separate administrative unit, as needed in this context. Since no known toponyms in the eastern Delta are short enough to fit the lacuna, one wonders whether in fact not a toponym, but some qualification belonging to the preceding name Arabia<sup>382</sup> or an adverbial expression belonging to the following verb has to be read.

Ptolemaios (1) locates Kasion, Ekregma of lake Serbonis, Ostrakine and Rinokoloura in the Kasiotis region, east of Pelousion and Gerra<sup>383</sup>:

Κασιώτιδος  
 Κάσιον  
 ἔκρηγμα Σιρβωνίδος λίμνης  
 Ὀστρακίνη  
 Ρινοκόρουρα

'Belonging to the Kasiotis: Kasion; Ekregma of lake Sirbonis, Ostrakine; Rinokoroura'

East of Rinokoloura lies the Egyptian border with Judaea, so the Kasiotis definitely belonged to Egypt.

In *Isaias*, 19, 18 it is prophesied how one day there will be five towns in Egypt speaking the language of Canaan. Hieronymus (2) in his comment on this passage refers to the opinion that Ostrakine was one of these places, together with other cities

<sup>381</sup> Gauthier, 1935, p. 141-142; followed by Jones, 1971, p. 314 and p. 479, n. 21. The suggested supplement Ἰ'Αφθα[αν is too long for the lacuna; cf. Jones, 1937(1), p. 482, n. 62; BL III, 1958, p. 131; Calderini, 1966, I 2, p. 282; Foti Talamanca, 1974, p. 29-30, n. 62 (see also s.v. Aphnaion).

<sup>382</sup> Cf. Foti Talamanca, 1974, p. 29-30 and n. 62.

<sup>383</sup> Ptolemaios, 4, 5, 6 (Müller, 1901, I 2, p. 682). Probably because of the mention of the Judaeian city of Anthedon in the following section, the manuscripts incorrectly add Ἀνθηδών after Rinokoloura as the last city of the Kasiotis; cf. Ortelius, 1595 in Baines, 1981 [= 1980], p. 23; Nobbe, 1843, I, p. 252 ('4, 5, 12'); Müller, 1901, I 2, p. 683.988; Lesquier, 1918, p. 385, n. 4.

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in the neighbourhood of Rinokoloura and Kasion. Till his own time, he adds, people in that region speak Syrian, although living in Egypt<sup>384</sup>:

alii ares, id est ὄστρακον, hoc est testam, urbem Ostracinem intellegi volunt, et ceteras iuxta Rhinocoruram et Casium civitates, quas usque hodie in Aegypto lingua Chananitide, hoc est, Syra loqui manifestum est.

'Others understand 'ares', sc. 'ostrakon', i.e. 'sherd', as the city of Ostracine and the other cities near Rhinocorura and Casium, of which it is clear that they still today speak in the language of Canaan, i.e. in Syrian.'

The mention of Ostrakine, Rinokoloura and Kasion matches the description of the Kasiotis region in Ptolemaios, and Hieronymus most likely refers to this whole area.

In *Genesis*, 10, 13-14 the Patrusim or inhabitants of Patros are listed among the descendants of Mizraim [Egypt] son of Cham<sup>385</sup>. The Aramaic *Targum* of Pseudo-Ionathan (3), written in the 7th-8th centuries AD, renders this people as the K(a)siotai (כַּסְיֹוֹטַי) or Kasiotites, the inhabitants of the Kasiotis region<sup>386</sup>. This switch is maybe due to the fact that Patros in *Ieremias*, 44, 1 and *Ezechiel*, 30, 14 is mentioned together with places as Migdol (Magdolos), Tahpanhes (Daphnai), Soan (Tanis) and Pi-Beset (Boubastis), which all lie in the eastern Delta. This might have induced the translator to situate also Patros in that same region.

Genesis: 'Mizraim fathered the people of Lud, of Anam, Lehab, Naphtuh, (14) Patros, Casluh and Caphtor, from which the Philistines came.'

Pseudo-Ionathan: 'Mizraim begot the Nivatitites, the Mareotians, the Lybians, and the Pentasekenites, (14) the Kasiotites, the Pentapolitanians whence came forth the Philistines, and the Cappadocians'

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<sup>384</sup> Hieronymus, *Commentarii in Esaiam*, 5, 19, 18 (Adriaen, 1963a, p. 197-198). See also s.v. Ostrakine for the broader context of the passage.

<sup>385</sup> For Patros (P3-t3-rsy, 'The land of the south'), probably the region south of Memphis, cf. Odelain, 1978, p. 288-289, s.v. Patros and s.v. Patrusim.

<sup>386</sup> *Targum*, Pseudo-Ionathan, *Genesis*, 10, 13-14 (translated in Maher, 1992, p. 48; text in Clarke, 1984, p. 11 [n(a)siotai (כַּסְיֹוֹטַי) (sic), which is corrected in Maher]); cf. Le Déaut, 1978, I, p. 139. In the *Fragment Targum* (translated in Klein, 1980, p. 95) and in the marginal glosses at the *Neophyti Targum* (text and translation in Díez Macho, 1968, I, p. 54-55.521; cf. Le Déaut, 1978, I, p. 138, n. o) the Kasiotai are replaced by the Pilosai or inhabitants of Pelousion. One can wonder whether the ethnic refers to the city of Kasion and not to the Kasiotis region, 'K(a)siotai' in that case being a direct transcription of the Greek Κασιωται; the forms 'P(e)nt(a)s(e)kinai' (mentioned in the same context) and 'Pilosai' (in the parallel texts), however, seem to correspond with Πεντασχοιῦται and Πηλουσι(ῶ)ται, so the ending 'ai' indeed corresponds with the Greek ending ῖται and the modern translators rightly link the name with the Kasiotis region. See also s.v. Pentaschoinon.

## DJIFAR

### Topographical situation

The Djifar is the Egyptian desert region bordering Syria and going from Rafah to the edge of the Delta, attested from the 9th till the 15th century AD. In the 9th-10th centuries AD its western border was situated near the unknown Sikkat el-Darura (4) and near the lake of Tennis (8, 48), but in the 13th century AD near the unknown el-Khashabi (30, 31). South of the Djifar lies the desert district Tih, while the Mediterranean is its northern border (8). The most important stations in the region were el-Farama, el-Baqqara, el-Warrada, el-Arish and Rafah; later on Qatia replaced el-Baqqara and el-Farama. In the 10th century AD the capital of the district was el-Farama (17), in the 13th (?) century AD el-Arish (24 / 34) and in the 14th century AD probably Qatia (as inferred from the account of Ibn Battuta<sup>387</sup>). The name Djifar on modern maps and in modern authors<sup>388</sup> is in fact borrowed from the medieval sources and does not reflect present-day use<sup>389</sup>.

Arab authors tell how the area 'in the time of the pharaoh' was much more fertile than in their days (2, 8, 14, 30, 57). Anyway, at least till the 10th century AD the area was not so barren as it is described from the 13th century AD on or as it still looks today. In contemporary sources as Istakhri (8), Muqaddasi (18) and el-Muhallabi (23) palm trees and dates are mentioned together with vines and pomegranates, and Bernardus describes the northeastern Sinai even as a fertile region.

### Identifications

The Arab Djifar area, which extended much farther than the Kasiotis region of the Roman period, does not seem to have been a specific administrative or geographical unit already known in the Graeco-Roman period.

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<sup>387</sup> Ibn Battuta (translated in Gibb, 1958, I, p. 72). See s.v. Qatia.

<sup>388</sup> E.g. Clédat, 1916b, p. 22; Gauthier, 1925, I, p. 217.

<sup>389</sup> Cf. Abel, 1939, p. 212.

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Clédat identifies the Djifar with the biblical country of the Geshurites, but his arguments are not convincing<sup>390</sup>.

### Etymology

According to Yaqut (30) and the *Marasid el-Itilla* (45) the Djifar region has been named after the numerous 'djifar' or 'sources' that have been constructed there for the inhabitants<sup>391</sup>.

Abu'l-Feda (48) links the name Djifar to the Arab word with the meaning 'being tired', since beasts of burden are completely exhausted because of the distances between the stations and the difficulties on the way. Although followed by Maqrizi (56), this explanation seems less plausible<sup>392</sup>.

### Analysis of the sources<sup>393</sup>

The Djifar is mentioned for the first time by Ibn Khurdadbeh (1) about 844-848 AD. He states that there were seventeen stations between el-Ramla in Palestine and the Djifar. The comparison with the parallel text in Qudama (4) clearly shows that Ibn Khurdadbeh's phrasing is not correct, the seventeen stations in fact belonging to the track between the first and the last station of the Djifar region<sup>394</sup>.

The Frankish monk Bernardus travelled about 870 AD from el-Farama to Gaza through a desert where nothing grows except for some palm trees. After the road station el-Baqqara, however, a fertile region starts that goes all the way to Gaza<sup>395</sup>:

huius deserti introitus a predicta civitate incipit, et bene desertum dicitur, quoniam nec herbam, nec alicuius seminis fructum affert, exceptis arboribus palmarum, sed albescit ut campania tempore nivis. sunt autem in medio itinere duo hospitia, unum quod vocatur Albara, alterum quod vocatur Albachara, in quibus negotia exercentur a Christianis et

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<sup>390</sup> *Iosue*, 13, 3; 1 *Samuel*, 27, 8; cf. Clédat, 1923a, p. 103-106 and map ('Géhourî'); Odelain, 1978, p. 150, s.v. Geshur, Geshurites 2.

<sup>391</sup> Cf. Hartmann, 1916b, p. 374; Mouton, 2000, p. 22. Clédat, 1920, p. 107 at first supposed that the Djifar region was so named because it was a marshy plane, covered with water, but later on (1923a, p. 64) he followed the explanation of Yaqut (30).

<sup>392</sup> Cf. Reinaud, 1848, II 1, p. 150, n. 3; Abel, 1939, p. 212; Mouton, 2000, p. 21-22.

<sup>393</sup> I have no information for the moment about the exact contents of Qazwini (mentioned in Maspero, 1919, p. 70) (40), *Marasid el-Itilla* (mentioned in Le Strange, 1890, p. 30; cf. Maspero, 1919, p. 70) (43), *Marasid el-Itilla* (mentioned in Maspero, 1919, p. 70) (44), and Ibn Duqmaq (mentioned in Maspero, 1919, p. 70) (51).

<sup>394</sup> Ibn Khurdadbeh (translated in de Goeje, 1889, p. 89).

<sup>395</sup> *Itinerarium Bernardi Monachi Franci*, 9-10 (Tobler, 1879, p. 313-314); cf. the translation in Wilkinson, 1977, p. 142.

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paganis emendi, que necessaria sunt iter agentibus. in eorum vero circuitu nichil preter quod dictum est, gignit terra. ab Albachara invenitur iam terra secunda usque ad civitatem Gazam.

'This is the city from which you enter the desert, and "desert" is the right name for it: it bears neither grass nor crops (apart from palm trees) but is completely white, like a landscape in time of snow. Along this route are two inns, one called Albara and the other Albachara, and travellers can buy what they need in the Christian and pagan shops there, but nothing grows in the land round them apart from what we have mentioned. After Albachara the fertile land begins and stretches till the city of Gaza.'

It is clear that Bernardus describes the Djifar, but unfortunately he does not mention a name for the region.

For the 9th century author Ibn Abd el-Hakam (2), quoted in Ibn Hauqal (14) and Maqrizi (57), the Djifar in the time of Mus'ab ibn el-Walid, the pharaoh of Moses, was very prosperous and full of water, towns and dwellings<sup>396</sup>.

Ya'qubi situates el-Arish in 891 AD in a frontier district between el-Shadjaratain, the border of Palestine and Egypt, and el-Farama, the first city of Egypt. Probably with this frontier district the Djifar region is meant<sup>397</sup>.

In the early 10th century AD Qudama speaks of seventeen stations between Sikkat ('road', 'track') el-Mo'aiyana, the last station of Palestine, and Sikkat el-Darura, the last station of the Djifar and probably situated near the Egyptian Delta (4)<sup>398</sup>. The same author calls the southern road between el-Arish and el-Farama the road of the Djifar, opposite to the northern road along the coast (3)<sup>399</sup>. The detailed itinerary that he gives in this context, however, does not correspond with the seventeen stations already mentioned, so he probably combined different sources.

Two manuscripts of Abu Zaid el-Balchi, who died in 934 AD, contain a map on which the Djifar region is situated between Egypt and Syria (5-6)<sup>400</sup>. Istakhri, who wrote ca. 951 AD, gives the borders of the Djifar district: the Mediterranean (north), the desert of Tih (south), Palestine (east), and the lake or sea of Tennis (west), with adjoining lands going to Qolzum at the Red Sea. It is a country of continuous fine and coloured sand, dotted about with palm trees and habitations, with water here and there. In the district are found serpents a span long, which spring up from the sand and bite the camel-riders. Istakhri said that the Djifar 'in the time of the pharaoh' was

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<sup>396</sup> Ibn Abd el-Hakam (translated in Gildemeister, 1883, p. 11-12 and in Bouriant, 1900, p. 623).

<sup>397</sup> Ya'qubi (translated in Butler, 1978 [= 1902], p. 197, n. 1).

<sup>398</sup> Qudama (translated in de Goeje, 1889, p. 172).

<sup>399</sup> Qudama (translated in de Goeje, 1889, p. 167); cf. Hartmann, 1910, p. 676.

<sup>400</sup> Abu Zaid el-Balchi, map in ms. Hamburg (Miller, 1986, pl. 2-3 [8, 4]) and in ms. Bologna (Miller, 1986, pl. 2-3 [8, 1]).

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covered with villages and that water was available (8)<sup>401</sup>. The northeastern border of Egypt goes from Qolzum to the Djifar, behind el-Arish and Rafah (7)<sup>402</sup>. Gaza is for Istakhri the last city of Palestine before the Djifar starts (10)<sup>403</sup>.

Muqaddasi mentions the Djifar about 986 AD as the first district of Egypt for someone coming from Syria, with el-Farama as its capital and el-Baqqara, el-Warrada and el-Arish as its chief towns (17)<sup>404</sup>. The entire district is covered with golden sands and it is traversed by roads; it provides dates, has wells and at a distance of every 6 miles (ca. 12 km) there is a marketplace for supplies. Because of the wind covering the road, travelling in the area is sometimes difficult (18)<sup>405</sup>. The Djifar lies north of the region Tih (19)<sup>406</sup>. Muqaddasi probably relates a popular belief when he states that in the Djifar some talisman, said to have been made by the prophets, protects towns and villages against the sand (20)<sup>407</sup>.

For el-Muhallabi, who wrote about 990 AD, the most important towns of the Djifar are el-Arish, Rafah and el-Warrada. In the Djifar are a lot of palm trees, but also vines and pomegranates. The inhabitants are sedentary Beduin. Each year quails coming from over the sea are caught, just as flocks of birds of prey (23)<sup>408</sup>. In another context el-Arish is mentioned as the place of residence of the governor of the Djifar region (24)<sup>409</sup>; one can wonder, however, whether this remark, which has been quoted in Yaqut (34), actually comes from el-Muhallabi and not from some later source, since Muqaddasi (17) considers el-Farama and not el-Arish the capital of the Djifar in that same 10th century AD.

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<sup>401</sup> Istakhri (translated in Gildemeister, 1883, p. 11); followed by Ibn Hauqal (translated in Gildemeister, 1883, p. 11) (14) and Abu'l-Feda (translated in Reinaud, 1848, II 1, p. 149-150) (48); cf. Tuch, 1847, p. 173; Le Strange, 1890, p. 29-30. The Djifar is also shown on a map found in two Istakhri manuscripts; cf. the map in ms. London (Miller, 1986, pl. 2-3 [8, 2]) (11) and in ms. Leningrad 1 (Miller, 1986, pl. 4-5 [9, 2]) (12).

<sup>402</sup> Istakhri and Ibn Hauqal (16) (translated in Elad, 1992, p. 339, n. 155).

<sup>403</sup> Istakhri (translated in Gildemeister, 1883, p. 4); followed by Ibn Hauqal (translated in Gildemeister, 1883, p. 4) (13) and Idrisi (translated in Gildemeister, 1885, p. 122) (27); see also Istakhri (9) and Ibn Hauqal (15) (translated in Marmardji, 1951, p. 155).

<sup>404</sup> Muqaddasi (translated in Collins, 1994, p. 163).

<sup>405</sup> Muqaddasi (translated in Collins, 1994, p. 165).

<sup>406</sup> Muqaddasi (translated in Collins, 1994, p. 177). The Djifar is also shown on a map found in two Muqaddasi manuscripts; cf. the map in ms. Berlin 2 (Miller, 1986, pl. 6-7 [10, 2]) (21) and in ms. Leiden 2 (Miller, 1986, pl. 2-3 [8, 3]; cf. p. 51) (22).

<sup>407</sup> Muqaddasi (translated in Collins, 1994, p. 178); cf. Le Strange, 1890, p. 29.

<sup>408</sup> el-Muhallabi in Yaqut, *Mu'qam al-buldan* (Wüstenfeld, 1867, II, p. 90; translated in Toussoun, 1926, I, p. 101); cf. Wüstenfeld, 1864, p. 465-466; Gaudefroy-Demombynes, 1923, p. 6-7, n. 2.

<sup>409</sup> el-Muhallabi in Yaqut, *Mu'qam al-buldan* (Wüstenfeld, 1868, III, p. 661; translated in Toussoun, 1926, I, p. 63); cf. Wüstenfeld, 1864, p. 466; Marmardji, 1951, p. 139. Toussoun translates the name 'Djifar' in this context as 'la région des sables'.

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Ibn Zulaq (25), quoted by Yaqut (33), describes the natural riches of el-Arish and the Djifar, including fowl, birds of prey, agricultural products, dried dates, and bushels that are also exported<sup>410</sup>.

The 11th century author el-Quda'i (26), quoted in Maqrizi (53), lists the administrative areas of the Delta and mentions the 'circle' of el-Farama, el-Arish and the Djifar<sup>411</sup>.

In 1225 AD Yaqut gives an extensive description of the region (30)<sup>412</sup>. The Djifar desert starts in Rafah<sup>413</sup> and it takes seven days to travel to el-Khashabi at its western end, a place between Qatia and el-Abbasa<sup>414</sup>. Its northern border is the Mediterranean; the southern border is the sea near Qolzum and the desert of Tih<sup>415</sup>. The region consists completely of white drifting sand. It has been named after the numerous sources constructed there<sup>416</sup>. 'In the time of the pharaohs' and till the 4th century AH (i.e. the 10th century AD) it has been a large district with a lot of villages and fields; for this statement Yaqut probably refers to sources as Ibn Abd el-Hakam (2), Istakhri (8) or Ibn Hauqal (14). In his days, on the other hand, there were a lot of palm trees with excellent sweet dates that belong to people from Egyptian villages (i.e. from the Delta); when they come to harvest, they stay with all their family in huts made from palm and reed. Elsewhere Yaqut tells about some Arabs of the Djifar region who have been questioned about the place el-Qass (35)<sup>417</sup>. In another context Yaqut refers to the road station el-Warrada in the Djifar (36)<sup>418</sup>. In his *Mushtarik* Yaqut mentions mount Badr in the Djifar (37)<sup>419</sup>, probably one of the mountains more

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<sup>410</sup> Ibn Zulaq in Yaqut, *Mu'qam al-buldan* (Wüstenfeld, 1868, III, p. 660; translated in Toussoun, 1926, I, p. 62).

<sup>411</sup> Maqrizi (translated in Bouriant, 1900, p. 208); cf. Guest, 1912, p. 974; Maspero, 1919, p. 175.

<sup>412</sup> Yaqut, *Mu'qam al-buldan* (Wüstenfeld, 1867, II, p. 90; translated in Toussoun, 1926, I, p. 100-101); cf. Reinaud, 1848, II 1, p. 150, n. 3; Wüstenfeld, 1864, p. 465.466.467; Le Strange, 1890, p. 30; Hartmann, 1916b, p. 375; Gaudefroy-Demombynes, 1923, p. 6-7, n. 2. The information about the Djifar quoted by Yaqut in this context from the work of el-Muhallabi (23) has been discussed already. The description of el-Muhallabi and Yaqut is partially repeated in Qazwini (translated in Marmardji, 1951, p. 47) (39); cf. Tuch, 1847, p. 174, n. 1. I have no information about the context of Yaqut, *Mu'qam al-buldan* (Wüstenfeld, 1866, I, p. 805) (28); cf. the index Wüstenfeld, 1870, VI, p. 59.

<sup>413</sup> See also Yaqut, *Mu'qam al-buldan* (Wüstenfeld, 1867, II, p. 796; translated in Marmardji, 1951, p. 80) (32) and *Marasid el-Itilla* (mentioned in Marmardji, 1951, p. 80) (42); cf. Le Strange, 1890, p. 517.

<sup>414</sup> See also Yaqut, *Mu'qam al-buldan* (Wüstenfeld, 1867, II, p. 445; mentioned in Wüstenfeld, 1864, p. 467) (31); cf. Hartmann, 1916b, p. 375.

<sup>415</sup> See also Yaqut, *Mu'qam al-buldan* (Wüstenfeld, 1866, I, p. 912; translated in Marmardji, 1951, p. 42) (29) and *Marasid el-Itilla* (mentioned in Marmardji, 1951, p. 42) (41).

<sup>416</sup> See also *Marasid el-Itilla* (mentioned in Reinaud, 1848, II 1, p. 150, n. 3) (45).

<sup>417</sup> Yaqut, *Mu'qam al-buldan* (Wüstenfeld, 1869, IV, p. 94; translated in Toussoun, 1926, I, p. 123).

<sup>418</sup> Yaqut, *Mu'qam al-buldan* (Wüstenfeld, 1869, IV, p. 917; translated in Toussoun, 1926, I, p. 191); cf. Gaudefroy-Demombynes, 1923, p. 6-7, n. 2.

<sup>419</sup> Yaqut, *Mushtarik* (mentioned in Gildemeister, 1881, p. 86).

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south in the Sinai. In another context he states that it takes a march of five or six days to cross the Djifar, known for its terrible sand. There are some towns and villages, such as el-Arish, but most of them are in ruins (38)<sup>420</sup>.

For Dimashqi (46) in the early 14th century AD the regions Djifar and Tih belong to the 'Gaur' inferior<sup>421</sup>.

According to Abu'l-Feda (48), who wrote in 1321 AD, the Djifar region is bounded by Rafah, the Mediterranean and the lake of Tennis in the north and by the Red Sea and the Tih or desert of the children of Israel in the south. This Egyptian district is also called 'Sands of Egypt' (Raml Misr)<sup>422</sup>, and the name Djifar - according to one of his sources - is derived from an Arab word meaning 'being tired' because the region is so difficult to cross. The most important city in the Djifar is Qatia, but Abu'l-Feda also knows the places Rafah, el-Arish and el-Warrada and he refers to Ibn Hauqal (14) about the larger number of villages there 'in the time of the pharaoh'<sup>423</sup>. In another context Abu'l-Feda apparently implies - less precisely - that el-Arish and el-Farama are the eastern and western ends of the Djifar (47)<sup>424</sup>.

According to Maspero the Djifar is mentioned for the last time (at least in a contemporary context) by Ibn el-Dji'an (49), who wrote in 1375 AD<sup>425</sup>.

In 1402 AD Bakuwi (50) describes the Djifar as a region between Palestine and Egypt that could be crossed in seven days. There is nothing but white drifting sand and some palm trees<sup>426</sup>.

Maqrizi, paraphrasing older sources, situates the Djifar near the eastern border of Egypt, south of the Mediterranean (52)<sup>427</sup>. The Djifar is the name of a group of five towns: el-Farama, el-Baqqara, el-Warrada, el-Arish and Rafah (55-56)<sup>428</sup>; this description probably refers to a 10th century source. After the city of Hatein, probably situated near lake Ballah, the inhabitants of Qatia call the region 'land of Hatein and

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<sup>420</sup> Yaqut, *Mushtarik* (translated in Marmardji, 1951, p. 47; cf. Maspero, 1919, p. 70).

<sup>421</sup> Dimashqi (translated in Mehren, 1874, p. 292); cf. Le Strange, 1890, p. 41; Marmardji, 1951, p. 48.

<sup>422</sup> Cf. Hartmann, 1916b, p. 374 (who mentions the name el-Raml, 'the Sand'); Gibb, 1958, I, p. 71, n. 4.

<sup>423</sup> Abu'l-Feda, *Geography* (translated in Reinaud, 1848, II 1, p. 149-150), partially based upon the work of Istakhri (7-8) and Ibn Hauqal (13-14).

<sup>424</sup> Abu'l-Feda, *Geography* (translated in Reinaud, 1848, II 1, p. 139).

<sup>425</sup> Ibn el-Dji'an (mentioned in Maspero, 1919, p. 70).

<sup>426</sup> Bakuwi (mentioned in de Guignes, 1789b, p. 432).

<sup>427</sup> Maqrizi (translated in Bouriant, 1900, p. 39). In another passage Maqrizi (translated in Bouriant, 1900, p. 46) inconsequently places the desert of Tih south of the Mediterranean; cf. Clédat, 1923a, p. 57, n. 1.

<sup>428</sup> Maqrizi (translated in Bouriant, 1900, p. 528.544). See also el-Quda'i (26), already mentioned, quoted by Maqrizi (translated in Bouriant, 1900, p. 208) (53).



## 2. Lake Serbonis, the Kasiotis and the Djifar

land of Djifar' (**58**)<sup>429</sup>. The Djifar region goes from el-Abbasa / el-Salhiya in the west to el-Arish / Rafah in the east (**54, 56**)<sup>430</sup>. It is all sand and a story goes that this sand is the remainder of the flourishing society of the Adites destroyed by God for their arrogance (**54**)<sup>431</sup>. Another account states that 'in old times' a certain Khodam ibn el-Arian lived in the Djifar, which was known for its fertile fields, abounding with saffron, safflower, sugar cane and sweet water, till it was all covered with sand; water has become sparse, there are no more herds, nor traces of human presence (**56**)<sup>432</sup>. Maqrizi apparently follows an author such as Abu'l-Feda (**48**) when he sees a link for the name Djifar with the Arab word for 'being tired' (**56**)<sup>433</sup>.

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<sup>429</sup> Maqrizi (translated in Bouriant, 1900, p. 672). See s.v. Hittin / Hatein.

<sup>430</sup> Maqrizi (translated in Bouriant, 1900, p. 524.544).

<sup>431</sup> Maqrizi (translated in Bouriant, 1900, p. 523-524). See s.v. Autaioi.

<sup>432</sup> Maqrizi (translated in Bouriant, 1900, p. 544). See also Ibn Abd el-Hakam (**2**), already mentioned, quoted by Maqrizi (translated in Bouriant, 1900, p. 623) (**57**).

<sup>433</sup> Maqrizi (translated in Bouriant, 1900, p. 544); cf. Reinaud, 1848, II 1, p. 150, n. 3.

### 3. The area between Raphia and Rinokoloura

*Summary*

*Late and Graeco-Roman periods*

**Brook of Egypt - Arza - The sealed harbour of Egypt**

**Ienysos**

**Bytl / P3-s3-nfr - Bitylion - Bethaphou - Boutaphios**

*Arab period*

**el-Barmakia - el-Za'aqa - el-Shadjaratain - el-Ushsh - el-Kharruba - Abi Ishaq**

*Modern period*

**el-Gora - Twajjel el-Emir - Maqrnat Umm el-Arais - el-Masurah - Krum el-Bahri / Krum Matallat el-Sheikh Zuweid - Tell el-Baqar - Tell Ouashi - Krum Eid ibn Abed - Sadot - Abu Tawilah - Rasm el-Zaizeh - Yamit - The R-sites of the Israeli survey southwest of Rafah - Tell Abu Shennar - Tell Roumelat - Tell el-Aslig - Tell el-Aheimer - R54 - el-Seyaah - Tell Emedian**

**Sheikh Zuweid - Khasaha - Tell Temilat (Tell Abu Selima) - Tell el-Eqneiyin (Tell Jenein) - Tell Abu Ghanem - Tell el-Sheikh - Minet el-Ahsein - Tell Mahiza' - Tell el-Sitt - Sabkhat el-Sheikh - Dikla**

**Tell el-Qabr / Bir Gabr Amir - Tell Eziaza - A335 / A346 - (Khirbet Umm) el-Kharruba / Khirbet el-Burdj - Haruvit - The A-sites of the Israeli survey northeast of el-Arish - Lahaemmet - el-Risah - Sibil Ain - el-Barra - Khirbet el-Fath**

*Summary*

In Assyrian sources and in the bible, the border between Egypt and Palestine was formed by the so-called 'brook of Egypt', and near this brook the city of Arza was known in the early 7th century BC. There is some discussion about their exact location. The texts themselves point to a location between Gaza and Raphia, so the historical 'brook of Egypt' might correspond with the Nahal Besor in the neighbourhood of Gaza. Several centuries later, however, one passage of the Septuaginta rendered the 'brook of Egypt' as Rinokoloura, and most Christian authors therefore situated the river in the neighbourhood of that city. Rinokoloura is situated at present-day el-Arish, and the 'brook of Egypt' has therefore often been identified with the Wadi el-Arish east of that city. There are no further indications, however, that this wadi ever served as an actual borderline, and the interpretation of the Septuaginta might just be due to the fact that the political border between Egypt and Palestine in the Ptolemaic period had shifted to the south.

There are surprisingly little ancient toponyms known in the area between Raphia and Rinokoloura. The accounts of Strabon and Plinius e.g., that are quite

### *3. The area between Raphia and Rinokoloura*

detailed for the region between Rinokoloura and Pelousion, don't provide any information at all for this track of the road. In the late 8th century BC Assyrian sources refer to 'the sealed harbour of Egypt', and Herodotos knows the city of Ienysos ca. 525 BC between Gaza and lake Serbonis, but there is discussion about their precise location. In 217 BC the villages Bytl and P3-s3-nfr are situated west of the border between Egypt and Palestine. Nothing is further known about P3-s3-nfr, but Bytl most likely corresponds with the toponym Bitylion attested in the 4th-7th century AD. In the early 4th century AD the border itself was situated at Bethaphou, some 20 km southwest of Raphia, which probably corresponds with the road station Boutaphios. No doubt some of these places have to be looked for in the neighbourhood of Sheikh Zuweid, where several archaeological sites are found covering all periods, but they have hardly been excavated, so any identification remains premature. We do have some information, however, about Tell Temilat, which was inhabited from the New Kingdom till the early Roman period, and about Tell el-Sheikh at the coast, where most remains can be dated to the 2nd-4th centuries AD. It is not impossible that the latter site corresponds with the Byzantine town of Bitylion.

#### *Late and Graeco-Roman periods*

### **BROOK OF EGYPT (NAHAL MUSUR - NAHAL MISRAYIM - SHIHOR MISRAYIM)**

Modern name: Nahal Besor

#### **Topographical situation**

Nahal Musur or Nahal Misrayim, the 'brook of Egypt' that formed the border between Israel and Egypt, is attested in Assyrian sources of the late 8th and the early 7th century BC, and in the bible, where it occurs in contexts ranging from Abraham till the early 6th century BC. In Assyrian sources the brook is situated north of the city of Raphia, while it is noticed that - despite the name - there is no flowing river (**11-12**). The bible places the 'brook of Egypt' at the southern border of Israel and

### 3. The area between Raphia and Rinokoloura

sometimes connects it with the city of Gaza (15, 17). The 'brook of Egypt' therefore apparently lay between Gaza in the north and Raphia in the south<sup>434</sup>.

The toponym 'Shihor' or 'Water of Horos' occurs four times in the bible in connection with Egypt. In two instances Shihor is a synonym for the 'brook of Egypt' (15, 23), in the two other passages (*Isaias*, 23, 3; *Ieremias*, 2, 18) it probably refers to the Nile.

In the Assyrian and biblical sources the 'brook of Egypt' is the border between Israel and Egypt, although it was apparently situated at quite a distance from Egypt proper. According to Na'aman this is due to the fact that the inhabitants of Israel and the Assyrians considered the uninhabited desert south of the brook as belonging to Egypt, regardless whether Egypt actually had control over that region; it was apparently considered a kind of buffer zone specifically linked to Egypt<sup>435</sup>. The Assyrian influence did, however, at some point extend beyond the 'brook of Egypt', since in Tell Temilat, some 15 km south of Raphia, an Assyrian stratum with a fortress and a temple was excavated, which seems to be the most southern Assyrian settlement in the area<sup>436</sup>.

#### Identifications

Winckler identifies 'Musur' not with Egypt, but with southern Judaea and therefore places the 'brook of Musur' in the neighbourhood of Raphia<sup>437</sup>. Some authors agree with this location, even without following Winckler's identification of Musur<sup>438</sup>. Na'aman combines the Assyrian and biblical information about the 'brook of Egypt' and probably rightly identifies it with the Nahal Besor or Wadi Gaza, which lies between Gaza and Raphia<sup>439</sup>.

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<sup>434</sup> Cf. Na'aman, 1979, p. 68-90, who extensively examined the relevant material.

<sup>435</sup> Na'aman, 1979, p. 70.74 and 1980, p. 97-98.

<sup>436</sup> See s.v. Tell Temilat (Tell Abu Selima).

<sup>437</sup> Winckler, 1898a, p. 10-11.

<sup>438</sup> Weidner, 1944, p. 42-44 (in doubt between el-Arish and Raphia); Wiseman, 1951, p. 22.24 (probably Raphia).

<sup>439</sup> Na'aman, 1979, p. 68-86 and 1980, p. 95-100; followed by Grayson, 1991, p. 124. Eph'al, 1982, p. 105, n. 353 calls the identification of Na'aman 'another approach', but without any further discussion he sticks to the traditional identification with the Wadi el-Arish. Figueras, 2000, p. 35.172 seems to accept the identification for the period before the 3rd century BC. Bietak, Manfred, s.v. Schi-Hor, in LÄ, V, 1984, col. 625, n. 3 and Schmitt, 1995, p. 65 leave the matter open.

### 3. The area between Raphia and Rinokoloura

As the Septuaginta (20) translates the 'brook of Egypt' with Rinokoloura, most Christian authors situate the river in the neighbourhood of that city. Rinokoloura corresponds with present-day el-Arish, so most modern authors used to identify the 'brook of Egypt' with the Wadi el-Arish that flows next to that city<sup>440</sup>. They saw a confirmation for this identification in the 10th century Arabic bible translation of Saadia Gaon, where the 'brook of Egypt' in one instance has actually been translated as 'Wadi el-Arish'<sup>441</sup>. Figueras supposes that the toponym actually shifted its location and that the Wadi el-Arish was indeed called the 'brook of Egypt' in the Graeco-Roman period<sup>442</sup>; since, however, the use of the latter toponym seems limited to Christian authors who just copied the Septuaginta, I am not convinced that the name 'brook of Egypt' was actually transferred to another wadi or that the Wadi el-Arish was ever called the 'brook of Egypt' by the locals.

Flavius Iosephos rendered 'the brook of Egypt' in 2 *Regum* (19) as Pelousion, apparently identifying the brook of Egypt with the Pelousiac Nile branch<sup>443</sup>.

The (correct) identification of the 'brook of Egypt' with the wadi in the neighbourhood of Gaza by the 12th century author Willelmus Tyrensis seems to be a reinterpretation based upon the geopolitical situation of his own time<sup>444</sup>.

On older maps the 'brook of Egypt' is situated in the northeastern Sinai, but oriented east - west, parallel to the Mediterranean coast and flowing out in (an eastern extension of) lake Bardawil<sup>445</sup>. In reality there is no river or wadi that fits this location<sup>446</sup>.

### Orthographic variants and parallel expressions

#### *Assyrian sources*<sup>447</sup>

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<sup>440</sup> Cf. e.g. Odelain, 1978, p. 379, s.v. Torrent.

<sup>441</sup> Saadia Gaon (mentioned in Dalman, 1924, p. 54). See s.v. el-Arish.

<sup>442</sup> Cf. Figueras, 2000, p. 35.172. See s.v. Rinokoloura and s.v. el-Arish.

<sup>443</sup> Iosephos, *Antiquitates Iudaicae*, 10, 6, 1 (86).

<sup>444</sup> Willelmus Tyrensis, *Chronicon*, 12, 24; 20, 19 (Huygens, 1986, p. 576.937); cf. van Senden, 1851, I, p. 83-84; Schmitt, 1989, p. 66.

<sup>445</sup> See the maps of Quaeresmi, 1639 in De Sandoli, 1989, p. 464; Fuller, 1650 in Schur, 1987, p. 784; Robert de Vaugondy, 1757, pl. 96 in Clédat, 1910a, p. 233 [cf. Fontaine, 1955, p. 73]; d'Anville, 1766, p. 1 (cf. p. 218).

<sup>446</sup> See also s.v. Bir el-Masa'id.

<sup>447</sup> I do not insist on minor variations due to the transcription system used. Dependent on the edition used the country determinative is transcribed as KUR or MAT, and the city determinative is as URU or ALU.

### 3. The area between Raphia and Rinokoloura

The normal forms for Nahal Musur, 'brook of Egypt', in cuneiform texts are 'na-ḫal kurMu-ṣur' (5, 10, 11) and 'na-ḫal kurMu-uṣ-ri' (3, 4, 6, 7) - with the country determinative before Musur ('Egypt') - or also 'na-ḫal Mu-ṣur' (8) - without any determinatives. In three instances (1, 2, 12) the form 'uru-na-ḫal Mu-ṣur' is used - with the city determinative before nahal ('brook') - and has therefore been translated as 'the city of the brook of Egypt' and - according to the identification of the 'brook of Egypt' - located in el-Arish or in Raphia. Na'aman supposes that the city determinative has been used here in its more generalized sense, and he translates simply 'the brook of Egypt'<sup>448</sup>.

#### *Biblical sources*

The 'brook of Egypt' is a translation of the Hebrew expression 'Nahal Misrayim', twice simply called 'Nahal', the 'brook' (21-22), while the word 'nahar', 'river', is once used instead of 'brook' (13)<sup>449</sup>. In English bible translations this is rendered also as 'the river of Egypt', 'the torrent of Egypt' or as 'the wadi'; French translations speak of 'le torrent d'Égypte' or 'le fleuve d'Égypte'.

In the Septuaginta the 'brook (of Egypt)' has mostly<sup>450</sup> been translated rather literally with the terms χειμάρρους ('torrent', 'brook')<sup>451</sup>, ποταμός ('river', 'stream')<sup>452</sup> and φάραγξ ('ravine', 'valley', in this context probably referring to a dry riverbed)<sup>453</sup>.

Hieronymus in his Latin translation uses for 'brook (of Egypt)' mostly<sup>454</sup> the terms 'torrens' ('torrent')<sup>455</sup>, 'rivus' (brook)<sup>456</sup> and 'fluvius' ('river')<sup>457</sup>. Apparently he

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<sup>448</sup> Na'aman, 1979, p. 68 and 1980, p. 105; cf. already Alt, 1945, p. 228 and n. 3. Tadmor, 1994, p. 178, on the other hand, remains sceptical about this suggestion.

<sup>449</sup> Cf. Odelain, 1978, p. 379, s.v. Torrent; Na'aman, 1979, p. 74; Holl, 1985, p. 125, n. 2; Wevers, 1993, p. 215.

<sup>450</sup> The translation of 'brook of Egypt' with the toponym Rinokoloura in *Isaias*, 27, 12 (20) is discussed s.v. Rinokoloura; the mention of the brook in *Ezechiel*, 47, 19 (21) ('to the brook') has been omitted in the Septuaginta; as the Hebrew word 'nahal' means 'take possession of', 'inherit', but also 'brook' (cf. Amidon, 1990, p. 241, n. 45), the Septuaginta translates 'nahal', 'brook', in *Ezechiel*, 48, 28 (22) incorrectly as κληρονομία, 'inheritance'.

<sup>451</sup> *Numeri*, 34, 5 (14) ('towards the brook of Egypt'): χειμάρρου Αιγύπτου; *Iosue*, 15, 47 (17) ('as far as the brook of Egypt'): ἕως τοῦ χειμάρρου Αιγύπτου; 2 *Regum*, 24, 7 (19) ('from the brook of Egypt'): ἀπὸ τοῦ χειμάρρου Αιγύπτου; 2 *Paralipomenon*, 7, 8 (24) ('to the brook of Egypt'): ἕως χειμάρρου Αιγύπτου. Cf. the translation of *Isaias*, 27, 12 (20) ('to the brook of Egypt') by Symmachos, mentioned in Eusebios, *Commentaria in Isaiam*, 91, 27, 12-13 (Ziegler, 1975, p. 177): ἕως τοῦ χειμάρρου Αιγύπτου; according to Theodoretos, *Commentaria in Isaiam*, 7, 27, 12 (Guinot, 1982, II, p. 228) the same translation has been given by 'the other translators', οἱ ἄλλοι ἐρμηνευταί.

<sup>452</sup> *Genesis*, 15, 18 (13) ('from the brook of Egypt'): ἀπὸ τοῦ ποταμοῦ Αιγύπτου; 1 *Regum*, 8, 65 (18) ('to the brook of Egypt'): ἕως ποταμοῦ Αιγύπτου; *Iudith*, 1, 9 (25) ('to ... the brook of Egypt'): ἕως ... τοῦ ποταμοῦ Αιγύπτου. Wevers, 1993, p. 215 argues that the translator of these passages apparently had an identification with the Nile in his mind.

<sup>453</sup> *Iosue*, 15, 4 (16) ('at the brook of Egypt'): ἕως φάραγγος Αιγύπτου.

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did not stick to the rule that he stated himself while talking about the 'brook', that the word 'fluvius' was used in a Judaeian context and the word 'torrens' in an Egyptian context to denote a brook with turbulent water, but that sometimes stands dry<sup>458</sup>:

et hoc notandum, quod in Iudaeae terminis, fluvius appelletur; in Aegypti finibus, torrens, qui turbidas aquas habet, et non perpetuas.

'And one has to remark that a watercourse that has turbulent water that is not always running, is called a river within the borders of Judaea and a brook within the borders of Egypt.'

Augustinus also uses the expression 'flumen Aegypti' ('stream of Egypt')<sup>459</sup>, and Remigius speaks of a 'fluviolus' ('little river')<sup>460</sup>.

The name Shihor - also spelled Chihor, Sihor, Sichor - is used in the expressions 'the Shihor facing Egypt' (15) and 'the Shihor of Egypt' (23) to indicate the same 'brook of Egypt'. In the expressions 'the grain of the Shihor' (*Isaias* 23, 3) and 'the water of the Shihor' (*Ieremias*, 2, 18) the Nile seems to be referred to.

The interpretation of this 'Shihor' has apparently not been evident for the Septuaginta, who translate it as 'the desert facing Egypt' (15) and the 'borders of Egypt' (23)<sup>461</sup>; in *Ieremias*, 2, 18 Shihor has been translated as 'Geon' (Γήων), the name of one of the rivers in Paradise<sup>462</sup>; in *Isaias* 23, 3 the toponyms have been left out<sup>463</sup>.

In the *Vulgata* Hieronymus renders 'from the Shihor facing Egypt' as 'a fluvio turbido qui inrigat Aegyptum' ('from the turbulent river that gives water to Egypt') (15), 'the water of the Shihor' as 'aqua turbida' ('the turbulent water') (*Ieremias*, 2, 18), both in the same tradition, and a third time he just transliterates 'from the Shihor of Egypt' as 'a Sior Aegypti' (23). In the *Epitaphium sanctae Paulae* he combines

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<sup>454</sup> The mention of the 'brook of Egypt' in *Judith*, 1, 9 (25) has been omitted in the *Vulgata*; just as the Septuaginta, Hieronymus translates 'nahal' in *Ezechiel*, 48, 28 (22) not as 'brook', but as 'hereditas', 'inheritance'.

<sup>455</sup> *Numeri*, 34, 5 (14), *Iosue*, 15, 4.47 (16-17), *Isaias*, 27, 12 (20), 2 *Paralipomenon*, 7, 8 (24): ad torrentem Aegypti; *Ezechiel*, 47, 19 (21): torrens.

<sup>456</sup> *I Regum*, 8, 65 (18): ad rivum Aegypti; 2 *Regum*, 24, 7 (19): a rivo Aegypti.

<sup>457</sup> *Genesis*, 15, 18 (13): a fluvio Aegypti.

<sup>458</sup> Hieronymus, *Commentarii in Esaiam*, 8, 27, 12 (Adriaen, 1963a, p. 352).

<sup>459</sup> Augustinus, *Quaestiones in Heptateuchum*, 6, 21, 3 (Fraipont, 1958, p. 327) and *De civitate Dei*, 16, 24. See s.v. Rinokoloura.

<sup>460</sup> Remigius Antissiodorensis, *Commentarius in Genesim*, 15, 18 (Migne, PL 131, 1853, col. 87).

<sup>461</sup> *Iosue*, 13, 3 (15) ('from the Shihor facing Egypt'): ἀπὸ τῆς ἀοικῆτος τῆς κατὰ πρόσωπον Αἰγύπτου; 1 *Paralipomenon*, 13, 5 (23) ('from the Shihor of Egypt'): ἀπὸ ὀρίων Αἰγύπτου.

<sup>462</sup> For the river Geon, cf. Odelain, 1978, p. 152, s.v. Gihôn 1. For the translation of Shihor as Geon, which is perhaps due to a scribal mistake, cf. Tov, 1992, p. 257.

<sup>463</sup> Eusebios, *Onomasticon*, s.v. Σιώρ (Klostermann, 1904, p. 156) - followed by Hieronymus, *Liber de situ et nominibus locorum Hebraicorum*, s.v. Sior (Klostermann, 1904, p. 157) - apparently mixes the river Shihor of *Iosue*, 13, 3 (15) with the place Sior of *Iosue*, 15, 54 and speaks of Σιώρ. ἡ κατὰ πρόσωπον Αἰγύπτου (Sior. locus contra faciem Aegypti) ('Sior. The place facing Egypt').

### 3. The area between Raphia and Rinokoloura

both indications for Shihor in the expression 'ad Aegypti fluvium Sior, qui interpretatur turbidus' ('to the river of Egypt Sior, which means turbulent')<sup>464</sup>. In *Isaias*, 23, 3 'the grain of the Shihor' becomes 'semen Nili' ('the seed of the Nile').

#### Etymology

The toponyms Musur or Musri in the Assyrian texts and Misrayim in the bible all indicate Egypt. Several etymologies for the word have been suggested<sup>465</sup>.

The name Shihor is a Hebrew transcription of the Egyptian Šy-Ḥr, 'Water of (the god) Horos' and probably referred to a Nile branch in the Egyptian Delta<sup>466</sup>. In the course of time it became a more general term for 'river' and was also used to denote the 'brook of Egypt'<sup>467</sup>. For unknown reasons the word 'shihor' for Hieronymus apparently meant 'turbulent' or 'a turbulent river'.

#### Homonyms

The name 'river of Egypt' usually indicates the Nile, as it has already been noted by some Christian authors as Augustinus. It is therefore no surprise that Hieronymus considers the 'brook of Egypt' in one context as a part of that Nile<sup>468</sup>.

As already mentioned, the term 'Shihor' in the bible in some instances is used to indicate the 'brook of Egypt' (**15, 23**), in others to refer to the Nile. The element Shihor is also found in the bible for the hydronym Shihor-Libnath in Israel. The name Shihor / Šy-Ḥr occurs in Egyptian sources for the Nile branch in the eastern Delta, but also for other hydronyms or toponyms in Egypt<sup>469</sup>.

#### Analysis of the sources

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<sup>464</sup> Hieronymus, *Epistulae*, 108 (*Epitaphium sanctae Paulae*), 14 (Labourt, 1955, p. 175).

<sup>465</sup> Cf. the outline in Fontinoy, 1989, p. 93-97. Even if in some instances the toponym does not refer to Egypt, but to some country in northwest Arabia (cf. Winckler, 1898a, p. 11; Abel, 1939, p. 530, n. 1; Fontinoy, 1989, p. 94, n. 1 and p. 97), this is not the case here.

<sup>466</sup> Cf. Quaegebeur, 1994, p. 170-171 for the meaning of the word šy, which can indicate a pond or lake, a well, a flooded area, a source, a canal or - in this case - even the Nile.

<sup>467</sup> Cf. Odelain, 1978, p. 351, s.v. Shihor; Na'aman, 1980, p. 96; Bietak, Manfred, s.v. Schi-Hor, in LÄ, V, 1984, col. 623 and col. 625, n. 3.

<sup>468</sup> Hieronymus, *Commentarii in Amos*, 3, 6, 12-15 (Adriaen, 1969, p. 310).

<sup>469</sup> Cf. Gauthier, 1928, V, p. 124-126; Odelain, 1978, p. 351, s.v. Shihor; Na'aman, 1980, p. 96-100; Bietak, Manfred, s.v. Schi-Hor, in LÄ, V, 1984, col. 624-625. For the eastern Delta Shihor, see also s.v. Tcharou.



### 3. The area between Raphia and Rinokoloura

#### *Assyrian sources*

During a campaign in 734 BC Tiglath-pileser III (**1**) erected a royal stele at the 'brook of Egypt'<sup>470</sup>. According to a very damaged prism of Sargon II (**2**) the king settled some exiles in the year 716 BC near the 'brook of Egypt'<sup>471</sup>. Probably in the last years of his reign the same king (**3**) described the range of his conquests, which went as far as the 'brook of Egypt'<sup>472</sup>.

In 679/678 BC, the second year of king Assarhaddon, the city of Arza near the 'brook of Egypt' was captured and sacked. The people were plundered and king Asuhili, his son and his council were taken prisoner and carried off to Assyria (**4-10**)<sup>473</sup>.

In 671 BC Assarhaddon (**11-12**) organised an expedition against Egypt. Leaving from Tyros he went as far as the town of Raphia, beyond - or 'near' according to another interpretation - the border of the 'brook of Egypt'; this place is without a (flowing) river, the astonished writer adds. The army looked for water in wells and started a long march to Egypt, which was conquered successfully<sup>474</sup>.

#### *Biblical sources*

In *Numeri*, 34, 5 (**14**) the 'brook of Egypt' is part of the southern border of the country that Yahweh promised to Moses. In *Iosue*, 15, 4 (**16**) it is the southern border

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<sup>470</sup> Tiglath-pileser III, Summary inscription 8, 18 (Wiseman, 1951, p. 23; Tadmor, 1994, p. 178-179); cf. Wiseman, 1951, p. 22.24; Na'aman, 1979, p. 68-69 and 1980, p. 105; Tadmor, 1994, p. 156.178. For the possible reading 'City of the brook of Egypt', see § Orthographic variants.

<sup>471</sup> Sargon II, Assur prism, B, 5 (Weidner, 1944, p. 42; Na'aman, 1979, p. 71).

<sup>472</sup> Sargon II, Prism, 13 (Lyon, 1883, p. 2.30-31); cf. Na'aman, 1979, p. 72.

<sup>473</sup> Assarhaddon, Ninive prism class B, I, 55 = Heidel prism, I, 57 (Borger, 1956, p. 50-51; Heidel, 1956, p. 14-15) (**4**); Ninive prism class A, III, 39 (Borger, 1956, p. 50) (**5**); Ninive prism class C (episode 5) (Borger, 1956, p. 50-51) (**6**) [cf. Kalach A, 16 (Borger, 1956, p. 33) = Tarbis A, 7b-8a (cf. Borger, 1956, p. 32-33.50.71) (**7**)]; Assur-Babel E, Ro 3b (Borger, 1956, p. 86) (**8**); Fragment A, Ro [16] (Luckenbill, 1927, II, p. 217, § 545; cf. Borger, 1956, p. 110) (**9**); Fragment B, Ro 14 (Borger, 1956, p. 110-111) (**10**); cf. *Assarhaddon Chronicle*, 7-8 (Grayson, 1975, p. 125). See also s.v. Arza.

<sup>474</sup> Assarhaddon, Fragment F, Ro 17 (Borger, 1956, p. 112; Na'aman, 1979, p. 74) (**11**); there is no consensus about the translation of this passage (Oppenheim in Pritchard, 1969 [= 1950], p. 292: 'Rapihu (in) the region adjacent to the "Brook of Egypt"'; Borger: 'Raphia, an der Seite des "Baches von Ägypten"'; Na'aman: 'Raphia, beyond the border of the Brook of Egypt'; Eph'al, 1982, p. 104-105, n. 349: 'Raphia (in) the region close to the Brook-of-Egypt'; Rainey, 1982, p. 131: 'Raphia up to the Brook of Egypt'; Rainey, 2001, p. 60: 'to Raphia, towards the Brook of Egypt'. A parallel is the damaged Fragment G, 6 (Borger, 1956, p. 113; Na'aman, 1979, p. 69) (**12**); cf. Weidner, 1944, p. 12, n. 12.

### 3. The area between Raphia and Rinokoloura

of the tribe of Judah. When the towns of this territory are listed, Gaza is mentioned in 15, 47 (**17**) with its dependencies and its villages as far as the 'brook of Egypt'. A somewhat different description of the southern borders of the twelve tribes of Israel is given in *Ezekiel*, 47, 19 (**21**) (repeated in *Ezekiel*, 48, 28 (**22**)), but again the 'brook' is part of that border.

To celebrate the dedication of the temple Solomon invites all Israel from the pass of Hamath in the north to the 'brook of Egypt' in the south (*1 Regum*, 8, 65 (**18**); verbatim quoted in *2 Paralipomenon*, 7, 8 (**24**)). As also David summoned all Israel from the Shihor of Egypt to the pass of Hamath to transport the ark (*1 Paralipomenon*, 13, 5 (**23**)), it is clear that the Shihor of Egypt - at least in this context - is just another name for the 'brook of Egypt'<sup>475</sup>.

The expression Shihor was already used in *Iosue*, 13,3 (**15**), where Yahweh urged Joshua to conquer the Canaanite territory 'from the Shihor facing Egypt'<sup>476</sup> to the frontier of Ekron in the north, including - as the first place in the south - the city of Gaza. In two other instances the term Shihor probably does not refer to the 'brook of Egypt', but to the Nile in general or to one of its eastern branches<sup>477</sup>. Describing the city of Sidon Isaias states that 'the grain of the Shihor, the harvest of the Ye'or' (sc. the Nile) formed her revenue (*Isaias*, 23, 3); a parallelism is usually seen here between Shihor and the Nile. Ieremias complains that Israel obeys to the people of Noph (Memphis) and Tahpanhes (Daphnai) (*Ieremias*, 2, 16) and continues: 'What is the good of going to Egypt now to drink the water of the Shihor? What is the good of going to Assyria to drink the water of the river (sc. the Euphrates)' (*Ieremias*, 2, 18); Shihor obviously corresponds with the Nile and from the mention of the two Egyptian towns one might deduct that the watercourse was situated in the Delta, possibly in the neighbourhood of one of these places.

In *Genesis*, 15, 18 (**13**) Yahweh gives Abraham's descendants the country stretching from the 'river of Egypt' till the Euphrates. This is the only time in the bible that the expression 'river of Egypt' is used instead of the usual 'brook of Egypt' and some think that here too the Nile is meant<sup>478</sup>. Other scholars put the mention on one

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<sup>475</sup> Cf. Odelain, 1978, p. 379, s.v. Torrent.

<sup>476</sup> Translation as in Bible, 1990, p. 210; in other translations also 'Shihor before Egypt' or 'Shihor east of Egypt' is found; cf. Na'aman, 1980, p. 96-98.

<sup>477</sup> Cf. Odelain, 1978, p. 276, s.v. Nil; Na'aman, 1980, p. 96.

<sup>478</sup> Cf. Na'aman, 1980, p. 96.98 and Wevers, 1993, p. 215, who points out that this was the view of the Septuaginta translator.

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line with the other occurrences of the 'brook of Egypt'<sup>479</sup> and indeed the opposition 'brook of Egypt' - Euphrates also occurs in the two following passages, where nobody looks for the Nile.

According to *Isaias*, 27, 12 (20) the Israelites will be gathered by Yahweh from the Euphrates to the 'brook of Egypt'. A similar opposition is found in *2 Regum* 24, 7 (19): It was impossible for the Egyptian king Necho II to leave his country, because the Babylonian king Nebuchadnezzar had reconquered the region from the 'brook of Egypt' to the Euphrates, that Necho had held from about 609 to 605 BC. In the twelfth year of his reign (ca. 592 BC) - thus *Iudith*, 1, 1-12 (25) - the same king Nebuchadnezzar summoned everybody in his kingdom for a military expedition against Ekbatana; the messengers went also to the 'brook of Egypt' (1, 9) and further on towards Taphnas, Ramesse, the country of Gesem, Tanis, Memphis and the rest of Egypt; in the end the king is furious because nobody obeyed him. It is surprising to find the name of a watercourse between the names of regions and towns, but the author of *Iudith* is known for its imaginative geographical and historical settings<sup>480</sup>.

The biblical texts have often been translated in Greek (the Septuaginta in the 3rd-2nd century BC; an only fragmentarily preserved translation made by Symmachos before the 3rd century AD; e.a.) and in Latin (the *Vetus Latina*, ca. 150-250 AD; the *Vulgata* of Hieronymus, written ca. 391-406 AD). Most of these instances have been discussed under § Orthographic variants, and they will not be repeated here. Neither did it seem useful to list the numerous other attestations of the 'brook of Egypt' in Christian literature that do not give any relevant geographical, historical or etymological information<sup>481</sup>.

## ARZA

Modern name: Tell Djamma

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<sup>479</sup> Cf. Odelain, 1978, p. 379, s.v. Torrent. For what it is worth: also Augustinus, *Quaestiones in Heptateuchum*, 6, 21, 3 (Fraipont, 1958, p. 327) and *De civitate Dei*, 16, 24 explicitly denies that the Nile is meant.

<sup>480</sup> Compare the translation of Hieronymus, *Vulgata*, *Iudith*, 1, 9-10, who omits most of the Egyptian toponyms and only mentions the 'terra Iesse'.

<sup>481</sup> For the Greek and Latin Christian authors linking the 'brook of Egypt' with the city of Rinokoloura, see the discussion s.v. Rinokoloura. For the rabbinic sources, cf. Schwab, 1878, II, p. 380-383; Dalman, 1924, p. 54; Golb, 1974, p. 143; Reeg, 1989, p. 435-436; Tsafirir, 1994, p. 215.

### **Topographical situation**

The city of Arza is attested in Assyrian sources of the early seventh century BC (1-7), which situate it next to the 'brook of Egypt', without further details.

The city was ruled by a king Asuhili and his council. It apparently belonged to the Assyrian empire (6-7), possibly since the campaign of Tiglath-pileser in 734 or 733/732 BC that reached the 'brook of Egypt'<sup>482</sup>. Perhaps the city revolted on the accession of Assarhaddon in 681 BC, but soon afterwards it was sacked by the Assyrians in 679/678 BC. It is therefore not necessary to consider this act as one of the preliminary steps of the Assyrian king for the conquest of Egypt<sup>483</sup>.

For Abel Asuhili is a Semitic name and he calls him an Arab king without any further arguments<sup>484</sup>. Actually, the texts do not offer any ethnic information about Arza.

### **Identifications**

With the elimination of the reading Arzani by Weissbach every link with the river Arzania in Asia Minor<sup>485</sup> has become impossible.

Arza has been searched for in the Syrian desert<sup>486</sup> or between Raphia and the Wadi el-Arish<sup>487</sup>, but as long as the 'brook of Egypt' was identified with the Wadi el-Arish, a lot of scholars situated Arza on the place of the later el-Arish<sup>488</sup>. Thompson even looked for an unacceptable phonetic link between Arza and el-Arish<sup>489</sup>.

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<sup>482</sup> Cf. Tiglath-pileser III, Summary inscription 8, 18 (Wiseman, 1951, p. 23; Tadmor, 1994, p. 178-179). See also s.v. Brook of Egypt.

<sup>483</sup> Against Weissbach, 1928, p. 108-110 and Spalinger, 1974a, p. 299.

<sup>484</sup> Abel, 1939, p. 530, n. 1 and p. 538. Ebelich, Erich, s.v. Asuhili, in RdA, I, 1928, p. 309 does not offer any etymology for the name.

<sup>485</sup> So Tiele quoted in Weissbach, 1928, p. 109; Landsberger, 1927, p. 74.79 and p. 79, n. 2.

<sup>486</sup> Winckler, 1898a, p. 11.

<sup>487</sup> Tadmor, 1966, p. 97, n. 43.

<sup>488</sup> Olmstead, 1923, p. 376; Weissbach, 1928, p. 108-110; Ebelich, Erich, s.v. Arşâ, in RdA, I, 1928, p. 154; Honigmann, Ernst, s.v. Arzašapa, in RdA, I, 1928, p. 161; Thompson, 1931, p. 18, n. 1; Abel, 1939, p. 530, n. 1 and p. 537-539; Steiner, 1984, p. 114 (tentatively); Kitchen, 1986 [= 1973], p. 391, § 352, n. 869; Grayson, 1975, p. 252; Eph'al, 1982, p. 104-105 ('in the vicinity of el-Arish'); Har-El, 1987b, p. 738, fig. 10; Rainey, 2001, p. 60.

<sup>489</sup> Thompson, 1931, p. 18, n. 1; followed by Abel, 1939, p. 538.

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Except for a vague phonetic similarity, there are no reasons to identify Arza and Ariza, which is mentioned only once in the 6th century AD as a city in southern Palaestina I<sup>490</sup>.

Since the 'brook of Egypt' is in fact the Nahal Besor, the identification with el-Arish has become impossible. Na'aman therefore quite convincingly places Arza in Tell Djamma on the southern bank of the Nahal Besor and identifies Arza with the Yurza (yrđ) known in the second half of the second millennium BC and with the places Jarda and Orda known in classical sources<sup>491</sup>.

#### Orthographic variants

The usual spelling for the city of Arza is <sup>uru</sup>Ar-za-a, with a city determinative<sup>492</sup>. In two instances the name is written with the country determinative <sup>kur</sup>Ar-za-a (1-2)<sup>493</sup>, but their parallels also have the city determinative and Na'aman considers this spelling therefore a mere scribal error<sup>494</sup>.

#### Etymology

The name Arza may have a Semitic origin<sup>495</sup>, but no etymology has been proposed.

#### Homonyms

The name <sup>uru</sup>Bīt <sup>m</sup>Ar-ša-' in Neo-Babylonian documents is no toponym, but an anthroponym<sup>496</sup>.

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<sup>490</sup> Cf. Aharoni, 1974, p. 90 (Hebrew); Eph'al, 1982, p. 105; Schmitt, 1989, p. 65 and 1995, p. 65-66. See s.v. Ariza.

<sup>491</sup> Na'aman, 1979, p. 68-90 and 1980, p. 105; followed by Schmitt, 1989, p. 65; Grayson, 1991, p. 124. For Yurza, cf. Eph'al, 1982, p. 104-105; Ahituv, 1984, p. 202-203.

<sup>492</sup> Cf. Parpola, 1970, p. 37. Weissbach, 1928, p. 108-110 corrected the older readings Ar-za-ni (Arzani), Ar-za-[ni]-a (Arzania) and Ar-za-a-šá-pa (Arzašapa, Arza-asapa). The *Assarhaddon Chronicle* (9) spells <sup>uru</sup>Ar-za-[a]-a, a form I did not find explained.

<sup>493</sup> Assarhaddon, Heidel prism, I, 57 (Heidel, 1956, p. 14-15; cf. Parpola, 1970, p. 37) (1) and Ninive prism class A, A<sup>5</sup>, III, 43 (Scheil, 1914, p. 16-17; cf. Weissbach, 1928, p. 108-110) (2).

<sup>494</sup> Na'aman, 1979, p. 72, n. 8. Against Weissbach, 1928, p. 110, who creates a region with the name Arza, next to a city Arza; also Smith, 1928, p. 625, n. 1 accepts the country determinative.

<sup>495</sup> Cf. Abel, 1939, p. 538.

<sup>496</sup> Cf. Eph'al, 1978, p. 80; Na'aman, 1979, p. 72, n. 8; Na'aman, 1980, p. 106.

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#### Analysis of the sources

For the second year of Assarhaddon, i.e. in 679/678 AD<sup>497</sup>, the *Assarhaddon Chronicle* (9) mentions the sack of the city of Arza<sup>498</sup>:

'In that same year Arza was captured (and) sacked. [The people] were plundered, the king and [his] son were taken prisoner.'

Other (groups of) texts (1-8)<sup>499</sup> from the reign of Assarhaddon give more detailed information. The city of Arza is situated next to the 'brook of Egypt'. King Asuhili - together with his councillors - was taken to Ninive as a prisoner and placed in front of the great gate, chained together with some animals. Two texts (6-7) also allude to the fact that Asuhili had cast off the yoke of Assarhaddon.

Heidel prism, I, 57-63 (translation based upon Heidel, 1956, p. 15) (1):

'I am the one who despoiled the city of Arza, which is in the region of the 'brook of Egypt'; I put its king, Asuhili, in fetters, together with his councillors, and brought (them) to Assyria. I made them sit in fetters near the gateway to the inner city of Ninive, together with a bear, a dog, and a pig.'

## THE SEALED HARBOUR OF EGYPT

#### Topographical situation

According to two Assyrian sources king Sargon II (722-705 BC) 'opened the sealed harbour of Egypt', 'mingled together the Assyrians and the Egyptians' and 'made them trade with each other', probably in 716 BC (1-2). No geographical information is given about the place, so any identification remains hazardous. Since Sargon was not active on Egyptian soil, apparently **some emporion or trading-station with Egyptian connections in southern Palestine** is referred to. It is not clear why the harbour is called **'sealed' or 'sealed-off'**; Ilan suggested that the term refers to sand

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<sup>497</sup> Abel, 1939, p. 530, n. 1 dates the events in 675 and p. 538 even in 671; Kitchen, 1986 [= 1973], p. 391, § 352, n. 869 is in doubt between 677 and 674. The date in the *Chronicle*, though, is quite clear.

<sup>498</sup> *Assarhaddon Chronicle*, 7-8 (Grayson, 1975, p. 125).

<sup>499</sup> Assarhaddon, Ninive prism class B, I, 55 - II 5 = Heidel prism, I, 57-63 (Borger, 1956, p. 50-51; Heidel, 1956, p. 14-15) (1); Ninive prism class A, III, 39-42 (Borger, 1956, p. 50) (2) (omitting the council); Ninive prism class C (episode 5) (Borger, 1956, p. 50-51) (3); Kalach A, 16-17 (Borger, 1956, p. 33) = Tarbis A, 7b-8a (cf. Borger, 1956, p. 32-33.50.71) (4) (omitting the punishment); Assur-Babel E, Ro 3b-4a (Borger, 1956, p. 86) (5) (omitting both the council and the punishment); cf. Spalinger, 1974a, p. 299. Assarhaddon, Fragment A, Ro 16-17 (Borger, 1956, p. 110; translation in Luckenbill, 1927, II, p. 217, § 545) (6); Fragment B, Ro 14 - Vo 2 (Borger, 1956, p. 110-111; translation in Luckenbill, 1927, II, p. 218, § 550) (7) and Vo 12 (Borger, 1956, p. 111) (8).

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blocking the entrance<sup>500</sup>, but without a precise location this remains a mere hypothesis.

#### Identifications

Several identifications have been suggested: Tell el-Ruqeish<sup>501</sup>, Tell Temilat<sup>502</sup>, el-Arish<sup>503</sup>, 'the bay of Sabkhat Bardawil near el-Arish'<sup>504</sup>, Pelousion or Tcharou<sup>505</sup>. There are little arguments to support an identification with any of the last four places mentioned, while Pelousion and Tcharou seem completely impossible. Excavations at Tell Temilat revealed an Assyrian stratum, while at Tell el-Ruqeish a fortified site was founded in the second half of the 8th century BC, but by lack of further information about the 'harbour of Egypt' every identification remains a mere hypothesis.

#### Analysis of the sources

A similar passage occurs in two Assyrian texts of king Sargon about his military actions in the border region with Egypt and Arabia, probably in 716 BC. The first one is mostly restored on the based of the second one, which also contains a broader context<sup>506</sup>:

(1) '[I opened the sealed] ha[rbour of Egypt (k[ar-ri] kurMu-šur)]. The Assyrians and the Egyptians] I mingled [t]ogether and made them trade with each other.'

(2)'The Egyptians and the Arabians - I made them overwhelmed by the glory of Assur my lord. At the mention of my name their hearts trembled, they let down their hands. I opened the sealed [harbo]ur of Egypt ([ka]r-ri kurMu-šur). The Assyrians and the Egyptians I mingled [to]gether and I made them trade [with each other].'

Sargon claims to have opened 'the sealed harbour of Egypt', where Assyrians and Egyptians could trade with each other. No geographical setting is offered, and there

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<sup>500</sup> Ilan, 1972, p. 111 in Reich, 1984, p. 33, n. 7.

<sup>501</sup> Oren, 1986a, p. 83-91 (Hebrew); Oren, 1993a, p. 1294; Oren, 1993c, p. 102-105 (non vidi); Oren, 1998, p. 76; Oren, 1999, p. 735.

<sup>502</sup> Reich, 1981, 283-287 (Hebrew) and p. 84\*-85\* (English summary); Reich, 1984, p. 32-38; Reich, 1993, p. 15; cf. Eph'al, 1982, p. 103 n. 341. See s.v. Tell Temilat (Tell Abu Selima).

<sup>503</sup> Tadmor, 1965, p. 272 (Hebrew) in Eph'al, 1982, p. 102-103, n. 341; Reich, 1984, p. 33, n. 7. See s.v. el-Arish.

<sup>504</sup> Tadmor, 1958, p. 78, n. 197; rejected by Eph'al, 1982, p. 102-103, n. 341; cf. Reich, 1984, p. 33, n. 7. See s.v. Sabkhat Bardawil.

<sup>505</sup> Tadmor, 1966, p. 92; rejected by Eph'al, 1982, p. 102-103, n. 341; cf. Reich, 1984, p. 33, n. 7. See s.v. Tcharou.

<sup>506</sup> Khorsabad Annals, 17-18 (Tadmor, 1958, p. 34; cf. Lie, 1929, p. 6-7) (1); Nimrud Prism, Fragment D, col. IV, 42-49 (Tadmor, 1958, p. 34; cf. Gadd, 1954, p. 179-180) (2).

### 3. *The area between Raphia and Rinokoloura*

was even some discussion about the word 'harbour', which in both texts is only partially preserved<sup>507</sup>.

## **IENYSOS**

### **Topographical situation**

The city of Ienysos is attested only once, when Herodotos describes the border region of Palestine and Egypt during the invasion of Kambyzes of 525 BC (1). Ienysos is situated west of Kadytis (Gaza) and at three days marching east of lake Serbonis and mount Kasion, probably near the coast, but the description is too vague to allow a more precise location<sup>508</sup>.

### **Administrative situation**

For Herodotos (1) Ienysos was the border place between - in the east - the part of the Mediterranean coast occupied by the Arabs<sup>509</sup> and - in the west - the desert extending till lake Serbonis and belonging to the Syrians. The phrasing in Herodotos does not clarify whether Ienysos belongs to the Syrian or the Arab part. Even if occupied by the Arabs<sup>510</sup>, most likely Ienysos was originally a Syrian place. Stephanos (3) calls Ienysos an Egyptian city, but this is a mistake, probably due to a drastic reduction of the account of Herodotos.

Ienysos is considered a city (πόλις (1-3)), which might imply that the place had at least certain significance.

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<sup>507</sup> The readings 'treasury' (cf. Gadd, 1954, p. 180) or 'border' (cf. Oppenheim, 1957, p. 35) are no longer accepted; cf. Eph'al, 1982, p. 101-102, n. 339.

<sup>508</sup> A location near the eastern border of Egypt (cf. e.g. Kees, Hermann, s.v. Ienysos, in RE, IX 1, 1914, col. 922; Calderini, 1978, III 1, p. 23) is a mere generalization, since in 525 BC that border was actually situated near lake Serbonis.

<sup>509</sup> The identity of the Arabs is not certain: for Rabinowitz, 1956, p. 3 and n. 20 they were possibly Nabataeans, which he distinguished from the Qedar Beduin for dialectal reasons; for Dumbrell, 1971, p. 42 (cf. p. 44, n. 48), Lemaire, 1974, p. 69, n. 34 and Graf, 1990, p. 138-143 on the other hand they were all Qedarite Arabs. A stone vessel with a Thamudaeen inscription, possibly from the late 6th or early 5th centuries BC, was found in the northern Sinai between Bir el-Abd and Bir Salamana; according to Naveh, 1974a, p. 83 the object may have been dedicated to a local deity by an Arab who lived in Ienysos or in its vicinity (cf. Graf, 1990, p. 138); with the alternative date of 3rd to 1st centuries BC the possible link with Ienysos of course disappears. See s.v. Bir Salamana.

<sup>510</sup> As inferred by Damsté, 1968, p. 538.



## Identifications

About every site in the neighbourhood of Rafah and el-Arish and the region in between comes in account for an identification with Ienysos, and indeed a lot of suggestions have been made - from east to west: Khan Yunus, Tell el-Ruqeish, Raphia / Rafah, Sheikh Zuweid, the region east of el-Arish, and Rinokoloura / el-Arish. None of them is really conclusive. Although it is tempting to see Ienysos as a predecessor of Rinokoloura, **Tell Temilat near Sheikh Zuweid is for the moment the only site where archaeological evidence strengthens a possible identification.**

Sicard located Ienysos in Khan Yunus<sup>511</sup>, a caravan serai between Gaza and Rafah, and apparently saw an etymological link between the names<sup>512</sup>. This identification has rightly been rejected since the place, founded about 1389 AD, is named after an emir Yunus<sup>513</sup>.

Tell el-Ruqeish, an important settlement of the Persian period in the neighbourhood of Khan Yunus, some 18 km south of Gaza, has been identified with Ienysos<sup>514</sup>, but this leaves little space for the other Arab emporia or trading-stations between Gaza and Ienysos mentioned by Herodotos.

For some authors Ienysos in later centuries might be replaced by Raphia<sup>515</sup>, but since the latter name existed probably already from the New Kingdom on, it is very unlikely that both names Ienysos and Raphia refer to the same site.

Also the sites in the neighbourhood of Sheikh Zuweid, some 15 km southwest of Rafah, have been identified with Ienysos. Hommel suggests a location in Tell el-Sheikh<sup>516</sup>, but Abel rightly prefers Tell Temilat (Tell Abu Selima), where indeed archaeological remains of the Persian period have been found<sup>517</sup>. Abel is apparently tempted by the phonetic resemblance between Ienysos and the site Tell Jenein in the

<sup>511</sup> Also spelled Cannunis, Chān Jūnas, Chān Jūnus, Hān Jūnus, Hān Jūnus, Ḥan-Yunis, Hanna, Kan Iounes, Kan-Jounés, Kan Younes, Khan Jūnes, Khan Younès, Khan-Younès, Khan Yunes, Khan Yunis, Khān Yūnis.

<sup>512</sup> Sicard, 1982 [= 1722-1724], II, p. 236 and III, p. 168.180; d'Anville, 1766, p. 104; Hazlitt, 1851, p. 190; van Senden, 1851, I, p. 83-84; Sepp, 1863, II, p. 530.531; Guérin, 1869, I 2, p. 227-230; Schumacher, 1886, p. 182; Schlumberger, 1906, p. 73-74; Maspero, 1921, p. 684, n. 1; Meinardus, 1963, p. 24; Avi-Yonah, 1966b, p. 11 (Hebrew) (non vidi); Mittmann, 1983, p. 130-140 (whose arguments in favour of the etymological links are not convincing); Kasher, 1990, p. 17, n. 9 (in doubt); Lemaire, 1990, p. 46; Graf, 1998, p. 108; rejected by Figueras, 2000, p. 197.199.

<sup>513</sup> How, 1928, I, p. 257; Abel, 1939, p. 535-537; cf. Hartmann, 1910, p. 696-701.

<sup>514</sup> Lemaire, 1990, p. 46. Oren, 1993, p. 1294.1393, on the other hand, probably rightly considers Tell el-Ruqeish one of the emporia between Gaza and Ienysos mentioned by Herodotos.

<sup>515</sup> Kees, Hermann, s.v. Ienysos, in RE, IX 1, 1914, col. 922; Hommel, 1926, p. 964.

<sup>516</sup> Hommel, 1926, p. 965. See s.v. Tell el-Sheikh.

<sup>517</sup> Abel, 1939, p. 544 and 1940, pl. 7. See s.v. Tell Temilat (Tell Abu Selima).

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immediate neighbourhood, which he therefore considers its Arabic successor<sup>518</sup>, but there is little to support this hypothesis. Since the place P3-s3-nfr, attested in the 3rd century BC, was probably situated in that same area, Abel considers it the Egyptian name of Ienysos<sup>519</sup>.

How locates Ienysos somewhat east of Rinokoloura because of the three days' march mentioned in Herodotos, but has apparently no specific site in mind<sup>520</sup>.

It has also been suggested that Ienysos could have been replaced by Rinokoloura and therefore has to be located in el-Arish<sup>521</sup>. The arguments of Abel against an identification with Rinokoloura / el-Arish<sup>522</sup> are not convincing, so the possibility remains open.

P.Anastasi, probably written in the time of Ramses II, mentions the place ʿ-y-n-n ('The two wells') on the track between Tcharou and Gaza. This general position might fit for Ienysos, but a phonetic link between the two names is highly improbable<sup>523</sup>. East of ʿ-y-n-n lies the well N-ḥ-s, which for Abel might be linked with Ienysos<sup>524</sup>, but again this is not convincing.

Hommel has some (unacceptable) arguments for an identification of Ienysos with the eastern Bouto, but admits himself that he is not convinced<sup>525</sup>.

Hommel also looks for an etymological link between Ienysos and the Arab city of Nysa, stating that there are two different geographical traditions about this place, the original one situating the city in southern Arabia and a secondary one near the Egyptian-Arab border<sup>526</sup>. This identification is rather far fetched - especially because Herodotos is familiar with the toponym Nysa - and has not found any support.

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<sup>518</sup> Abel, 1939, p. 544. See s.v. Tell el-Eqneiyin (Tell Jenein).

<sup>519</sup> Abel, 1939, p. 544. See s.v. Bytl - P3-s3-nfr.

<sup>520</sup> How, 1928, I, p. 257; cf. Damsté, 1968, p. 538.

<sup>521</sup> Stark in Guérin, 1869, I 2, p. 227-230; Sourdille, 1910a, map; Kees, Hermann, s.v. Ienysos, in RE, IX 1, 1914, col. 922; Hommel, 1926, p. 721-724.963.964; Lemaire, 1974, p. 69; Figueras, 1988, p. 62, n. 19; Graf, 1990, p. 138; Kasher, 1990, p. 17, n. 9 (in doubt); Aharoni, 1993, p. 130 and map 171; Carrez-Maratray, 1993b, p. 24; Carrez-Maratray, 1998, p. 88-89; Carrez-Maratray, 1999, p. 60.465; Figueras, 2000, p. 32.36.58.65.94.197 (but inconsequently on p. 39 versus p. 84); Carrez-Maratray, 2001, p. 90; Rainey, 2001, p. 60. See s.v. Rinokoloura.

<sup>522</sup> Abel, 1939, p. 537-539.

<sup>523</sup> P.Anastasi I, 27, 6 (10); the phonetic link has been rejected by Abel, 1939, p. 539, n. 1.

<sup>524</sup> Karnak, 1986, IV, pl. 4, 19 (T): N-ḥ-s n p3 sr ('N-ḥ-s of the Prince'); P.Anastasi I, 27, 6-7 (11): N-ḥ-s; cf. Abel, 1939, p. 544.

<sup>525</sup> Hommel, 1926, p. 722, n. 1, p. 724, n. 1 and p. 964, n. 5.

<sup>526</sup> Hommel, 1926, p. 721-723 and p. 965, n. 3.

## Etymology

Abel suggests the possibility of an Egyptian origin for the name Ienysos and he compares it with names as Anysis and Abydos, but in the end he prefers to consider it a Greek Ionian name<sup>527</sup>. The fact, though, that the name ends in -υσος or -υσσος, is not really compelling. Since Ienysos was a Syrian city, an (unknown) Syrian origin for the name seems most likely.

## Analysis of the sources

Herodotos (1) describes the invasion of Egypt by Kambyses in 525 BC. The king was advised to send a messenger to the king of the Arabs in order to get free passage on the best route to Egypt. Herodotos explains in detail the geopolitical situation of the region. The region between Phoenicia and the borders of the city of Kadytis belongs to the Palestinian Syrians. All the emporia or trading-stations<sup>528</sup> near the sea between the important city of Kadytis and the city of Ienysos belong to the country of the Arab king<sup>529</sup>. From Ienysos till lake Serbonis, which lies next to mount Kasion, the region again belongs to the Syrians; it takes three days to cross it and there is no water available. At lake Serbonis Egypt starts<sup>530</sup>:

μούνη δὲ ταύτη εἰσὶ φανεραὶ αἱ ἐσβολαὶ εἰς Αἴγυπτον· ἀπὸ γὰρ Φοινίκης μέχρι οὐρων τῶν Καδύτιος πόλιος (ἢ ἐστὶ Σύρων τῶν Παλαιστίνων καλεομένων), ἀπὸ δὲ Καδύτιος (ἐούσης πόλιος, ὡς ἐμοὶ δοκεῖ, Σαρδίων οὐ πολλῶ ἐλάσσονος), ἀπὸ ταύτης τὰ ἐμπόρια τὰ ἀπὸ θαλάσσης μέχρι Ἰηνύσου πόλιός ἐστι τῆς Ἀραβίου, ἀπὸ δὲ Ἰηνύσου αὐτὴς Συρίων μέχρι Σερβωνίδος λίμνης, παρ' ἣν δὴ τὸ Κάσιον ὄρος τείνει εἰς θάλασσαν, ἀπὸ δὲ Σερβωνίδος λίμνης (ἐν τῇ δὴ λόγος τὸν Τυφῶ κεκρύφθαι), ἀπὸ ταύτης ἤδη Αἴγυπτος. τὸ δὴ μετὰξὺ Ἰηνύσου πόλιος καὶ Κασίου τε ὄρεος καὶ τῆς Σερβωνίδος λίμνης, ἐὼν τοῦτο οὐκ ὀλίγον χωρίον, ἀλλὰ ὅσον τε ἐπὶ τρεῖς ἡμέρας [ὁδόν], ἀνυδρόν ἐστι δεινῶς.

'Now the only manifest way of entry into Egypt is this. The road runs from Phoenicia as far as the borders of the city of Kadytis (which belongs to the Syrians of Palestine, as it is called); from Kadytis (which, as I judge, is a city not much smaller than Sardis) to the city of Ienysos the emporia belong to the Arabians; then they are Syrian again from Ienysos as far as lake Serbonis, beside which mount Kasion stretches seawards; from this lake Serbonis (where Typhon, it is said, was hidden), the country is Egypt. Now between the city of Ienysos and mount Kasion and lake Serbonis there lies a wide territory for as much as three days' journey, wondrous waterless.'

<sup>527</sup> Abel, 1939, p. 538-539. For a link between Anysis and Ienysos, cf. also Sicard, 1982 [= 1722], III, p. 168.170, who considered the name Ienysos a combination of Hanes and Anysis; Hommel, 1926, p. 958, n. 6 and p. 964, n. 5; already rejected by d'Anville, 1766, p. 104.

<sup>528</sup> For the term 'emporion' in Herodotos, which seems to imply trade and transport over water, cf. Casevitz, 1993, p. 15-17.20.

<sup>529</sup> Abel, 1939, p. 539 is wrong placing these emporia between the Kasion and Ienysos.

<sup>530</sup> Herodotos, 3, 5, 1-3.

### 3. *The area between Raphia and Rinokoloura*

Herodotos possibly went himself all the way to Kadytis and maybe gives an account based upon autopsy<sup>531</sup>, but the interpretation of the text is not easy<sup>532</sup>. Kadytis (Gaza<sup>533</sup>) elsewhere in Herodotos is called a Syrian city<sup>534</sup>, but here it is apparently under Arab control. To identify the emporia along the coast controlled by the Arabs would be guesswork. Herodotos does not mention towns as Raphia and Rinokoloura in his work, but this does not necessarily imply at all that they should be referred to here. It is not clear whether Ienysos, which is only known in this context, belongs to the Arab or the (second) Syrian part of the region. Herodotos, who comments on the other toponyms in the passage, does not give any further information on the city. It took three days to go from Ienysos to lake Serbonis and mount Kasion, but since neither starting nor ending point is fixed and the exact distance of a day's march in a harsh desert region is only speculation, this information does not help much to locate the city<sup>535</sup>. It is a bit odd that the desert between Ienysos and lake Serbonis should again belong to (Palestinian?) Syrians<sup>536</sup>, especially because the Arab king apparently could guide Kambyses through it without any problem. Probably the whole region from Phoenicia to lake Serbonis was originally Syrian<sup>537</sup>, but the Arabs about 525 AD apparently controlled the more important emporia there for trade purposes<sup>538</sup> and were not interested to 'occupy' the uninteresting desert west of Ienysos to which they had unhindered access anyway. The text raises more questions than it answers, but it remains a unique source of information for the northern Sinai in the 6th-5th centuries BC.

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<sup>531</sup> Cf. How, 1928, I, p. 247; Lemaire, 1974, p. 69, n. 33.

<sup>532</sup> Cf. Clédat, 1923a, p. 75-77.

<sup>533</sup> Cf. How, Abel, Dumbrell, Lemaire, Naveh and Graf already mentioned (and more tentatively Rabinowitz, 1956, p. 3 and Damsté, 1968, p. 150.539); see also Hommel, 1926, p. 963; Lloyd, 1988, III, p. 162-163; Quaegebeur, 1995, p. 245-270. Also other, less plausible identifications have been made: Clédat, 1923a, p. 76 on the basis of Herodotos, 2, 159, 2 looks for the place in northern Palestine, and also Jerusalem (cf. How, 1928, I, p. 247) and Qadesh (cf. Lloyd, 1988, III, p. 162-163; Quaegebeur, 1995, p. 248) have been suggested.

<sup>534</sup> Cf. Herodotos, 2, 159, 2.

<sup>535</sup> Against Abel, 1939, p. 537.539, who uses this argument for a precise location of Ienysos. For Mittmann, 1983, p. 132-133 and the map p. 131 the name Kasion in Herodotos refers to the entire narrow strip of land between Sabkhat Bardawil and Mediterranean, but this meaning is unparalleled and not very likely.

<sup>536</sup> Mittmann, 1983, p. 140 therefore thinks that Herodotos made a mistake ascribing this area to the Syrians. For those Syrians, cf. Herodotos, 2, 12, 2 and Lloyd, 1976, II, p. 70.

<sup>537</sup> Cf. Kees, Hermann, s.v. Ienysos, in RE, IX 1, 1914, col. 922.

<sup>538</sup> Cf. How, 1928, I, p. 257.

### 3. The area between Raphia and Rinokoloura

The invocation of Isis in P.Oxy. XI, 1380, probably written in the early 2nd century AD, lists places in and outside Egypt, which are followed by a specific name or epithet of the goddess. After Pelousion, the Kasion, the Ekregma (or Outlet of lake Serbonis) and Arabia follows in line 77-78 a damaged passage ἐν τη[...σ]ω ἱερωνικοτελοῦσαν, followed by the mention of Lycia and Myra in Lycia. The editors usually restore ἐν τῆ [Νή]σῳ ἱερωνικοτελοῦσαν, 'in the Island (Isis is called) giver of victory in the sacred games', but it remains unclear which 'Island' is meant<sup>539</sup>. Abel reads ἐν Ἰη[νύ]σῳ, 'in Ienysos'<sup>540</sup>. Since the geographical order in the list in no way requires a location in the northern Sinai, it would be very hazardous to restore here this hapax of Herodotos.

Stephanos of Byzantion (3) quotes Herodotos (1) for an Egyptian city Inyssos near mount Kasion<sup>541</sup>:

Ἰνυσσός, πόλις Αἰγύπτου προσεχῆς τῷ Κασίῳ ὄρει. Ἡρόδοτος.  
'Inyssos, a city of Egypt near mount Kasion. Herodotos.'

The lemma Inyssos is listed between Ἰνδος and Ἰνσόβαρες and not at its correct place between Ἰνυκον and Ἰξίαι. Meineke suggests that maybe Ἰνησσός was written in the edition of Herodotos used by Stephanos; anyway, something has gone wrong in the tradition of the name, either in Herodotos or in Stephanos<sup>542</sup>. Stephanos apparently also abridged the account of Herodotos rather drastically and by mistake situated Inyssos in Egypt and 'near' (in fact at a three days' march of) mount Kasion.

## BYTL - P3-S3-NFR

### Topographical situation

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<sup>539</sup> Cf. Grenfell, P.Oxy. XI, 1915, p. 197.201.213: ἐν τη[...σ]ω or ση[...σ]ω or even τη[σ]ω]; Lafaye, 1916, p. 60.83; Collart, 1919, p. 94; Weinreich, 1922, col. 794; Manteuffel, 1930, p. 76; Calderini, 1983, III 4, p. 350; Bricault, 1995 (draft), p. 34 rejects the proposed alternative reading ση[...σ]ω and definitely reads τη[...σ]ω.

<sup>540</sup> Abel, 1939, p. 545; rejected by Figueras, 2000, p. 37.197.

<sup>541</sup> Stephanos of Byzantion, *Ethnica*, s.v. Ἰνυσσός (Meineke, 1849, p. 332); cf. Rosén, 1987, p. 255. Possibly via Herodianos, *De prosodia catholica*, 8 (Lentz, 1867, I, p. 213, 17-18) (2) [Ἰνυσσός πόλις Αἰγύπτου προσεχῆς τῷ Κασίῳ ὄρει. Ἡρόδοτος].

<sup>542</sup> For Ball, 1942, p. 167.172 on the other hand not the spelling of the name, but the reference to Herodotos is wrong and he does apparently not identify Inyssos and Ienysos; because of the reference to mount Kasion, however, this view is not acceptable.

### 3. The area between Raphia and Rinokoloura

The places Bytl and P3-s3-nfr are situated immediately west of the Egyptian border (1-2), which in 217 BC ran somewhere between Rinokoloura and Raphia. Both places were at that time apparently situated on Egyptian territory. Nothing can be said with certainty about the distance between Bytl and P3-s3-nfr, but the fact that they are mentioned together, might suggest a certain proximity. Alt therefore suggests that the Semitic Bytl and the Egyptian P3-s3-nfr refer to a 'Doppelsiedlung' in one and the same area<sup>543</sup>, but this is a mere hypothesis.

Both Bytl and P3-s3-nfr are called a dmi (1) / tmi (2), which is a general Egyptian term for every kind of place, town or city; in the same passage e.g. the word is also used for the city of Raphia.

#### Identifications

Both on phonetic and geographical grounds Bytl seems to correspond with the Byzantine town of Bitylion<sup>544</sup>, which is situated some 18 km south of Raphia and possibly some 30 km north of Rinokoloura, and which is often located in Tell el-Sheikh near Sheikh Zuweid. Bitylion, however, is only attested in the 4th to 7th centuries AD, and one can wonder about the nature of this hiatus of more than five centuries in the sources.

Since Bitylion is often incorrectly identified with the town of Bethleá near Gaza, also Bytl has been linked with that place<sup>545</sup>.

In the Raphia decree the Egyptian border is situated east of Bytl and P3-s3-nfr (1-2), while in the corresponding account of Polybios the border lies east of the city of Rinokoloura. It has therefore been suggested that Rinokoloura might be identical with one of the two places<sup>546</sup>, but the fact that Polybios apparently sees Rinokoloura as the last city at the Egyptian side of the border, might just as well imply that Bytl and P3-s3-nfr were of too little importance for him to be mentioned. Furthermore, if one accepts the identification of Bytl and Bitylion, P3-s3-nfr has to be the Egyptian name of Rinokoloura; but then there is no plausible explanation why the Raphia decree

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<sup>543</sup> Alt, 1926, p. 240, n. 2.

<sup>544</sup> Cf. already Gauthier, 1925, p. 28.49 (using the misleading name Beteleá instead of Bitylion, a confusion that has only been cleared by Alt, 1926, p. 236-242.333-335); followed by most scholars, e.g. Figueras, 2000, p. 34 and passim. See s.v. Bitylion.

<sup>545</sup> See s.v. Bitylion.

<sup>546</sup> Spiegelberg, 1925, p. 18; cf. Alt, 1926, p. 240, n. 2.

### 3. The area between Raphia and Rinokoloura

would mention two cities in a reversed geographical order and at quite a large distance from each other as a point of reference for the Egyptian border.

Figueras tentatively identifies P3-s3-nfr with Boutaphios<sup>547</sup>, but there are no real arguments to support this suggestion.

It is not unlikely that Bytl and P3-s3-nfr both lay in the neighbourhood of Sheikh Zuweid. Abel locates Bytl in Tell el-Sheikh and P3-s3-nfr in Tell Temilat, while he considers P3-s3-nfr the Egyptian name of Ienysos<sup>548</sup>. The identification of Bytl and Tell el-Sheikh, however, is not certain since no Ptolemaic remains have been found there in situ. **The Ptolemaic settlement of Tell Temilat, therefore, in my view might correspond as well with P3-s3-nfr as with Bytl.** There are furthermore a lot of unexplored sites in the Sheikh Zuweid area that might yield a second Ptolemaic settlement that can correspond with either P3-s3-nfr or with Bytl. Figueras in this respect tentatively locates P3-s3-nfr in the nearby Tell Eqneiyin (Tell Jenein), which indeed perhaps yielded some Ptolemaic remains<sup>549</sup>.

#### Etymology

For the name Bytl Gauthier thinks of a Semitic origin, but his suggestion Beth-El, 'House of god', is influenced by the incorrect identification with Bethleá<sup>550</sup>.

The Egyptian name S3-nfr (1) / P3-s3-nfr (2) can perhaps be translated as '(The) beautiful / good son<sup>551</sup>. Sothas wonders whether there is a link with the name of king Snofrou (Snfrw) of the 4th dynasty, but this has rightly been rejected by Spiegelberg<sup>552</sup>. Figueras, who is the only one to read 'Pr-s-nfr', translates the name as

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<sup>547</sup> Figueras, 1988b, p. 121-124 (Hebrew) (non vidi); Figueras, 2000, p. 34.36.38.172.254.228. See s.v. Boutaphios.

<sup>548</sup> Abel, 1939, p. 544. See s.v. Tell Temilat, s.v. Tell el-Sheikh and s.v. Ienysos.

<sup>549</sup> Figueras, 1988b, p. 121-124 (Hebrew) (non vidi); Figueras, 2000, p. 228 (cf. p. 53). See s.v. Tell Eqneiyin.

<sup>550</sup> Gauthier, 1925, p. 28 (who correctly rejects any link with the biblical city of Bethel north of Jerusalem); followed by Figueras, 2000, p. 59, n. 36. Even if the name Bytl is Semitic, this is not enough reason to suppose that it was also an 'ancient non-Greek worship-place', as Figueras, 2000, p. 121.149 does.

<sup>551</sup> Spiegelberg, 1925, p. 17, n. 2.

<sup>552</sup> Sothas in Gauthier, 1925, p. 48-49; cf. Spiegelberg, 1925, p. 17, n. 3.

### 3. The area between Raphia and Rinokoloura

'House of the good ones', which he considers a reference to the gods<sup>553</sup>; neither his reading nor his translation, however, are convincing.

#### Analysis of the sources

In the spring of 217 BC Ptolemaios IV Philopator marched from Alexandria to Syria with some seventy thousand soldiers, five thousand horsemen and seventy-three elephants, to fight the Seleucid king Antiochos III, who had invaded Koile Syria. He left Pelousion probably on 13 June 217 and, passing by the Kasion and the Barathra, crossed the desert. On the fifth day he camped fifty stadia (ca. 9 km) west of Raphia, the first city of Koile Syria for one coming from Rinokoloura<sup>554</sup>:

Πτολεμαῖος δὲ ποιησάμενος τὴν πορείαν ἐπὶ Πηλουσίου τὸ μὲν πρῶτον ἐν ταύτῃ τῇ πόλει κατέζευξε, προσαναλαβὼν δὲ τοὺς ἐφελκομένους καὶ σιτομετρήσας τὴν δύναμιν ἐκίνει καὶ προῆγε ποιούμενος τὴν πορείαν παρὰ τὸ Κάσιον καὶ τὰ Βάραθρα καλούμενα διὰ τῆς ἀνύδρου. διανύσας δ' ἐπὶ τὸ προκείμενον πεμπταῖος κατεστρατοπέδευσε πεντήκοντα σταδίου ἀποσχὼν Ῥαφίας, ἣ κείται μετὰ Ῥινοκόλουρα πρώτη τῶν κατὰ Κοίλην Συρίαν πόλεων ὡς πρὸς τὴν Αἴγυπτον.

'Ptolemaios, marching on Pelousion, made his first halt at that city, and after picking up stragglers and serving out rations to his men he moved on marching, skirting the Kasion and the so-called Barathra, through the desert. Reaching the spot he was bound for on the fifth day he encamped at a distance of fifty stadia from Raphia, which is the first city of Koile Syria on the Egyptian side after Rinokoloura.'

This expedition is also mentioned in the so-called Raphia decree of 15 November 217 BC, which specifies that the border between Egypt and Syria is situated east of the towns of Bytl and P3-s3-nfr. Those two places seem to be the last towns on the Egyptian side before reaching the border, but the phrasing does not make it clear whether Bytl lies east of P3-s3-nfr or vice versa. It is for that matter remarkable that no reference is made to the well-known border city of Rinokoloura. The decree is known in three different copies, coming from Memphis, Tell el-Maskhuta and Tod, each originally containing a hieroglyphic, a demotic and a Greek text. The relevant passage, however, is unfortunately only preserved in the (fragmentary) hieroglyphic version and the demotic version of the Tell el-Maskhuta stele.

The hieroglyphic version (Tell el-Maskhuta stele, l. 7-8) (1)<sup>555</sup>:

ii.n ḥm=f r-rwt P3-ir-Imn m hrw n ḥ3 [ ] (l. 8) ḥr gs i3bty n dmi Bytl.w ḥr dmi S3-nfr

'His Majesty departed from P3-ir-Imn (Pelousion) on the day of fighting [with king Antiochos at a town which is called Raphia and is close to the border-territory of Egypt, which is] to the east of the town of Bytl.w and the town of S3-nfr.'

<sup>553</sup> Figueras, 2000, p. 59, n. 36.

<sup>554</sup> Polybios, 5, 80, 1-3.

<sup>555</sup> Cf. Gauthier, 1925, p. 6 (text), p. 8 (translation), p. 26-28 (comment).



### 3. The area between Raphia and Rinokoloura

The demotic version (Tell el-Maskhuta stele, l. 10-11) (2)<sup>556</sup>:

šm=f r-bl n Pr-ir-Imn ir=f mlh irm Pr-‘3 (3tyks) ‘ws n w‘ tmi mtw=w d n=f Rph iw=f hn (l. 11) r t3 sh(.t) (n) tš (n) Kmy nty (n) pr-i3bt r tmi Bytl irm P3-s3-nfr

'He departed from Pr-ir-Imn (Pelousion); he joined battle with King Antiochos at a town which is called Raphia and is close to the border-territory of Egypt, which is to the east of the town of Bytl and P3-s3-nfr.'

The battle has also been mentioned by Porphyrios, as quoted by Hieronymus, but no further information about the location has been given<sup>557</sup>:

Inito ergo certamine iuxta oppidum Raphiae quod in foribus Aegypti est, omnem Antiochus amisit exercitum et, per desertum fugiens, paene captus est.

'And so when he had joined battle near the town of Raphia at the gateway of Egypt, Antiochus lost his entire army and was almost captured as he fled through the desert.'

## BITYLION

Modern name: Tell el-Sheikh

### Topographical situation

Bitylion, attested in the 4th-7th century AD, was situated between Rinokoloura and Raphia (4), somewhat east of the border between Egypt and Palestine (10; cf. 1)<sup>558</sup>. It lay some 12 miles (ca. 18 km) southwest of Raphia (7), which infers a distance of some 20 miles (ca. 30 km) towards Rinokoloura, and perhaps at a distance of some 90 miles (ca. 135 km) from the Jerusalem region (5, 9). It lay very close to the sea (5, 9), probably in a plain (5).

Bitylion was apparently a rather insignificant town, since it is called a polydrion or 'small polis' (5, 9) and even 'a very small polis' (5). Hierokles uses the more general indication of 'polis' (6).

The place had a church (10), and three of its bishops are known, sc. Aias in the second half of the 4th century AD (3), Theognios ca. 494-522 AD (5, 9) and Manouelios in 536 AD (8). A 'cleric of Bitylion' remains nameless (5). Out of the plain, Theognios had a small cell (5)<sup>559</sup>.

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<sup>556</sup> Cf. Gauthier, 1925, p. 34 (text and translation), p. 48-49 (comment); Spiegelberg, 1925, p. 7 (translation), p. 17-18 (comment); Sottas, 1927, p. 231 (comment), p. 240 (translation); Thissen, 1966, p. 13-15 (translation), p. 53-54 (comment); Simpson, 1996, p. 244-245 (text and translation); DBL, 2005, p. 524.

<sup>557</sup> Hieronymus, *Commentarii in Daniele*, 3, 11, 11-12 (Glorie, 1964b, p. 906-907); Porphyrios, *Adversum Christianos*, FGrHist no. 260, F 44.

<sup>558</sup> Figueras, 2000, p. 114.132.151 (cf. p. 111) incorrectly states that the border itself was fixed at Bitylion.

<sup>559</sup> This is probably the reason that Figueras, 2000, p. 52.134 lists Bitylion under the 'monastic establishments'.

### **Administrative situation**

In the 6th-7th century AD Bitylion belonged to the province of Palaestina I (6, 11-13), while its bishop resorted under the patriarch of Jerusalem (5, 9).

### **Identifications**

Bitylion is most likely identical with the place Bytl attested in 217 BC immediately west of the Egyptian border<sup>560</sup>.

Bitylion has often incorrectly been identified with the city of Bethleia mentioned by Sozomenos in the early 5th century AD and situated in the immediate neighbourhood of Gaza<sup>561</sup>.

Some scholars identify Bitylion with the biblical Bethu(e)l of the tribe of Simeon in the Beersheba region (in the Septuaginta and in Eusebios rendered as Βαθούλ, Βαιθήλ e.a.), but this place is situated too far east to come into account<sup>562</sup>.

Figueras tentatively identifies Bitylion with the medieval road station el-Shadjaratain, which is also situated at 12 miles from Rafah<sup>563</sup>, but he apparently did not realise that in the latter case Arabic miles of 2 km were used, and that el-Shadjaratain has to be looked for more to the west.

In modern studies Bitylion is usually situated in Tell el-Sheikh near el-Za'aqa / Sheikh Zuweid, which lies some 15 km south of Raphia<sup>564</sup>.

Schmitt supposes that the itinerary of Hilarion (1) implies a position along the inland road and therefore distinguishes an inland Bitylion, which he identifies with

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<sup>560</sup> See s.v. Bytl - P3-s3-nfr.

<sup>561</sup> See § Analysis of the sources.

<sup>562</sup> Schulten, 1900, p. 28; Albright, 1924, p. 154-155 (non vidi); cf. Jacoby, 1905, p. 48, n. 2; Alt, 1926, p. 240 and n. 3; O'Callaghan, R. T., s.v. Madaba, in DB, Suppl. V, 26, 1953, col. 695. For Bethuel, cf. Odelain, 1978, p. 80 and Rogerson, 1985, p. 94-95.

<sup>563</sup> Figueras, 2000, p. 56 (cf. p. 246).

<sup>564</sup> Cf. Dalman, 1924, p. 57; Alt, 1926, p. 241-242.333; Abel, 1939, p. 227-228; Honigmann, 1939a, p. 42; O'Callaghan, R. T., s.v. Madaba, in DB, Suppl. V, 26, 1953, col. 695; Bagatti, 1971, p. 94 (although p. 105 incorrectly situated near Gaza); Fedalto, 1988, p. 1018; Figueras, 2000, p. 148.170.172.256. See s.v. el-Za'aqa and s.v. Tell el-Sheikh.

### 3. The area between Raphia and Rinokoloura

Tell Eqneiyin, and a coastal Bitylion, which he identifies with Tell el-Sheikh<sup>565</sup>, but I do not see any reasons to expand the name Bitylion over two different sites.

Because of textcritical problems in Hieronymus' description of the itinerary of Hilarion (1) the position of Bitylion in that passage has often been misinterpreted. This led to unacceptable locations between lake Serbonis and Ostrakine<sup>566</sup> or in the Negev desert<sup>567</sup>

Bethelea, and therefore also Bitylion, has sometimes been located in Khan Hetteh, near Gaza<sup>568</sup>, but the place most likely corresponds with the present-day Bet Lahja some 6 km northeast of Gaza<sup>569</sup>.

Some scholars located Bitylion in Sheikh Nuran, 18 km east of Raphia<sup>570</sup>, in Tell el-Fari', 7 km east of Sheikh Nuran<sup>571</sup>, or in Tell el-Sheikh Hamdan and Khirbet Asqab, north of Gaza<sup>572</sup>, but these identifications do not match the sources.

#### Orthographic variants

The normal spelling in Greek sources seems to be Bitylion (Βιτύλιον - Βητύλιον), but also the forms Bitoulion (3), Bityle (6), Bittylios (11) and the puzzling Tapidoula (4) are attested. The gender differs: most often the name is neuter (5, 10; cf. 2, 3, 8, 9), but occasionally it is feminine (6) or masculine (11; cf. 12). The Latin Betilium, if this is the correct reading in Hieronymus (1), corresponds nicely with the Greek Bitylion. The spelling Betulia (7) is due to a confusion with the city of Betulia mentioned in *Iudith*.

#### Etymology

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<sup>565</sup> Schmitt, 1995, p. 114-115; cf. TAVO B VI 10, 1993. See s.v. Tell el-Sheikh and s.v. Tell Eqneiyin.

<sup>566</sup> Ortelius, 1595 in Baines, 1981 [= 1980], p. 23 (cf. Fontaine, 1955, p. 63); Vallarsius in Migne, PL 73, 1849, col. 3-4.

<sup>567</sup> Miller, 1895, III, p. 17.

<sup>568</sup> De Buck, Acta sanctorum Octobris, 1869, IX, p. 22 (cf. van den Gheyn, 1891b, p. 572).

<sup>569</sup> Cf. Kiepert, 1893-1913 [1910], VI, p. 3; Alt, 1926, p. 242 and n. 1 and p. 335; Tsafirir, 1994, p. 81-82; Schmitt, 1995, p. 103.

<sup>570</sup> Musil, 1908, II 2, p. 61.244; Kiepert, 1893-1913 [1910], VI, p. 3 and pl. 6; Albright, 1924, p. 154-155 (non vidi); cf. Alt, 1926, p. 240, n. 3 and p. 242, n. 1.

<sup>571</sup> Albright, 1924, p. 154-155 (non vidi); cf. Alt, 1926, p. 240, n. 3.

<sup>572</sup> Avi-Yonah, 1976, p. 43 and the map p. 110; cf. O'Callaghan, R. T., s.v. Madaba, in DB, Suppl. V, 26, 1953, col. 695.

### 3. The area between Raphia and Rinokoloura

Jacoby looks for an etymological link with the word βαίτυλος, of Semitic origin, and its diminutive βαιτύλιον, which are used for meteoric stones that were held sacred, and he suggests that Bitylion was a Nabataean foundation around such a holy stone<sup>573</sup>. Since, however, his major argument is actually based upon a passage of Sozomenos about Bethlelea (and not about Bitylion), the suggestion has little to recommend it.

Both the names Bytl and Bitylion might have a Semitic origin. An etymology such as Beth-El, 'House of god', however, is influenced by the obsolete identification with Bethlelea and seems no longer convincing<sup>574</sup>.

#### Analysis of the sources

Flavius Iosephos describes how Herodes in 40 BC travelled from Petra to Egypt, and before arriving in Rinokoloura passed the night at a local temple<sup>575</sup>. Figueras tentatively suggests that the temple might have been at Bitylion or Boutaphios<sup>576</sup>, but there are little arguments for this suggestion.

According to the geographer Claudius Ptolemaios the eastern border of Egypt is the (fictitious) line going from the Palestinian city of Anthedon to some point in the northern Sinai desert at 30' or ca. 46,5 km south of Ostrakine, and continuing to the head of the Arabian Gulf (i.e. the most northern part of the Gulf of Suez); it passes immediately east of Rinokoloura, which becomes the most eastern place mentioned for Egypt in his work, Raphia and Gaza being left to the Judaeian side of this border<sup>577</sup>:

ἀπὸ δὲ ἀνατολῶν τῆς τε Ἰουδαίας μέρει τῷ ἀπὸ Ἀνθηδόνας πόλεως μέχρι πέρατος, οὗ  
θέσις ξδ' δ" λ' γο"  
καὶ τῇ ἐντεῦθεν Ἀραβία Πετραία μέχρι τοῦ καθ' Ἡρώων πόλιν μυχοῦ τοῦ Ἀραβίου  
κόλπου, οὗ θέσις ξγ' L" κθ' L"γ"  
'In the east (Egypt is limited) by the region of Judaea which goes from the city of Anthedon till its  
end, which lies at 64° 15' - 30° 40',  
and further by Arabia Petraia till the head of the Arabian Gulf near Heroon Polis, which lies at 63°  
30' - 29° 50.'

In some manuscripts the coordinates of Anthedon are added above this text, which gave the impression of Anthedon being the most eastern city in the Kasiotis

<sup>573</sup> Jacoby, 1905, p. 49-50; cf. Figueras, 2000, p. 171.

<sup>574</sup> Against Figueras, 2000, p. 59, n. 36 and p. 121.171, who still looks for a link with Beth-El. See s.v. Bytl - P3-s3-nfr.

<sup>575</sup> Iosephos, *Bellum Iudaicum*, 1, 14, 2 (277) and *Antiquitates Iudaicae*, 14, 14, 2 (374). The text is quoted in full s.v. Rinokoloura.

<sup>576</sup> Cf. Figueras, 2000, p. 41.171.

<sup>577</sup> Ptolemaios, 4, 5, 7 (Müller, 1901, I 2, p. 683); cf. Ball, 1942, p. 100 and pl. 2.

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mentioned in the previous paragraph (4, 5, 6), but this is clearly impossible. In modern editions therefore this superfluous reference to Anthedon is deleted. Figueras, however, suggests that this Anthedon is a mistake for Bitylion, a city that otherwise does not occur in the work of Ptolemaios<sup>578</sup>. This suggestion has little to recommend it.

About 359 AD Hilarion, the bishop of Maiouma near Gaza, left Palestine for Egypt, and a lot of people followed him till a place called Betilium. Here Hilarion persuaded the people to turn back - perhaps because Betilium was the last town before entering Egypt -, and he continued with only a small group of monks. No details are given about his journey through the northern Sinai, but five days later he reached Pelousion, as Hieronymus tells in his *Vita Hilarionis* (1)<sup>579</sup>:

cum infinito agmine prosequentium venit Betilium, ubi persuasis turbis ut reverterentur, elegit quadraginta monachos, qui haberent viaticum, et possent ieiunantes ingredi. quinto igitur die venit Pelusium.

'With a countless group of followers he reached Betilium, where he convinced the crowds to return and where he chose forty monks who would have travel provisions, and who could walk while fasting. On the fifth day he so reached Pelusium.'

Manuscripts and editions often vary in the orthography of the toponym (Betilium, Vetilium, Bethelium, Bethirium, Betulium, Vetulium; Bethelia; Betulia, Vetulia), but the original name is probably Bitylion (Βιτύλιον), as preserved in the Greek translation of Sophronios (2)<sup>580</sup>:

ἐλθὼν δὲ ἅμα πᾶσιν αὐτοῖς ἕως τῆς πόλεως Βιτυλίου, ... καὶ ἀπάρας ἐκεῖθεν μετὰ τῶν τεσσαράκοντα ἀδελφῶν, δι' ἡμερῶν πέντε ἦλθεν εἰς Πηλούσιον.

'with all those people he went till the city of Bitylion, ... and leaving from there with forty brothers, he came to Pelousion in five days.'

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<sup>578</sup> Figueras, 2000, p. 42.73.86.161.171.177.240 and p. 43, fig. 4. Figueras, 2000, p. 60, n. 56 claims to have used the edition of Müller, but the data that he gives (also for Ostrakine and Rinokoloura), rather correspond with the edition of Nobbe, 1843-1845 or some older publication. The same passage lead Petrie, 1937, p. 2-3 to the incorrect identification of Tell Temilat (Tell Abu Selima) near Sheikh Zuweid with Anthedon; cf. Abel, 1939, p. 542, n. 1; see s.v. Tell Temilat and s.v. Tell Eqneiyin.

<sup>579</sup> Hieronymus, *Vita Hilarionis*, 20, 8-9 (Bastiaensen, 1975, p. 116-119). Bastiaensen prefers the spelling Bethelia to Betilium (e.a.), but since his choice seems influenced by the obsolete identification with Bethelaea, I prefer the reading Betilium, which is quite close to the Greek Bitylion. In some older editions (as Migne, PL 23, 1845, col. 44) the clause 'quinto igitur die venit Pelusium' has been omitted, which has caused quite some confusion about the position of Bitylion and other toponyms in this passage.

<sup>580</sup> Sophronios, *Vita Hilarionis*, 30 (Papadopoulos, 1898, p. 119-120).

### 3. The area between Raphia and Rinokoloura

According to Sozomenos (3) Aias was a married man with three sons, who yet became a monk in Maiouma near Gaza and was later raised bishop of Bitoulion (Bitylion)<sup>581</sup>:

ἐπεικῶς δὲ καὶ μάλα εὐδοκίμως τὴν τοῦ Βιτουλίου ἐκκλησίαν ἐπετρόπευσε.  
'With propriety and much distinction Aias governed the church of Bitoulion.'

Sozomenos himself (ca. 400-443 AD) met Aias' brother Zenon, who was still bishop of Maiouma when he was nearly a hundred years old, so the two brothers possibly became bishops in the second half of the 4th century AD<sup>582</sup>.

In two other contexts Sozomenos mentions the village of Bethelaea near Gaza, where his own grandfather came from<sup>583</sup>:

5, 15, 14-15:

ταύτης δὲ τῆς φυγῆς μετέσχον πολλοὶ τῶν ἐμῶν προγόνων καὶ ὁ ἐμὸς πάππος. καθότι πατὴρ Ἕλληνας ὢν, αὐτὸς τε πανοικί καὶ οἱ ἀπὸ τοῦ γένους Ἀλαφίωνος χριστιανοὶ πρῶτοι ἐγένοντο ἐν Βηθελέα κώμῃ Γαζαία, πολυανθρώπων τε οὔση καὶ ἱερὰ ἐχούση ἀρχαιότητι καὶ κατασκευῇ σεμνὰ τοῖς κατοικοῦσι, καὶ μάλιστα τὸ πάνθειον ὡς ἐπὶ ἀκροπόλεως χειροποιήτου τινὸς λόφου κείμενον καὶ πανταχόθεν πάσης τῆς κώμης ὑπερέχον. συμβάλλον δὲ οἶμαι τὸ χωρίον ἔνθεν λαχεῖν τὴν προσηγορίαν καὶ ἐκ τῆς Σύρων φωνῆς εἰς τὴν Ἑλλήνων ἐρμηνευόμενον θεῶν οἰκητήριον ὀνομάζεσθαι, διὰ τὸν τοῦ πανθέου ναόν. λέγεται δὲ χριστιανισμοῦ αἴτιος γενέσθαι τοῖς τούτων οἴκοις Ἰλαρίων ὁ μοναχός.

'My grandfather and many of my ancestors were compelled to flee in this manner. My grandfather was of pagan parentage, and, with his own family and that of Alaphion, had been the first to embrace christianity in Bethelaea, a populous village of Gaza, in which there are temples highly revered by the people of the country on account of their antiquity and structural excellence; the most celebrated of these temples is the pantheon, built on an artificial eminence commanding a view of the whole village. The conjecture is that the place received its name from the temple, that the original name given to this temple was in Syriac language, and that this name was afterwards rendered into Greek and expressed by a word which signifies that the temple is the residence of all the gods. (15) It is said that the above-mentioned families were converted through the instrumentality of the monk Hilarion.'

6, 32, 5:

ἡνίκα δὴ ἐν τοῖς τῆδε φροντιστηρίοις εὖ μάλα διέπρεπον Σαλαμάνης τε καὶ Φούσκων καὶ Μαλαχίων καὶ Κρισπίων ἀδελφοί· ἐφιλοσόφουν δὲ ἀμφὶ Βηθελέαν κώμην τοῦ νομοῦ Γάζης. καὶ γὰρ δὴ καὶ εὐπατρίδαι τῶν ἔνθεν ἦσαν. διδασκάλου δὲ ταύτης τῆς φιλοσοφίας ἔτυχον Ἰλαρίωνος.

'At the same period in the monasteries, Salamanes, Phouskon, Malachion and Krispion, four brethren, were highly distinguished: they practiced philosophy in the neighbourhood of Bethelaea, a village in the district of Gaza; they were of a resident noble family, and had been instructed in that philosophy by Hilarion.'

<sup>581</sup> Sozomenos, *Historia ecclesiastica*, 7, 28, 5 (Bidez, 1960, p. 344); cf. the translation of Hartranft, 1979, p. 396; in some manuscripts the toponym is spelled Βιτωλίου, while in some editions the emendation Βοτωλίου has been suggested; see also Nikephoros Kallistos, *Ecclesiastica historia*, 12, 47 (Migne, PG 146, 1865, col. 913) (14): λίαν δὲ σωφρόνως καὶ εὐδοκίμως τῆς τοῦ Βιτωλίου ἐκκλησίας ὁ Αἴας πρόεστη, 'with much wisdom and distinction Aias lead the church of Bitolion'.

<sup>582</sup> Several dates have been suggested: ca. 357 AD (van den Gheyn, 1891b, p. 572); 362 AD (Le Quien, 1740, III, col. 671 (non vidi); Gelzer, 1890, p. 192; Musil, 1908, II 2, p. 244; Fedalto, 1988, p. 1018); under Theodosius (379-395 AD) (De Buck, *Acta sanctorum Octobris*, 1869, IX, p. 22); they are, however, often influenced by the incorrect identification with Bethelaea.

<sup>583</sup> Sozomenos, *Historia ecclesiastica*, 5, 15, 14-15 and 6, 32, 5 (Bidez, 1960, p. 215-216.288); cf. the translation of Hartranft, 1979, p. 337.370; in some manuscripts the toponym is spelled Βηθελέα; see also Cassiodorus, *Historia ecclesiastica tripartita*, 6, 28, 3 (Hanslik, 1952, p. 344) [in Bethelaea, vico Gazensi] and Nikephoros Kallistos, *Ecclesiastica historia*, 11, 39 (Migne, 1865, col. 711-712) [ἀμφὶ Βηθελέαν κώμην, νομοῦ Γάζης].

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The village Bethlelea is not attested elsewhere. Because of the phonetic similarity the place has often been identified with Bitylion<sup>584</sup>, but Sozomenos clearly distinguishes the toponyms Bitoulion and Bethlelea, while the latter's position near Gaza is not compatible with the location of Bitylion more to the south.

The geographer Iulius Honorius, who wrote in the 4th-5th century AD, refers to the city of 'Bethulia' in a geographically rather confusing context<sup>585</sup>

Invenies ibi Columnas Herculeas, ubi oppidum Bethulia vicinum montis Sinai.

'You will find there the Columns of Herakles, where the city of Bethulia (lies) near mount Sinai.'

Bethulia (Baityloua), mentioned passim in the book of *Iudith*, was situated in northern Israel, but has not been identified with certainty<sup>586</sup>. Some scholars suppose that Iulius Honorius actually described the city of Bitylion<sup>587</sup>, which - in a certain sense - can indeed be considered as lying near mount Sinai. In the same context, however, Iulius Honorius also refers to the biblical cities of Sodom and Gomorra, so with Bethulia he perhaps only had the biblical place in mind, and no contemporary toponym.

The papyrus SB XXVI, 16607 (4), probably written in the 5th century AD, contains an itinerary of places in Egypt, Palestine and Asia Minor. On the road from Pelousion to Gaza Νινκορο|ε|υ|ε (Ninokoreue, immo Rinokoloura), Ταπιδουλα (Tapidoula) and Ραφία (Raphia) are mentioned<sup>588</sup>. The orthography of the toponyms in this papyrus is often puzzling, and Tapidoula most likely refers to Bitylion. The initial Ta- perhaps can be considered an article.

The monk Theognios, born in Cappadocia in 425 AD, came to live in Palestine in 454 AD and eventually founded a new monastery, whose exact location is not known. At some point between 494 and 512 AD<sup>589</sup> he was appointed bishop of

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<sup>584</sup> The identification of Bitylion and Bethlelea proposed by Reland, 1714, p. 800 (non vidi) and followed by most scholars of the 19th century AD has only been enfeebled by Alt, 1926, p. 241-242. Only Avi-Yonah, 1954, p. 75 n. 121 and 1976, p. 43 for unknown reasons still accepted the identification of Bitylion and Bethlelea, which he, however, clearly distinguished from the Bitylion of Theodosius (7) and the Medaba mosaic (10).

<sup>585</sup> Iulius Honorius, *Cosmographia*, 47 (recensio B) (Riese, 1878, p. 53); in some manuscripts the toponym is spelled Betulia and Vetulia.

<sup>586</sup> For Bethulia, cf. Jacoby, 1905, p. 50; Odelain, 1978, p. 78, s.v. Béthulie; Rogerson, 1985, p. 149.

<sup>587</sup> Jacoby, 1905, p. 50; Tsafir, 1994, p. 91; Figueras, 2000, p. 170-171.

<sup>588</sup> SB XXVI, 16607 (P.von Scherling G110), 12-14; cf. Noordegraaf, 1938, p. 274.

<sup>589</sup> van den Gheyn, 1891b, p. 572 places Theognios' appointment in 494 or 495 AD, but this seems a mere hypothesis; as far as I can see, the terminus post quem is the appointment of Helias as patriarch in

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Bitylion by Helias the patriarch of Jerusalem. Theognios died in 522 AD at the age of 97<sup>590</sup>. The monk Paulos of Elousa wrote ca. 526 AD a long eulogy for Theognios, whom he knew personally (5)<sup>591</sup>. This *Vita* contains some useful information about Bitylion, which is called 'a very small polis' or 'a polydrion' (sc. 'a small polis'); the city lay next to the sea, apparently in a plain, and did not seem to have had any significant walls: one of the miracles ascribed to Theognios is that he calmed the waves of the sea threatening to destroy the city<sup>592</sup>. In the neighbourhood of Bitylion, out of the plain, Theognios had a small cell<sup>593</sup>. The inhabitants of Bitylion are occasionally mentioned as a group, while a 'cleric of Bitylion' remains nameless:

χρόνου δὲ διππεύσαντος, ἐξ ὑποβολῆς τινων βίας αὐτῷ καὶ ἀνάγκης ἐπενεχθείσης, παρὰ τοῦ κατ' ἐκεῖνο καιροῦ τὸν πατριαρχικὸν ἐν Ἱεροσολύμοις ἔχοντος θρόνον ἐπίσκοπος γίνεται τῆς ἐκκλησίας, τῆς ἐν τῷ Βιτυλίῳ· μικροτάτη δὲ αὕτη ἐστὶν ἡ πόλις, ἐνενήκοντα μιλίοις ἔνθεν κεχωρισμένη. καιρὸν οὖν τινα ἐν τῇ πόλει ἐκείνῃ διέτριβε, καιρὸν δὲ τίνα ἐνταῦθα ἐρχόμενος τοῖς ἰδίῳις τέκνοις ποθεινῶς συνηλιζέτο. ἦν δὲ ἤδη καὶ αὕτη ἡ ἐκκλησία κτισθεῖσα, μικρὰ μὲν τέως τὸ πρῶτον, ὕστερον δὲ, ὡς πρὸ δέκα ἐνιαυτῶν τῆς τοῦ ἁγίου τελευτῆς, μείζων γεγενημένη· διὸ καὶ ὁ ἀριθμὸς τότε τῶν εὐλαβῶν μοναχῶν θεοῦ βουλήσει ἠϋξήθη. μικρότατον δὲ ἐστὶ τὸ κελλίον ἔνθα εἰώθει ὁ μακάριος οὗτος ἐκ τοῦ Βιτυλίου ἐρχόμενος πρὸς καιρὸν διατρίβειν, καὶ τοσοῦτον χθαμαλόν, ὥστε, εἰ μὴ προσέχοι ὁ εἰσιὼν τῷ κρανίῳ τῇ στέγῃ προσκρούη. ἐκ τῆς πεδιάδος τοιγαροῦν ἀνερχόμενος ὧδε, καὶ εἰς τὴν λεχθείσαν εἰσερχόμενος κέλλαν τὰς χεῖρας διεπέταζεν εὐχαριστῶν τῷ Κυρίῳ ...

(10 - p. 88-89) 'When time went by and since constraint and necessity were imposed upon him, Theognios was made bishop of the church in Bitylion, as suggested by some people, by the one who at that moment held the patriarchal throne in Jerusalem (sc. Helias); Bitylion was a very small city, ninety miles from there (sc. from Theognios' monastery). He therefore spent some time in that city, but at other moments he came there to live longingly with his own children. Also this church was already founded; until then it was small, but later on, about ten years before the death of the saint, it became larger; therefore also the number of pious monks then grew because of the will of god. Very small was the cell where this blessed one used to come from Bitylion and spend some time, and it was so low that one who came in and did not pay attention, knocked the roof with his head. When he therefore came there from the plain and he entered the cell already mentioned, he stretched his hands, thanked the Lord ...'

ἐπὶ τῶν χρόνων Ἀναστασίου τοῦ βασιλέως ἠξίωσαν τὸν μέγαν οἱ τοῦ Βιτυλίου οἰκήτορες, πράγματος ἕνεκα δημοσίου, ἐπὶ τὴν βασιλίδαν τῶν πόλεων ἐκπλεῖσαι. ...

(11 - p. 90) 'In the time of king Anastasios (sc. 491-518 AD) the inhabitants of Bitylion asked the great one, because of some public business, to sail to the queen of cities (sc. Constantinopolis). ...'

τοῦ θαύματος τοῦ ἐν τῷ Βιτυλίῳ γενομένου παρ' αὐτοῦ οὐ μόνον ἡ παράλιος ἅπασα ἐν γνώσει γηγένηται, ἀλλὰ καὶ πᾶσα σχεδὸν ἡ Αἴγυπτος, Κιλικία τε καὶ Καππαδοκία, καὶ αὐτὸ τὸ Βυζάντιον τῆς ἀγγέλλας ἀπήλαυσεν. ἡ γειτνιώσα θάλασσα τοὺς οἰκέλους παραβεβηκυῖα ὄρους, κυμάτων ἀγριωπῶν φάλαγξι τῷ πολυδρίῳ προσέβαλλεν, ...

(14 - p. 94) 'Not only the whole coast (sc. of Palestine) came to know the miracle that he performed in Bitylion, but also almost the whole of Egypt, Cilicia and Cappadocia, and Byzantion itself

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494 AD, while the terminus ante quem is a reference in Paulos of Elousa, *Vita Theognii*, 10 (van den Gheyn, 1891a, p. 89) to a period ten years before Theognios' death, sc. to 512 AD.

<sup>590</sup> For Theognios, cf. van den Gheyn, 1891a, p. 78-118; van den Gheyn, 1891b, p. 559-576; Bardenhewer, 1932, V, p. 128-129; Galuzzi, Alessandro, s.v. Teognio, in BS, 1969, XII, col. 353-354; Bagatti, 1971, p. 105. The monastery of Theognios is also mentioned in Ioannes Moschos, *Pratum spirituale*, 160 (Migne, PG 87, 3, 1860, col. 3028).

<sup>591</sup> Paulos of Elousa, *Vita Theognii* (van den Gheyn, 1891a, p. 78-113 [with some textual corrections in Bulletin, 1892, p. 477]), with Bitylion mentioned 10-21 passim (p. 78; 88-104).

<sup>592</sup> According to Schmitt, 1995, p. 114 the miracle itself has been copied from Hieronymus, *Vita Hilarionis*, 29, 1-7 (Bastiaensen, 1975, p. 132-135), but he still trusts the geographical setting.

<sup>593</sup> van den Gheyn, 1891b, p. 572 states that this cell was situated in the monastery of Theognios, but the phrasing rather points to a cell near Bitylion.



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enjoyed the news. The adjacent sea, which crossed its own borders, hit the small city with a line of very wild waves, ...'

κληρικὸς τοῖνον Βιτυλίωτης ἐκλήματι τινὶ ἔνοχος γινόμενος τῷ δουκὶ παρεπέμφθη, ...  
(19 - p. 101) 'A cleric of Bitylion, who was accused of some crime, was brought to the dux [sc. Antipatros, the dux of the provincia Palaestina], ...'

The work of Paulos was later used by Kyrillos of Skythopolis to compose his own, shorter *Vita Theognii* (9)<sup>594</sup>:

χρόνου δὲ τινος διεθόντος, ἀκούσας τὰ περὶ αὐτοῦ ὁ ἀρχιεπίσκοπος Ἡλίας χειροτονεῖ αὐτὸν ἐπίσκοπον τοῦ Βιτυλίου, πολύδριον δὲ τοῦτο παραθαλάσσιον ἐπὶ ἐνεήκοντα μιλίοις διέχον τῆς ἁγίας πόλεως. τοῦ δὲ θείου Θεογνίου τὴν ἐπισκοπὴν ἀκουσίως δεξαμένου καὶ ἐν τῷ εἰρημένῳ πολυδρίῳ χρόνον τινὰ διατελέσαντος ἢ προσπαρακειμένη θάλασσα τοὺς οἰκείους ὄρους ὑπερβάσα ἀγρωτάτοις κύμασι τῷ πολυδρίῳ προσέρρησεν ...

'After some time, archbishop Helias (sc. 494-516 AD) heard about Theognios and made him bishop of Bitylion; this small city along the sea lay ninety miles from the holy city. The divine Theognios accepted the bishopric against his will; when he had spent some time in the small city mentioned, the adjacent sea, which crossed its own borders, hit the small city with very wild waves ...'

Kyrillos locates Bitylion at 90 miles (ca. 135 km) from Jerusalem, while Paulos gave the same distance between Bitylion and Theognios' monastery; van den Gheyn suggests that the monastery was therefore situated near Jerusalem<sup>595</sup>, but this is mere speculation and perhaps Kyrillos just misinterpreted Paulos' text.

Hierokles, who probably wrote ca. 527/528 AD, mentioned Gaza, Raphia, Askalon, Ariza and Βιτύλη (Bitylion) as the last five cities in the province of Palaestina I (6)<sup>596</sup>. A strict geographical order is not likely, since Askalon stands out of place, while the identification of Ariza is problematic, but surely the south of Palestine is referred to.

About 530 AD Theodosius places 'Betulia', the city mentioned in the book of *Iudith*, 12 miles (ca. 18 km) south of Raphia (7)<sup>597</sup>:

de Ascalona usque ad Gaza milia XII. inter Ascalonam et Gazam civitates duas, id est Antedona et Maioma. de Gaza usque ad Rafia milia XXIII. de Rafia usque ad Betuliam, ubi Olofernis mortuus est, milia XII.

'From Ascalona (Askalon) to Gaza 12 miles (ca. 18 km). Between Ascalona and Gaza there are two cities, Antedona (Anthedon) and Maioma (Maiouma). From Gaza to Rafia 24 miles (ca. 36 km). From Rafia to Betulia, where Olofernis (Holofernes) died, 12 miles (ca. 18 km).'

From the location it is clear that in fact the city of Bitylion is referred to, and that Theodosius incorrectly identified that place with the biblical Bet(h)ulia, where the Jewish woman Ioudith killed the Assyrian-Babylonian general Holofernes.

<sup>594</sup> Kyrillos of Skythopolis, *Vita Theognii* (Schwartz, 1939, p. 241-243), with Bitylion mentioned in § 2 (p. 242).

<sup>595</sup> Cf. van den Gheyn, 1891a, p. 89, n. 3 and 1891b, p. 571.

<sup>596</sup> Hierokles, 719, 7-11 (Honigmann, 1939a, p. 42). See also s.v. Ariza.

<sup>597</sup> Theodosius, *De situ terrae sanctae*, 3 (Geyer, 1965, p. 116).

### 3. The area between Raphia and Rinokoloura

In 536 AD bishop Manouelios of Bitylion attended the synod in Jerusalem (8)<sup>598</sup>:

Μανουήλιος ἐλέει θεοῦ ἐπίσκοπος τοῦ Βιτυλίου  
'Manouelios by the mercy of god bishop of Bitylion'

In the Medaba mosaic (10), probably made about 560-565 AD, Ρα[φία] (Raphia), τὸ [τοῦ ἁγίου] | Ἱ[λαρίωνος] ('the place of Saint Hilarion') and Β[...]υλιον (Bitylion) are situated in Palestine. After the following 'Borders of Egypt and Palestine' (ὅροι Αἰγύπτου | καὶ Παλαιστίνης) comes the town of Ρινοκόρουρα (Rinokoloura) in Egypt<sup>599</sup>. Of the vignette of Bitylion only the red roof of a church is still visible. The name Β[...]υλιον has also been read as Βα[...]λιον, Β[...]λιον and [...]υλιον<sup>600</sup>, and many different restorations have been suggested: Βα[θύ]λιον, Βα[τύ]λιον, Β[ατ]ύλιον, Β[ατύ]λιον, Β[ηθ]ύλιον, [Βηθ]ύλιον, Β[ητ]ύλιον, [Βητ]ύλιον, Β[υτ]ύλιον, [Βυτ]ύλιον. The restorations with 'Bat(h)-' and 'Bet(h)-' are usually influenced by the incorrect identifications with either the biblical Bethu(e)l / Bathoul in the Beersheba region, with the village of Bethlelea near Gaza, or with the city of Bet(h)ulia in *Judith*. Since the names for Bitylion in Greek sources almost always start with Βιτ-, it seems most plausible to restore the name as Β[ιτ]ύλιον<sup>601</sup>.

Among the subscriptions of a Syriac letter from the archimandritai or abbots of the province of Arabia to their orthodox bishops, probably dated to the 6th century AD, 'David, abbot of the monastery of Bitalia' is mentioned<sup>602</sup>. Some scholars suppose that Bitylion is referred to<sup>603</sup>, but the latter place belongs to Palaestina I and not to the province of Arabia.

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<sup>598</sup> *Synodus Hierosolymitana* (Schwartz, 1940, 3, p. 188, no. 21). Figueras, 2000, p. 170-171 (in contradiction with p. 138) incorrectly states that Manouelios attended the synod of Constantinopolis of 536 AD.

<sup>599</sup> Medaba mosaic (IGLS XXI 2, 153), 123-127. For Bitylion in particular, cf. Lagrange, 1897, p. 179; Schulten, 1900, p. 28; Jacoby, 1905, p. 48-50; O'Callaghan, R. T., s.v. Madaba, in DB, Suppl. V, 26, 1953, col. 695; Avi-Yonah, 1954, p. 75; Gatier, IGLS XXI 2, 1986, p. 173; Donner, 1992, p. 77; Alliata, 1999, p. 93.

<sup>600</sup> The reading Β.ΥΛΙΟΝ, however, is clear on e.g. Abel, 1940, pl. 8, Avi-Yonah, 1954, pl. 9 and Donner, 1992, pl.

<sup>601</sup> Cf. Figueras, 2000, p. 61, n. 75.

<sup>602</sup> *Documenta ad origines Monophysitarum illustrandas* (Latin translation in Chabot, 1933, II, p. 149).

<sup>603</sup> Cf. Tsafirir, 1994, p. 91.

### 3. The area between Raphia and Rinokoloura

Georgios of Cyprus (**11**), who wrote about 591-603 AD, lists thirty places in the province of Palaestina I (Ἐπαρχία Παλαιστίνης Α)<sup>604</sup>. The administrative list starts with the metropolis Jerusalem, but the other toponyms are mentioned without a strict geographical order: Ἀσκαλῶν (Askalon), Γάζα (Gaza), Ῥαφία (Raphia) and Ἀνθηδῶν (Anthedon) are roughly grouped together (1008-1011), but are listed separately from the other southern cities Εὐκωμάζων (Eukomazon, immo Sykomazon, between Gaza and Raphia) and Βιτυλίος (Bittylios - Bitylion) (1022-1023).

Georgios' list is partially followed by a Greek *Notitia episcopatum*, where the entry is incorrectly rendered as ὁ Αἰττυλίου ('the (bishop) of Aittylios') (**12**)<sup>605</sup>. This *Notitia* also exists in a Latin translation, where the entry is rendered as 'Estilion' (**13**)<sup>606</sup>.

## BETHAPHOU

Other ancient name: Boutaphios

### Topographical situation

Bethaphou, attested in the early 4th century AD, lies some 14 miles (ca. 21 km) south of Raphia (**1; 3**), at the border between Palestine and Egypt (**1-4**). One might suppose that the village (κώμη (**1**); vicus (**3**)) was situated along the road between Raphia and Rinokoloura. It is not clear whether it actually belonged to Egypt or Palestine, or stretched at both sides of the border.

### Identifications

Both on phonetic and geographical grounds Bethaphou might be identical with the town Boutaphios, which is also situated between Raphia and Rinokoloura, perhaps at 13 miles (19,5 km) southwest of the former<sup>607</sup>. Since Eusebios mixed up the

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<sup>604</sup> Georgios of Cyprus, 997-1027 (Honigmann, 1939a, p. 66-67); in some manuscripts the toponym is spelled Βιτέλιος and Βιτίλιος. Bitylion is also mentioned in *Notitia episcopatum*, V, 104 (Parthey, 1866, p. 144), but this part of the *Notitia* is actually a copy of Georgios' list.

<sup>605</sup> *Notitia episcopatum*, fol. 245Ro, 30 (Gelzer, 1892, p. 252); cf. Jacoby, 1905, p. 49 (where the name is misprinted as Αἰττυλίου).

<sup>606</sup> *Notitia Antiochiae ac Ierosolymae patriarchatum* (Tobler, 1879, p. 340).

<sup>607</sup> Cf. Roberts, P.Ryl. IV, 1952, p. 124; Alt, 1954, p. 162-163; Tsafirir, 1994, p. 92; Figueras, 2000, p. 172. See s.v. Boutaphios.

### 3. *The area between Raphia and Rinokoloura*

biblical Bethaphou / Beth-Tappuah with the place south of Raphia (1), is not impossible that Boutaphios is actually the more correct name of the village.

Figueras tentatively identifies Bethaphou and Boutaphios with the town P3-s3-nfr, attested in 217 BC<sup>608</sup>, but there are no real arguments to support this suggestion.

Bethaphou and Boutaphios being located some 19,5 - 21 km southwest of Raphia, it seems not impossible that the place has to be looked for at or in the area of Tell el-Qabr, which lies some 20 km southwest of Rafah<sup>609</sup>. Without further archaeological information about Tell el-Qabr, however, this remains a mere hypothesis.

On the other hand, since Bitylion is situated some 12 miles southwest of Raphia, Bethaphou and Boutaphios have to be looked for some 1 or 2 miles (ca. 1,5 - 3 km) more to the west of the former site. If the identification of Bitylion and Tell el-Sheikh (which actually seems to be situated some 15 km or 10 miles southwest of Rafah) is correct, this points to a location for Bethaphou and Boutaphios still in the Sheikh Zuweid area, rather than at Tell el-Qabr. Avi-Yonah so identifies Bethaphou with Sheikh Zuweid<sup>610</sup>, and Figueras tentatively locates Bethaphou and Boutaphios in Tell Eqneiyin (Tell Jenein) near Sheikh Zuweid, a site that perhaps yielded some Roman remains<sup>611</sup>. Schmitt identifies Bethaphou and Boutaphios with Tell Mahiza' somewhat more to the south<sup>612</sup>, but also this is a mere hypothesis.

Guérin located Khirbet el-Burdj at 14 miles (21 km) from Rafah and therefore identified the place with Bethaphou<sup>613</sup>, but he apparently made some mistake because Khirbet el-Burdj is actually situated some 30 km from Rafah, which enfeebles his identification.

### **Etymology**

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<sup>608</sup> Figueras, 1988b, p. 121-124 (Hebrew) (non vidi); Figueras, 2000, p. 34.36.38.172.254.228. See s.v. Bytl - P3-s3-nfr.

<sup>609</sup> Cf. Abel, 1939, p. 547 and 1940, p. 227; Roberts, P.Ryl. IV, 1952, p. 124; Alt, 1954, p. 162-163; Tsafirir, 1994, p. 92; Figueras, 2000, p. 172.229. See s.v. Tell el-Qabr.

<sup>610</sup> Avi-Yonah, 1976, p. 41; cf. O'Callaghan, R. T., s.v. Madaba, in DB, Suppl. V, 26, 1953, col. 695; King, 1977, p. 66.

<sup>611</sup> Figueras, 1988b, p. 121-124 (Hebrew) (non vidi); Figueras, 2000, p. 53.172.228. See s.v. Tell Eqneiyin.

<sup>612</sup> Schmitt, 1995, p. 102-103; cf. TAVO B VI 10, 1993. See s.v. Tell Mahiza'.

<sup>613</sup> Guérin, 1869, I 2, p. 230.237.

### 3. The area between Raphia and Rinokoloura

The Semitic name Bethaphou corresponds with the biblical toponym Beth-Tappuah ('House of the apple-tree')<sup>614</sup>.

#### Analysis of the sources

Commenting on the toponyms mentioned in the book of *Iosue*, Eusebios (1) dwells on the village of Bethaphou, which he situates at 14 miles (ca. 21 km) south of Raphia, at the border of Palestine<sup>615</sup>:

Βηθαφοῦ. φυλῆς Ἰούδα. κώμη ἐπέκεινα Ῥαφίας σημείοις ἰδ' εἰσιόντων εἰς Αἴγυπτον, ἣ καὶ ὄριον ἐστὶ Παλαιστίνης.

'Bethaphou. Of the tribe of Judah. A village on the other side of Raphia, fourteen milestones on the way to Egypt, which is also the border of Palestine.'

Eusebios apparently refers to Beth-Tappuah (in the Septuaginta rendered as Βαιθααπφουε [var. Βαιθαχου]), one of the towns of the tribe of Judah in the region of Hebron<sup>616</sup>. It is clear, however, that the location south of Raphia does not match the biblical Beth-Tappuah. Eusebios' mistake is most likely inspired by the fact that the latter name in some way resembled the name of the village, but it is difficult to decide whether 'Bethaphou' is Eusebios' rendering of the biblical name Beth-Tappuah or indeed the actual name of the village.

Hieronymus translated the text of Eusebios (3)<sup>617</sup>:

Bethaffu. in tribu Iudae. vicus trans Rafiam milibus quattuordecim euntibus Aegyptum, qui est terminus Palaestinae.

'Bethaffu. In the tribe of Judah. A village on the other side of Rafia, fourteen miles on the way to Egypt, which is the border of Palestine.'

Eusebios also comments on the city of Thaphphou / Tappuah, some 40 km north of Jerusalem, bringing up the similar name of Bethaphou (2)<sup>618</sup>:

Θαφφοῦ. πόλις ἣν ἐπολιόρησεν Ἰησοῦς, τὸν βασιλέα αὐτῆς ἀνελόν, ἣ γέγονε φυλῆς Ἰούδα. κεῖται καὶ ἀνωτέρω Βηθαφοῦ, ὄριον Παλαιστίνης καὶ Αἴγυπτου.

'Thaphphou. A city Joshua besieged, killing its king, which fell to the tribe of Judah. There is also the Bethaphou mentioned above, the border of Palestine and Egypt.'

Eusebios apparently mixed up the city of Tappuah that was besieged by Joshua (cf. *Iosue*, 12, 17) and that lay at the border of the tribes of Manasseh and Ephraim (cf. *Iosue*, 16, 8; 17, 7-8) with another Tappuah in the lowlands of the tribe of Judah (cf.

<sup>614</sup> See § Analysis of the sources.

<sup>615</sup> Eusebios, *Onomasticon*, s.v. Βηθαφοῦ (Klostermann, 1904, p. 50); cf. the translation of Freeman-Grenville, 2003, p. 34.

<sup>616</sup> For Beth-Tappuah ('House of the apple-tree'), mentioned in *Iosue*, 15, 53, cf. Odelain, 1978, p. 80 and Rogerson, 1985, p. 94-95. Abel, 1938, II, p. 283 locates Beth-Tappuah 8 km west of Hebron.

<sup>617</sup> Hieronymus, *Liber de situ et nominibus locorum Hebraicorum*, s.v. Bethaffu (Klostermann, 1904, p. 51); cf. the translation of Freeman-Grenville, 2003, p. 34.

<sup>618</sup> Eusebios, *Onomasticon*, s.v. Θαφφοῦ (Klostermann, 1904, p. 98); cf. the translation of Freeman-Grenville, 2003, p. 57. For the different toponyms Tappuah ('Apple-tree'), cf. Odelain, 1978, p. 368 and Rogerson, 1985, p. 84-85 and 148-149.

### 3. The area between Raphia and Rinokoloura

*Iosue*, 15, 34). Freeman-Grenville supposes that Eusebios considered Bethaphou and Thaphphou as identical<sup>619</sup>, but I do not think that the phrasing allows this interpretation.

Also this passage was translated by Hieronymus (4)<sup>620</sup>:

Thaffu. in tribu ludae civitas quam expugnavit Iesus, rege illius interfecto. diximus et supra de termino Palaestinae et Aegypti qui appellabatur Bethafu.

'Thaffu. A city in the tribe of Judah, which Joshua took, killing its king. We have also spoken above about the border of Palestine and Egypt, which was called Bethafu.'

The border between Egypt and Palestine is explicitly mentioned in two other sources, but unfortunately not linked with any specific toponym.

The inscription SEG XLVII, 2132, dated between 10 December 232 and 9 December 233 AD, was probably set up as a milestone along the main road in the northern Sinai somewhere south the Egyptian border, but its precise location remains uncertain<sup>621</sup>.

9 ἀπὸ ὄρων  
Συρίας Παλαι[στίνης]  
11 [μίλια - ]

'From the borders of Syria Palai[stina ... miles].'

In the Medaba mosaic, probably made about 560-565 AD, the 'borders of Egypt and Palestine' (ὄροι Αἰγύπτου | καὶ Παλαιστίνης) are listed in red letters between the towns of Β[ι]λλιον (Bitylion) in Palestine and Ρινοκόρουρα (Rinokoloura) in Egypt<sup>622</sup>. Some scholars suppose that the lemma actually belongs to Rinokoloura, which in many sources is indeed considered the Egyptian border town<sup>623</sup>, but the general disposition of the text rather points to an independent lemma.

## BOUTAPHIOS

Other ancient name: Bethaphou

### Topographical situation

<sup>619</sup> Freeman-Grenville, 2003, p. 57 (translating: 'it is also mentioned above as Bethaphou') and p. 120.

<sup>620</sup> Hieronymus, *Liber de situ et nominibus locorum Hebraicorum*, s.v. Thaffu (Klostermann, 1904, p. 99); cf. the translation of Freeman-Grenville, 2003, p. 57.

<sup>621</sup> AE, 1973 [= 1976], p. 182, no. 559; SEG, XLVII, 1997 [= 2000], p. 638-639, no. 2132. For a full discussion of this inscription and its parallel SEG XLVII, 2133, see s.v. el-Arish.

<sup>622</sup> Medaba mosaic (IGLS XXI 2, 153), 126. For this lemma in particular, cf. Lagrange, 1897, p. 179; Schulten, 1900, p. 28; Jacoby, 1905, p. 48; O'Callaghan, R. T., s.v. Madaba, in DB, Suppl. V, 26, 1953, col. 695; Avi-Yonah, 1954, p. 75; Gatier, IGLS XXI 2, 1986, p. 173; Donner, 1992, p. 77; Alliata, 1999, p. 93.

<sup>623</sup> Cf. O'Callaghan, R. T., s.v. Madaba, in DB, Suppl. V, 26, 1953, col. 695. See s.v. Rinokoloura.

### 3. The area between Raphia and Rinokoloura

Boutaphios, attested only once ca. 322-323 AD, is a road station perhaps 13 miles (19,5 km) southwest of Raphia and 19 miles (28,5 km) north of Rinokoloura (1). The papyrus does not specify whether the place was situated in Egypt or in Palestine. If the identification of Boutaphios and Bethaphou is correct, the place might have been the border town between the two countries.

If Bitylion was indeed situated some 12 miles (ca. 18 km) south of Raphia<sup>624</sup>, Boutaphios apparently lay some 1,5 to 3 km southwest of the former place. Figueras supposed that both places flourished at the same time, and that travellers had the choice between two roads, one along the coast passing by Bitylion and another one more inland passing by Boutaphios<sup>625</sup>. Both places, however, do not seem to function as a road station at the same moment, and at the latest from 359 AD on Bitylion seems to be the only settlement between Raphia and Rinokoloura referred to in the sources. One can only guess whether Boutaphios continued to exist or whether its function as a border town was transferred to Bitylion.

#### Identifications

The identification of Boutaphios and Bethaphou seems a plausible hypothesis<sup>626</sup>: both places are situated respectively at 14 and (perhaps) 13 miles (1) south of Raphia; they are both attested in the early 4th century AD, while their names might be phonetically related.

Boutaphios was perhaps situated at or in the area of Tell el-Qabr, a site some 20 km southwest of Rafah, although a location near Sheikh Zuweid, some 15 km southwest from Rafah, cannot be excluded<sup>627</sup>.

Figueras tentatively suggests that the local temple where Herodes in 40 BC passed by on his way to Rinokoloura according to Flavius Iosephos, might have been in Bitylion or Boutaphios<sup>628</sup>, but there are little arguments for this suggestion.

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<sup>624</sup> See s.v. Bitylion.

<sup>625</sup> Figueras, 1988b, p. 121-124 (Hebrew) (non vidi); Figueras, 2000, p. 46.63.

<sup>626</sup> See s.v. Bethaphou.

<sup>627</sup> See s.v. Bethaphou and s.v. Tell el-Qabr.

<sup>628</sup> Iosephos, *Bellum Iudaicum*, 1, 14, 2 (277) and *Antiquitates Iudaicae*, 14, 14, 2 (374). The text is quoted in full s.v. Rinokoloura. Cf. Figueras, 2000, p. 41.171.

### 3. The area between Raphia and Rinokoloura

Figueras tentatively identifies Bethaphou and Boutaphios with the town P3-s3-nfr, attested in 217 BC<sup>629</sup>, but there are no real arguments to support this suggestion.

In 639 AD the Arab general Amr ibn el-As on his way to conquer Egypt passed by a nameless Egyptian village between Rafah and el-Arish. Figueras tentatively identifies that village with Boutaphios<sup>630</sup>, but since the latter is only attested in the early 4th century AD, there are again no real little arguments to support this suggestion.

#### Orthographic variants and etymology

In his itineraries Theophanes apparently corrected the name 'Boutaphios' or 'Boutaphion' from his draft (1; 3) into the invariable 'Boutaphis' in his fair copy (2). Roberts supposes that 'Boutaphis' is a mistake for 'Boutaphos', which he considers a variant of 'Boutaphion'<sup>631</sup>, but it seems more likely that 'Boutaphis' is a variant for 'Boutaphios'<sup>632</sup>. If this is correct, 'Boutaphios' (and not 'Boutaphion') has to be considered the nominative form of the name<sup>633</sup>.

The name Boutaphios can literally be translated as 'Burial place of the cow / bull', which might be a Greek pseudo-etymological interpretation of the original (Semitic?) name. According to Figueras Boutaphios is an Egyptian name<sup>634</sup>, but he does not offer any further explanation.

#### Homonyms

Boutaphion (or Boutaphios?) is one of the quarters of Arsinoe, the capital of the Arsinoites, in the 2nd-3rd centuries AD<sup>635</sup>.

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<sup>629</sup> See s.v. Bethaphou and s.v. Bytl - P3-s3-nfr.

<sup>630</sup> Figueras, 2000, p. 63, n. 111 and p. 111. For the whole story of the invasion, see s.v. el-Arish.

<sup>631</sup> Roberts, P.Ryl. IV, 1952, p. 125, n. 11.

<sup>632</sup> A similar example of this spelling is the ending εἰς Πηλούσιον in P.Ryl. IV, 627, 229 (the name is not preserved in the fair copy P.Ryl. IV, 628, 4); if the ending -ις belonged to a noun of the paradigm πόλις, one rather expects the spelling -εις as in the case of Τάνεις in P.Ryl. IV, 628, [2]-3, although it has to be stressed that there is little consistency in Theophanes' orthography.

<sup>633</sup> The spelling Β(ουτάφιων) in Avi-Yonah, 1976, p. 41 is probably a mere mistake.

<sup>634</sup> Cf. Figueras, 2000, p. 173.

<sup>635</sup> Cf. Calderini, 1973, II 1, p. 68; 1988, Suppl. 1, p. 86; 1996, Suppl. 2, p. 38; 2003, Suppl. 3, p. 27, s.v. Boutaphion / Boutaphiou 1; the name is only attested in the genitive and the dative case, so the nominative might be either Boutaphion or Boutaphios.



### 3. The area between Raphia and Rinokoloura

#### Analysis of the sources

The official Theophanes travelled from Upper Egypt to Antiocheia in Syria, possibly in 322 or 323 AD. Some memoranda and accounts of this journey - both drafts and fair copies - are preserved. On 22 Pharmouthi (17 April) Theophanes came from Rinokoloura, passed by Boutaphios and continued on to Raphia, but the exact distances are not preserved. This itinerary is mentioned twice, both as a draft and as a fair copy<sup>636</sup>:

#### (627, draft) (1)

|     |     |                                  |               |
|-----|-----|----------------------------------|---------------|
| 235 | [ια | ἀπὸ Ρῖνο]κόρουνα <εἰς> Βουτάφιον | [μίλ(ια) ιθ?] |
| 236 | [   | ἀπὸ Βου]ταφίου εἰς Ῥαφείαν       | μίλ(ια) ι?γ   |
| 235 | [11 | From Rino]korona <to> Boutaphios | [milia 19?]   |
| 236 | [   | From Bou]taphios to Rapheia      | [milia 1]3?   |

#### (628, fair copy) (2)

|    |     |                                    |
|----|-----|------------------------------------|
| 10 | [ια | ἀπὸ Ρῖνο]κόρουρα [εἰ]ς Β[ου]τάφισ] |
| 11 | [   | ἀπὸ] Βουτάφισ εἰς Ῥαφ[ίαν]         |
| 10 | [11 | From Ri]nokoroura to B[outaphis]   |
| 11 | [   | From] Boutaphis to Raph[ia]        |

On his way back from Antiocheia to Egypt on 9 Mesore (2 August) of that same year Theophanes travelled again from Raphia via Boutaphios to Rinokoloura. He did some shopping in Raphia and Rinokoloura, but apparently didn't buy anything in Boutaphios<sup>637</sup>:

#### (638, itinerary) (3)

|    |   |           |
|----|---|-----------|
| 22 | [ἀπ]ὸ Ῥαφίας εἰς Β[ου]τάφιον            | μίλ(ια) ] |
| 23 | [ἀπ]ὸ Β[ου]ταφίου εἰς [Ῥ]ῖνο]κόρουρα(?) | μίλ(ια) ] |
| 22 | [Fro]m Raphia to B[outaphios]           | milia ]   |
| 23 | [Fro]m B[ou]taphios to [R]ino]koroura?  | milia ]   |

Unfortunately in the papyrus the distances between Rinokoloura, Boutaphios and Raphia are mostly lost. The figures are not so easily restored, because also in other sources the distances between Rinokoloura and Raphia are confusing. On the latter track the *Itinerarium provinciarum Antonini Augusti* gives a distance of 22 miles (ca. 33 km), but since the actual distance between Rafah and el-Arish is about 46 km, this figure has often been corrected in 32 miles (ca. 48 km), although also other figures have been suggested<sup>638</sup>. Several restorations are therefore possible: [9] / [1]3 miles if one restores according to the 22 miles in the *Itinerarium*; [19] / [1]3 or [9] / [2]3 miles if one accepts an actual distance of 32 miles between Rinokoloura and

<sup>636</sup> P.Ryl. IV, 627, 235-236 is a draft for P.Ryl. IV, 628, 10-11.

<sup>637</sup> P.Ryl. IV, 638, 22-23 for the itinerary; Boutaphios is not mentioned in the account P.Ryl. IV, 630\*.

<sup>638</sup> See s.v. Rinokoloura and s.v. el-Arish.

### 3. *The area between Raphia and Rinokoloura*

Raphia. I have a slight preference for [19] / [1]3 miles or 28,5 / 19,5 km, since a position midway seems more plausible for Boutaphios. The editor Roberts proposes [15] / [2]3 miles<sup>639</sup>, but the total distance of 38 miles (ca. 57 km) seems too high.

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<sup>639</sup> Roberts, P.Ryl. IV, 1952 is not very consistent: on p. 107 he proposes a distance of 15 miles (ca. 22,5 km) / 23 miles (ca. 34,5 km), on p. 124 he chooses for a distance of [1]3 miles (ca. 19 km) [followed by Figueras, 2000, p. 45 with n. 65, and p. 172] and in the Greek text itself on p. 120 he leaves the lacunae [ ] / [ ] 3 miles.

## *Arab period*

### **EL-BARMAKIA**

#### **Topographical situation**

The road station el-Barmakia, attested in the 10th century AD, is situated at the Syrian side of the border, some 6 miles (ca. 12 km) southwest of Rafah, some 6 miles (ca. 12 km) northeast of el-Shadjaratain, and some 18 miles (ca. 36 km) northeast of el-Arish (1; 3).

#### **Identifications**

Cytryn-Silverman tentatively identifies el-Barmakia with site R-48 in the Tell el-Aheimer region, where the early islamic material was most consistent and representative<sup>640</sup>.

In 1898 Musil noticed the remains of an old village with the name Tell el-Qabr some 20 km southwest of Rafah. According to this scholar the place was also known under the name of Tell el-Barmakia, but since the medieval el-Barmakia lay more to the northeast, this identification is doubtful<sup>641</sup>.

#### **Analysis of the sources<sup>642</sup>**

According to the 10th century Arab author el-Muhallabi (1), quoted by the 13th century author Yaqut (3), the road between el-Arish and Rafah passed by the stations Abi Ishaq, el-Shadjaratain (the Syrian border) and el-Barmakia, each situated at 6 miles (ca. 12 km) one from another<sup>643</sup>.

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<sup>640</sup> Cf. Cytryn-Silverman, 2001, p. 22; for R-48 see also p. 20 and the maps p. 33-34. See s.v. Tell el-Aheimer.

<sup>641</sup> Musil, 1907, II 1, p. 228; followed by Abel, 1940, p. 227 and Schmitt, 1995, p. 102; rejected by Hartman, 1910, p. 685. See s.v. Tell el-Qabr.

<sup>642</sup> According to the index of Yaqut (Wüstenfeld, 1870, VI, p. 34) el-Barmakia also occurs in Wüstenfeld, 1866, I, p. 594 (2), but I did not find a translation for this passage.

<sup>643</sup> el-Muhallabi in Yaqut, *Mu'qam al-buldan* (Wüstenfeld, 1868, III, p. 661; translated in Toussoun, 1926, I, p. 63); cf. Wüstenfeld, 1864, p. 465; Hartmann, 1910, p. 685; Gaudefroy-Demombynes, 1923,

## EL-ZA'AQA

Modern name: Sheikh Zuweid

### Topographical situation

el-Za'aqa was a road station between el-Arish and Gaza from the 12th (1?) or 13th (2) till the late 17th century AD (24); it continued to be known under the name of Sheikh Zuweid. According to the *Devisé* (3) el-Za'aqa was situated 5 'liues' (ca. 20 km) southwest of Rafah, but the *Via* (4) and Sanudo (6) list only 4 'liues' (ca. 16 km); the distance of 3 'lives' (ca. 12 km) in the *Memoria* (5) is apparently a mere mistake. Since the total distance between Rafah and el-Arish in the *Devisé* is 14 'liues' or about 56 km, which is some 10 km more than the actual distance of 46 km, the figures of the *Via* and Sanudo are probably more accurate. The figure of 16 km is also confirmed by the modern distance between Rafah and Sheikh Zuweid<sup>644</sup>. According to el-Omari (8) el-Shadjaratain was situated between el-Za'aqa and Rafah, but since this border town actually lay some 24 km southwest of Rafah, it is more likely that the place has to be looked for some 8 km southwest of el-Za'aqa<sup>645</sup>. In the older sources Rafah is mentioned as the first station northeast of el-Za'aqa (2-6; 9; 14; 15), but the former place gradually lost its importance and is not mentioned anymore as a road station in the itineraries from the late 15th century AD on, leaving el-Salqa as the first station northeast of el-Za'aqa (12)<sup>646</sup>. In 1389 AD the road station Khan Yunus was founded, some 10 km northeast of Rafah<sup>647</sup>; in later sources, therefore, Khan Yunus usually became the first station northeast of el-Za'aqa (17-24). No actual distances are recorded between el-Za'aqa and Khan Yunus, but the places were probably some 26 km from each other.

In southwestern direction, el-Za'aqa is situated some 4 'liues' (ca. 16 km) from el-Ushsh, which was later called el-Kharruba, and some 8 'liues' (ca. 32 km) from el-

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p. 7; Marmardji, 1951, p. 139; Figueras, 2000, p. 56; Mouton, 2000, p. 172, n. 17; Cytryn-Silverman, 2001, p. 9.22.

<sup>644</sup> See s.v. Sheikh Zuweid.

<sup>645</sup> Cf. the map in Mouton, 2000, p. 199. See s.v. el-Shadjaratain.

<sup>646</sup> The road station el-Salqa between Rafah and Gaza is attested in the 14th-15th century AD; cf. Hartmann, 1910, p. 689.691-692.696.

<sup>647</sup> Cf. Hartmann, 1910, p. 696; Khan Yunus is shown on the maps of Gardiner, 1920, pl. 13 and Abel, 1939, p. 532.

### 3. The area between Raphia and Rinokoloura

Arish<sup>648</sup> (4-6; cf. 2; 9; 12; 14; 15; 19?), the figures of 5 'liues' (ca. 20 km) and 9 'liues' (ca. 36 km) in the *Devise* (3) again being too high. el-Za'aqa was located 4 miles (ca. 6 km) from the sea (18) (a figure too high in comparison with the position of modern Sheikh Zuweid), so the road apparently did not follow the coastline itself, but went somewhat more inland.

There was a well that at first provided good water (4-6; 18), but in the 17th century AD became salty (24), which probably caused the decline of the village. In its hey-days there were shops (2) and a good inn (4-6), but by 1697 AD there was no serai anymore (24). el-Za'aqa lay in the border region between Egypt and Syria (13), and customs had to be paid there in the 15th century (18). The place was then guarded against pirates on the Mediterranean (18). In el-Za'aqa the holy man Sheikh Zuweid was buried (24), and although the village got deserted, the latter name was preserved because of this wely or burial chapel.

In 1898 Musil was shown the ruins of el-Za'aqa on a sandy hill west of the road from Rafah, with the wely situated at the eastern side of that hill. A well had recently been restored, but the people still used the better water from Bir el-Za'aqa, near the Mediterranean<sup>649</sup>.

#### Identifications

An identification of el-Za'aqa with any of the New Kingdom wells or stations on the Karnak relief of Sethos I or in P.Anastasi<sup>650</sup> is not supported by any real evidence.

On the map of Sicard of 1722, followed by a Greek-Arab map of that same year, the name Ostrakine is linked with el-Arish and the name Rinokoloura with el-Za'aqa<sup>651</sup>. Because in Arabic sources the border between Egypt and Syria was situated near el-Za'aqa, Sicard might have linked the border towns Rinokoloura and el-

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<sup>648</sup> It is not clear why Mouton, 2000, p. 172, n. 18, who does not specify whether his figure is based upon a modern map or upon an older source, locates el-Za'aqa at 28 km from el-Arish.

<sup>649</sup> Musil, 1907, II 1, p. 227-228; cf. Abel, 1939, p. 209.

<sup>650</sup> Clédat, 1923b, p. 157 (cf. p. 148.150) proposed an identification with Karnak, 1986, IV, pl. 4, 19 (T): N-ḥ -s n p3 sr ('N-ḥ-s of the Prince'); Karnak, 1986, IV, pl. 4, 20 (S): T3 ḥnm.t (Mn-m3'.t-R') ('The well of Men-ma'at-Ra'); and P.Anastasi I, 27, 6-7 (11): N-ḥ-s.

<sup>651</sup> Sicard, 1982 [= 1722], II, p. 219 and III, p. 70-71.180; rejected by d'Anville, 1766, p. 103; cf. Munier, 1943, p. 60; Honigmann, 1961, p. 182. See also s.v. Rinokoloura, s.v. Ostrakine and s.v. el-Arish.

### 3. The area between Raphia and Rinokoloura

Za'aqa<sup>652</sup>. The ancient geographical information about Rinokoloura, however, points to a location far more west than el-Za'aqa, as already noticed by d'Anville. Probably on the basis of this map, however, some scholars incorrectly accept the identification of Rinokoloura with el-Za'aqa<sup>653</sup>.

el-Za'aqa is often in a general way linked to the city of Bitylion, attested in the 4th-7th century AD and probably located at the nearby Tell el-Sheikh<sup>654</sup>.

Wüstenfeld locates el-Za'aqa between Rafah and el-Barmakia<sup>655</sup>, but el-Za'aqa probably lay some 4 km southwest of el-Barmakia.

#### Etymology

Abel translates the name el-Za'aqa as 'la Saumâtre' ('the salty one') and supposes that the name has been given because of the salty water at the spot<sup>656</sup>. This explanation, however, is not really convincing, since the water of the well was at first considered quite good (4-6; 18).

#### Analysis of the sources

According to Clédat the 12th century author Idrisi, apparently referring to el-Za'aqa as Zaqah, states that Zaqah and Rafah are in fact identical (1). Indeed the Arabic spelling of these names can be easily confused, but el-Za'aqa and Rafah were definitely two different places. Since Gildemeister's translation of the relevant passage does not refer to Zaqah or el-Za'aqa, I suppose that Clédat (or his source) made some mistake<sup>657</sup>.

Yaqut, who crossed the northern Sinai about 1213 AD, found a lot of places with shops where caravans and travellers could buy everything they needed; in this

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<sup>652</sup> A similar argumentation might explain the position of el-Za'aqa southwest of Rinokoloura on the map of Pococke, 1746 (?) in Tzachou-Alexandri, 1995, p. 16.

<sup>653</sup> Sauget, Joseph-Marie, s.v. Melas, in BS, IX, 1967, col. 289; Lukaszewicz, 1978, p. 361; Fedalto, 1988, p. 607.

<sup>654</sup> See s.v. Bitylion and s.v. Tell el-Sheikh.

<sup>655</sup> Wüstenfeld, 1864, p. 465.

<sup>656</sup> Abel, 1939, p. 228 and 1940, p. 226; cf. Wehr, 1979, p. 438, s.v. zu'āq, 'brackish, unpotable (water)'.

<sup>657</sup> Idrisi (mentioned in Clédat, 1915a, p. 19, n. 1); cf. Gildemeister, 1885, p. 122-123.

### 3. The area between Raphia and Rinokoloura

respect he lists Rafah, el-Qass, el-Za'aqa, el-Arish, el-Warrada and Qatia (2)<sup>658</sup>. It is clear that el-Qass, actually situated north of Sabkhat Bardawil, is inserted on the wrong place in this list.

In 1271 AD sultan Baibars passed by el-Za'aqa, and went from there through the desert to the citadel of Karak (10)<sup>659</sup>.

In *La devise des chemins de Babiloine* (3), written ca. 1289-1291 AD, a military itinerary goes from Rafah to Cairo. It mentions the station el-Za'aqa at 5 'liues' (ca. 20 km) from Rafah, at 5 'liues' (ca. 20 km) from el-Kharruba and at 9 'liues' (ca. 36 km) from el-Arish<sup>660</sup>:

Item du Rephaph iusques au Zaheca liues .V.  
Item dou Zaheca iusques au Karrobler liues .V.  
Item dou Karrobler iusques au Hariss .iiij. liues.  
'Next from Rephaph to Zaheca 5 liues.  
Next from Zaheca to Karrobler 5 liues.  
Next from Karrobler to Hariss 4 liues.'

A similar itinerary composed before 1289 AD is found in three different documents: the French *Via ad terram sanctam*, written ca. 1291-1293 (4); the Latin *Memoria terre sancte*, written ca. 1300-1321 (5); the Latin work of the Italian geographer Marino Sanudo (6), written in 1321 AD and based upon the *Memoria*. They also describe the road from Rafah to Cairo, each with some minor variants. They mention el-Za'aqa at 4 'liues' (ca. 16 km) from Rafah, 4 'liues' (ca. 16 km) from el-Ushsh and 8 'liues' (ca. 32 km) from el-Arish<sup>661</sup>: The place apparently had a decent inn and a good well.

(4) Dou Rafah a la Zahque, IIII liues; bone herberge et bone aigue et assés; poi de sablon. De la Zahque jusques a Heus, IIII liues tot sablonous; bone aigue et assés. De Heus jusques a Larris, IIII liues tot sablon; bone aigue et assés; estassons de vendre et d'acheter.

'From Rafah to Zahque, 4 liues; a good inn and good and plenty water; little sand.

From Zahque to Heus, 4 liues all sandy; good and plenty water.

From Heus to Larris, 4 liues all sand; good and plenty water; places for selling and buying.'

(5) de Raphaht usque ad Zasque, .III. leuce, bonum herbagium, bone aque et satis; parum littore.

de Zasque usque ad Heus, .IIII<sup>or</sup>. leuce, via littorosa, satis bone aque.

de Heus usque Lariz, .IIII. leuce, totum litus, bona aqua satis, et platea pro emendo et vendendo.

'From Raphaht to Zasque, 3 (sic) liues, a good inn, good and plenty water; little sand.

From Zasque to Heus, 4 liues, a sandy road, plenty of good water.

<sup>658</sup> Yaqut (Wüstenfeld, 1867, II, p. 90; translated in Toussoun, 1926, I, p. 101); cf. Wüstenfeld, 1864, p. 465; Hartmann, 1910, p. 685; Hartmann, 1916b, p. 375; Gaudefroy-Demombynes, 1923, p. 7. See s.v. el-Qass.

<sup>659</sup> Maqrizi, *History* (translated in Musil, 1907, II 1, p. 303); cf. Gaudefroy-Demombynes, 1923, p. 6, n. 2; Abel, 1940, p. 226.

<sup>660</sup> *La devise des chemins de Babiloine* (Michelant, 1882, p. 242).

<sup>661</sup> *Via ad terram sanctam* (Kohler, 1904, p. 432); *Memoria terre sancte* (Kohler, 1904, p. 454); Marino Sanudo, 3, 14, 12 (Röhricht, 1898, p. 121).

### 3. The area between Raphia and Rinokoloura

From Heus to Lariz, 4 liues, all sand, good and plenty water, and a place for selling and buying.'  
(6) inde usque Zasque leuce IV, parum de litore, bonum herbacium et bona aqua et copiosa.

inde usque Heus leuce IV, via littorosa et aque satis bone.

inde usque Laris leuce IV; totum littus et aqua bona satis et platea ad emendum et vendendum.

'From there (sc. Raphat) to Zasque, 4 liues, little sand, a good inn and good and plenty water.

From there to Heus, 4 liues, a sandy road and plenty of good water.

From there to Laris, 4 liues, all sand and good and plenty water and a place for selling and buying.'

Ca. 1309-1341 AD the Beduin who had to maintain the fifteen road stations in the northern Sinai, negotiated with the sultan that he would take care of el-Za'aqa and Rafah, the two most eastern stations (7)<sup>662</sup>.

According to the 14th century author el-Omari the northern border of Egypt was situated between el-Za'aqa and Rafah in the neighbourhood of el-Shadjaratain, which lies in the dunes of the Mediterranean near el-Za'aqa (8)<sup>663</sup>. The phrasing suggests that el-Shadjaratain lay northeast el-Za'aqa, but this location does not seem correct. In another context el-Omari lists the road stations between Cairo and Syria, including el-Arish, el-Kharruba, el-Za'aqa and Rafah (9)<sup>664</sup>.

Abu'l-Mahasin briefly mentions el-Za'aqa between Gaza and el-Arish for the year 1410 AD (16)<sup>665</sup>.

In the register of toponyms of William Wey (11), composed in 1462 AD, the names Gaza, Lugham (perhaps Khan Yunus), ..., fluuius Rinoconoro (Rinokoloura), ..., Zacca (el-Za'aqa), Galachia (el-Salhiya), Saris, Bilbes (Bilbeis), Alariff (el-Arish) and Catria (Qatia) follow each other without much logic<sup>666</sup>. Rafah apparently had lost its importance, and is omitted in the list.

In 1464 AD Qalqashandi junior lists the road stations el-Arish, el-Kharruba, el-Za'aqa and el-Salqa, omitting Rafah (12)<sup>667</sup>.

According to Khalil el-Zahiri, who wrote before 1468 AD, the northern border of Egypt ends in el-Za'aqa, Rafah and Amadj, which is also called el-Arish, all cities near the Mediterranean (13)<sup>668</sup>. In another context he lists the postal stations el-Arish, el-Kharruba, el-Za'aqa and Rafah (14)<sup>669</sup>. The same road stations are also listed by

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<sup>662</sup> Ibn el-Dawadari (mentioned in Mouton, 2000, p. 163).

<sup>663</sup> el-Omari (translated in Hartmann, 1916a, p. 15-16); cf. Gaudefroy-Demombynes, 1923, p. 6, n. 2; Abel, 1939, p. 228; Grohmann, 1959, p. 8.17; Mouton, 2000, p. 33. See s.v. el-Shadjaratain.

<sup>664</sup> el-Omari (translated in Hartmann, 1916a, p. 488).

<sup>665</sup> Abu'l-Mahasin, *Annals* (translated in Popper, 1954, II (14), p. 169).

<sup>666</sup> William Wey (Röhrich, 1901, p. 133).

<sup>667</sup> Qalqashandi junior (mentioned in Hartmann, 1910, p. 689.691); cf. Sprenger, 1864, p. 9, n. 1.

<sup>668</sup> Khalil el-Zahiri (translated in Gaulmier, 1950, p. 37).

<sup>669</sup> Khalil el-Zahiri (translated in Gaulmier, 1950, p. 201).



### 3. The area between Raphia and Rinokoloura

Abu'l-Mahasin, who wrote before 1470 AD (15)<sup>670</sup>. The fact that Rafah is still mentioned, probably implies that an older source is used.

In 1477 AD sultan Qaitbay went in one day from Khan Yunus to el-Za'aqa and continued the next day to el-Arish (17)<sup>671</sup>.

In 1481 AD rabbi Meshullam of Volterra went from Egypt to Palestine, passing by el-Arish, el-Za'aqa, Khan Yunus and Gaza (18). In 'Aziqa' or 'Azan', which he describes as being as small as el-Arish, he found sweet water and had to pay customs. The place was located 4 miles (ca. 6 km) from the sea, and was guarded by the Muslims against pirates from Rhodos<sup>672</sup>.

The map of Bernhard von Breydenbach (19), drawn up between 1483 and 1486 AD, is not very trustworthy. West of Gaza it mentions the 'oppida parva' ('small places') Lughany (perhaps Khan Yunus) at 20 miles (ca. 30 km), Allariff (el-Arish) at 20 miles (ca. 30 km), Zaceha (el-Za'aqa) at 36 miles (ca. 54 km), and Cattia (Qatia) at 46 miles (ca. 69 km). It is clear from the other sources that the names Allariff and Zaceha have been switched; if also the distances are switched, this places el-Arish at an acceptable 20 miles from el-Za'aqa and the latter at 36 miles of Lughany, but nothing can be said for certain<sup>673</sup>.

In 1565 AD Johann Helffrich (20) knows the stations Cannunis (Khan Yunus), Sacca (el-Za'aqa) and Arisch (el-Arish) on the road from Gaza to Cairo<sup>674</sup>.

Francesco Quaresmi (21) travelled ca. 1616-1626 AD from 'Cunianus' (Khan Yunus) to 'Aris' (el-Arish) passing by the so-called 'Puteus deserti' ('Well of the desert'), which is situated at 25 miles (ca. 37,5 km) from Khan Yunus and at 50 miles (ca. 75 km) from el-Arish. It is not impossible that the well of el-Za'aqa is referred to, as Abel suggests, but the figures are not to be trusted, since the total distance of 75 miles (ca. 112,5 km) is definitely too high<sup>675</sup>.

Absoluti viginti milliaribus post e Gaza discessum, primus locus qui offenditur, "Cunianus" appellatur; ex isto post vigintiquinque milliaribus, secundus offenditur locus, dictus "Puteum deserti"; tertius post istum, peractis quinquaginta milliaribus, qui "Aris Principis" nomine insignitur: ibi dulces aquae inveniuntur.

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<sup>670</sup> Abu'l-Mahasin, *Chronicle* (mentioned in Popper, 1955, I (15), p. 47).

<sup>671</sup> Ibn el-Dji'an (translated in Devonshire, 1922, p. 31-32); cf. Gildemeister, 1880, p. 249; Hartmann, 1910, p. 696.

<sup>672</sup> Meshullam of Volterra (mentioned in Cytryn-Silverman, 2001, p. 14; cf. p. 23); cf. Veronese, 1989, p. 60-63 (non vidi).

<sup>673</sup> Breydenbach (Röhricht, 1901, pl. 3); cf. Röhricht, 1898, p. 120, n. 5; Hartmann, 1910, p. 688, n. 1.

<sup>674</sup> Johann Helffrich (mentioned in Hartmann, 1910, p. 697).

<sup>675</sup> Francesco Quaresmi (De Sandoli, 1989, p. 432); cf. Abel, 1940, p. 227, n. 1.

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'Having covered twenty miles after our departure from Gaza, the first place that is met, is called Cunianus; from there after twenty-five miles the second place is met, called the Well of the desert; the third place hereafter, fifty miles further, is named Aris Princeps: here one finds fresh water.'

About 1655 AD Hadji Khalifa (**22**) knows the stations Khan Yunus, el-Za'aqa and el-Arish<sup>676</sup>.

In 1676 AD Ferdinand von Troilo (**23**) describes a trip to Egypt in 1661 AD, mentioning the stations Hanna (Khan Yunus), Zacca (el-Za'aqa) and Aziz (el-Arish). It took him eight hours to go from Hanna to Zacca and the next day twelve hours to get to Aziz<sup>677</sup>.

Vierten Tages nach Hanna 8 Stunden.

Fünfften Tages nach Zacca 8 Stunden.

Sechsten Tages nach Aziz 12 Stunden.

The fact that von Troilo needed twelve hours to cover the 32 km to el-Arish (which gives an average of only some 2,7 km per hour), probably implies that the road became heavy going from el-Za'aqa on.

In 1697 AD el-Nabulusi (**24**) travelled from Khan Yunus to el-Arish, passing by el-Za'aqa, a place in the desert, which was no real village and had no serai, but only a well with salty water. He did notice, however, a white dome and a large building in which the holy man Sheikh Zuweid was buried<sup>678</sup>.

## EL-SHADJARATAIN

### Topographical situation

The road station el-Shadjaratain ('The two trees'), attested in the 9th-15th centuries AD, was the border between Egypt and Syria (**1**; **2**; **4**; **6?**; **13-18**). It was situated some 12 miles (ca. 24 km) northeast of el-Arish, some 6 miles (ca. 12 km) northeast of Abi Ishaq, some 6 miles (ca. 12 km) southwest of el-Barmakia, and some 12 miles (ca. 24 km) southwest of Rafah (**5**; **10**). According to el-Omari el-Shadjaratain lay between el-Za'aqa and Rafah in the dunes near el-Za'aqa (**13**), but other sources place el-Za'aqa at a distance northeast of el-Shadjaratain, so the account of el-Omari seems not to be trusted<sup>679</sup>. The border was apparently at first indicated by

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<sup>676</sup> Hadji Khalifa (mentioned in Hartmann, 1910, p. 698).

<sup>677</sup> Troilo (mentioned in Hartmann, 1910, p. 699).

<sup>678</sup> el-Nabulusi (translated in Hartmann, 1916a, p. 15, n. 5); cf. von Kremer, 1850b, p. 823; Goldziher, 1890, II, p. 320; Hartmann, 1910, p. 701; Gaudefroy-Demombynes, 1923, p. 6, n. 2.

<sup>679</sup> Cf. Mouton, 2000, p. 33 and p. 172, n. 18.

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two trees that gave the place its name (14), but the name continued to exist even when those trees were gone (13).

#### **Archaeological finds**

In 1900 Musil knew some ancient tombs southwest of Rafah near Khirbet el-Shadjaratain, but he was not able to visit the site<sup>680</sup>.

Grohmann describes el-Shadjaratain as situated on a hilltop with the city at the eastern side and a fortress at the western side<sup>681</sup>, but I do not know whether he refers to an Arabic account or to some archaeological observation.

#### **Identifications**

Cytryn-Silverman tentatively places el-Shadjaratain among the islamic sites investigated during the Israeli survey between Tell Mahiza' and Bir el-Kharruba in the region labelled 'E'<sup>682</sup>.

In 639 AD the Arab general Amr ibn el-As on his way to conquer Egypt passed by a nameless Egyptian village between Rafah and el-Arish. Grohmann identifies that village with el-Shadjaratain<sup>683</sup>, but this is a mere hypothesis.

Figueras tentatively locates el-Shadjaratain in the neighbourhood of Sheikh Zuweid, at or near the ancient places Boutaphios or Bitylion, which are perhaps situated at 12 to 14 (Roman) miles (ca. 18 - 21 km) from Rafah<sup>684</sup>. He apparently did not, however, realise that in el-Muhallabi and Yaqut (5, 10) Arabic miles of 2 km are meant, which points to a location for el-Shadjaratain some 3 to 6 km more to the east.

#### **Etymology**

In most sources the place is called el-Shadjaratain ('The two trees'), but occasionally also the name el-Shadjara ('The tree'), in singular, is attested (4; 17).

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<sup>680</sup> Musil, 1908, II 2, p. 59; cf. Grohmann, 1959, p. 17.

<sup>681</sup> Grohmann, 1959, p. 17.

<sup>682</sup> Cf. Cytryn-Silverman, 2001, p. 22.

<sup>683</sup> Grohmann, 1959, p. 17. For the whole story of the invasion, see s.v. el-Arish.

<sup>684</sup> Figueras, 2000, p. 56.246.255.

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According to Mouton this reduction from two trees to one shows that one of the trees had disappeared by the first half of 10th century AD<sup>685</sup>, but this hardly explains the persistent use of the name el-Shadjaratain in later sources.

Abel wonders whether the tradition of the two trees in some way is linked with the two sidr trees at Maqrunat Umm el-Arais, some 5 km southwest of Rafah<sup>686</sup>, but there are no real indications that both facts are related.

#### **Analysis of the sources**<sup>687</sup>

Ca. 844-848 AD Ibn Khurdadbeh states that it took forty days to go from el-Shadjaratain, the border place between Rafah and el-Arish, to Assuan at the southern border of Egypt (1)<sup>688</sup>.

In 891 AD Ya'qubi mentions Rafah ('border of the districts of Syria'), el-Shadjaratain ('first point of the Egyptian border') and el-Arish ('first fortified place and first district of Egypt') on the road from Palestine to Egypt (2)<sup>689</sup>.

Ca. 947 AD Mas'udi (4) describes the limits of the kingdom of Misr, the mythical eponymous king of Egypt. For the northeastern border his sources apparently know three different border places: the Syrian city of Rafah, el-Arish, and el-Shadjara ('The tree'); the latter is described as a 'well-known place' at the border between Egypt and Syria and situated 'between el-Arish and Rafah'; Assuan forms the southern border of the kingdom<sup>690</sup>. The same story - with the same spelling el-Shadjara - is repeated by the 15th century author Abu'l-Mahasin (17)<sup>691</sup>. Also Maqrizi tells a similar anecdote, but for the northeastern border he only mentions 'the region of el-Shadjaratain, near el-Arish', which is at the same time the western border for the

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<sup>685</sup> Mouton, 2000, p. 33.

<sup>686</sup> Abel, 1939, p. 228. See s.v. Maqrunat Umm el-Arais.

<sup>687</sup> I lack further information about the following passages: Ibn el-Faqih (mentioned in Mouton, 2000, p. 172, n. 14) (3) (cf. also Hartmann, 1916a, p. 16, n. 1; Maspero, 1919, p. 111; Grohmann, 1959, p. 17, n. 8; Elad, 1992, p. 336, n. 139); Yaqut (Wüstenfeld, 1867, II, p. 726; p. 963; III, p. 260; mentioned in the index Wüstenfeld, 1870, VI, p. 127) (7-9); Yaqut (Wüstenfeld, 1869, IV, p. 546; mentioned in Maspero, 1919, p. 111) (11).

<sup>688</sup> Ibn Khurdadbeh (translated in de Goeje, 1889, p. 60).

<sup>689</sup> Ya'qubi, *Geography* (translated in Wiet, 1937, p. 183); cf. Sprenger, 1864, p. 95; Butler, 1978 (= 1902), p. 197, n. 1; Hartmann, 1910, p. 676; Marmardji, 1951, p. 161; Cytryn-Silverman, 2001, p. 5, n. 11.

<sup>690</sup> Mas'udi (translated in Barbier de Meynard, 1861-1877, II, p. 395; cf. p. 457); cf. Gil, 1992, p. 112, n. 35; Mouton, 2000, p. 32.

<sup>691</sup> Abu'l-Mahasin, *Chronicle* (mentioned in Mouton, 2000, p. 172, n. 11); cf. Maspero, 1919, p. 111.

### 3. The area between Raphia and Rinokoloura

kingdom of Mah, Misr's brother (15)<sup>692</sup>. Perhaps also the 13th century author Abu Salih refers to el-Shadjaratain when he ends a story about the Egyptian king Misraim with the phrase 'beyond Egypt is the district between the two rocks (sic), beyond el-Arish' (12)<sup>693</sup>.

According to the 10th century Arab author el-Muhallabi (5), quoted by the 13th century author Yaqut (10), the road between el-Arish and Rafah passes by the stations Abi Ishaq, el-Shadjaratain (which belongs to Syria) and el-Barmakia, each situated at 6 miles (ca. 12 km) one from another<sup>694</sup>.

A tax register of 1090/1091 AD mentions income from 'the provinces of Syria that start at the border of el-Shadjaratain, where the province of Palestine and of Tripoli starts' (16)<sup>695</sup>.

The 14th century author Qalqashandi (14), who quotes from el-Quda'i (6), knows el-Shadjaratain as the northeastern border of Egypt, but he is sceptical whether that frontier was actually formed by two trees<sup>696</sup>.

According to the 14th century author el-Omari the northern border of Egypt was situated between el-Za'aqa and Rafah in the neighbourhood of el-Shadjaratain, which lies in the dunes of the Mediterranean near el-Za'aqa. This phrasing suggests that el-Shadjaratain lay north el-Za'aqa. el-Omari doesn't think that the two trees still exist in his time, and he suspects that the name refers to the tree (present in his time?) in whose branches the people attached rags; since the trees are called 'the keys of the sand', the rags were possibly a prayer for a safe journey through the sandy desert. el-Omari also stresses that these old trees have nothing to do with the trees found in his own time in el-Kharruba (13)<sup>697</sup>.

The 15th century author Abu'l-Mahasin places el-Shadjaratain at the southern border of Palestine, between Rafah and el-Arish (18)<sup>698</sup>.

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<sup>692</sup> Maqrizi (translated in Bouriant, 1900, p. 55).

<sup>693</sup> Abu Salih (translated in Evetts, 1895, p. 86).

<sup>694</sup> el-Muhallabi in Yaqut (Wüstenfeld, 1868, III, p. 661; translated in Toussoun, 1926, I, p. 63); cf. Wüstenfeld, 1864, p. 465.466; Blochet, 1901, p. 542, n. 6; Hartmann, 1910, p. 685; Hartmann, 1916a, p. 16, n. 1; Gaudefroy-Demombynes, 1923, p. 7; Marmardji, 1951, p. 139; Grohmann, 1959, p. 17b, n. 7; Figueras, 2000, p. 56; Mouton, 2000, p. 172, n. 17; Cytryn-Silverman, 2001, p. 9.22.

<sup>695</sup> Maqrizi (translated in Bouriant, 1900, p. 286).

<sup>696</sup> Qalqashandi (mentioned in Mouton, 2000, p. 32-33); cf. Grohmann, 1959, p. 8.17.18.

<sup>697</sup> el-Omari (translated in Hartmann, 1916a, p. 15-16); cf. Gaudefroy-Demombynes, 1923, p. 6, n. 2; Grohmann, 1959, p. 8.17.18; Mouton, 2000, p. 33 (who gives a different interpretation that does not correspond with the (sometimes ambiguous) translations of Hartmann and Gaudefroy-Demombynes).

<sup>698</sup> Abu'l-Mahasin, *Annals* (mentioned in Gil, 1992, p. 112, n. 35); cf. Barbier de Meynard, 1861-1877, II, p. 457; Elad, 1992, p. 336, n. 139.

## EL-USHS

Other medieval name: el-Kharruba

### Topographical situation

In the 13th century AD el-Ushsh was situated some 4 'liues' (ca. 16 km) southwest from el-Za'aqa and some 4 'liues' (ca. 16 km) northeast from el-Arish (1-3). It was said to be the old name of el-Kharruba (4), but since that name is also attested in the same 13th century AD, both names must have been in use more or less simultaneously and perhaps originally two different, nearby places were referred to. The road station had a good well (1-3).

### Homonyms

el-Ushsh is not to be confused with Umm el-Ushush, a place some 22 km west of el-Arish<sup>699</sup>, or with the road station el-Ushsh north of Cairo<sup>700</sup>.

### Analysis of the sources

An itinerary composed before 1289 AD is found in three different documents: the French *Via ad terram sanctam*, written ca. 1291-1293 (1); the Latin *Memoria terre sancte*, written ca. 1300-1321 (2); the Latin work of the Italian geographer Marino Sanudo (3), written in 1321 AD and based upon the *Memoria*. They describe the road from Rafah to Cairo, each with some minor variants. They mention el-Ushsh at 4 'liues' (ca. 16 km) from el-Za'aqa, and at 4 'liues' (ca. 16 km) from el-Arish. The place apparently had a good well<sup>701</sup>:

(1) De la Zahque jusques a Heus, IIII liues tot sablonous; bone aigue et assés.  
De Heus jusques a Larris, IIII liues tot sablon; bone aigue et assés; estassons de vendre et d'acheter.

'From Zahque to Heus, 4 liues all sandy; good and plenty water.

From Heus to Larris, 4 liues all sand; good and plenty water; places for selling and buying.'

(2) de Zasque usque ad Heus, .IIII<sup>O</sup>. leuce, via littorosa, satis bone aigue.

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<sup>699</sup> See s.v. Umm el-Ushush.

<sup>700</sup> Cf. Hartmann, 1910, p. 688.690 and 1916a, p. 485; Popper, 1955, I, p. 47.

<sup>701</sup> *Via ad terram sanctam* (Kohler, 1904, p. 432); *Memoria terre sancte* (Kohler, 1904, p. 454); Marino Sanudo, 3, 14, 12 (Röhricht, 1898, p. 121).

### 3. The area between Raphia and Rinokoloura

de Heus usque Lariz, .liiii. leuce, totum litus, bona aqua satis, et platea pro emendo et vendendo.

'From Zasque to Heus, 4 liues, a sandy road, plenty of good water.

From Heus to Lariz, 4 liues, all sand, good and plenty water, and a place for selling and buying.'

(3) inde usque Heus leuce IV, via littorosa et aque satis bone.

inde usque Laris leuce IV; totum littus et aqua bona satis et platea ad emendum et vendendum.

'From there (sc. Zasque) to Heus, 4 liues, a sandy road and plenty of good water.

From there to Laris, 4 liues, all sand and good and plenty water and a place for selling and buying.'

According to the 14th century author el-Omari the road station el-Kharruba used to be called el-Ushsh (4)<sup>702</sup>.

## EL-KHARRUBA

Other medieval name: el-Ushsh

Modern name: (Khirbet Umm) el-Kharruba - Khirbet el-Burdj

### Topographical situation

The road station el-Kharruba ('Carob tree') is attested in sources of the 13th-15th century AD. According to el-Omari (2) el-Kharruba used to be called el-Ushsh, but since both names are attested in the same period in the late 13th century AD, they must have been in use more or less simultaneously, and perhaps originally two different, nearby places were referred to. Both el-Kharruba and el-Ushsh are situated at 4 'liues' (ca. 16 km) northeast from el-Arish (1)<sup>703</sup>, but in the *Devise* (1) el-Kharruba is situated at 5 'liues' (ca. 20 km) southwest from el-Za'aqa, while other sources locate el-Ushsh at 4 'liues' (ca. 16 km) from that same place; the latter figure seems to be more trustworthy<sup>704</sup>. el-Kharruba lay some 2,5 km from the Mediterranean (8). In the early 14th century AD a caravan serai and a water supply system were built (2-3, 4), but by the end of the 15th century AD they seem to be rather dilapidated (8).

### Identifications

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<sup>702</sup> el-Omari (translated in Hartmann, 1916a, p. 16); cf. Hartmann, 1910, p. 691; Gaudefroy-Demombynes, 1923, p. 6, n. 2; Mouton, 2000, p. 33. See s.v. el-Kharruba.

<sup>703</sup> It is not clear why Mouton, 2000, p. 172, n. 18 gives a distance of 18 km.

<sup>704</sup> See s.v. el-Ushsh. Gibb, 1958, I, p. 71, n. 5 locates el-Kharruba 'on the Egyptian frontier close by Rafah', but this is a mere generalization.

### 3. The area between Raphia and Rinokoloura

The medieval road station el-Kharruba is probably situated at Khirbet el-Burdj, which is also called (Khirbet Umm) el-Kharruba<sup>705</sup>.

Abel at first located el-Kharruba at Tell el-Qabr, a place some 5 km south of Sheikh Zuweid (el-Za'aqa), but later on he rightly rejected this identification<sup>706</sup>.

An identification of the medieval el-Kharruba with any of the New Kingdom wells or stations on the Karnak relief of Sethos I or in P.Anastasi<sup>707</sup> is not supported by any real evidence, and there is certainly no reason to suppose that the name el-Kharruba is derived from an ancient Egyptian toponym.

#### Etymology

The name el-Kharruba ('Carob tree') possibly refers to carob trees (*Ceratonia Siliqua*) growing in the neighbourhood<sup>708</sup>. No source or traveller's account, however, mentions the actual presence of these trees. el-Omari did mention some trees at el-Kharruba (2), but he does not identify them.

Abel points out that the toponym T3 ḥnm.t nḏm ('The well (called) Sweet') mentioned on the Karnak relief of Sethos I might refer to the nḏm or carob tree rather than to the 'sweet' water of the well; because of the use of the water-determinative, however, the second interpretation seems more likely<sup>709</sup>.

#### Analysis of the sources

In *La devise des chemins de Babiloine* (1), written ca. 1289-1291 AD, a military itinerary goes from Rafah to Cairo. It mentions the station el-Kharruba at 5 'liues' (ca. 20 km) from el-Za'aqa, and at 4 'liues' (ca. 16 km) from el-Arish<sup>710</sup>:

Item dou Zaheca iusques au Karrobler liues .V.  
Item dou Karrobler iusques au Hariss .iiij. liues.

<sup>705</sup> See s.v. (Khirbet Umm) el-Kharruba - Khirbet el-Burdj.

<sup>706</sup> Abel, 1939, p. 209 and 1940, p. 227, n. 2. See s.v. Tell el-Qabr.

<sup>707</sup> Clédat, 1923b, p. 156-157 (and n. 1) (cf. Gauthier, 1926, III, p. 101 and 1927, IV, p. 202) proposed an identification with Karnak, 1986, IV, pl. 4, 14 (P): Dmi qd.n ḥm.f m m3w.t m t3 ḥnm.t Ḥwtwti(?) ('Town which His Majesty built anew at the well Ḥwtwti(?)); Karnak, 1986, IV, pl. 4, 16 (Q): P3 nḥtwn (Mn-m3'.t-R' iw'-R') ('The stronghold of Men-ma'at-Ra heir of Ra'); Karnak, 1986, IV, pl. 4, 15 (R): [Y]m(?) rbt ('Wide (?) pool!'); and P.Anastasi I, 27, 7 (12): (r?) Ḥ-b-r-t. For a possible identification with the New Kingdom sites in the neighbourhood of el-Kharruba, see. s.v. (Khirbet Umm) el-Kharruba.

<sup>708</sup> Schefer, 1884, p. 94; cf. Wehr, 1979, p. 269, s.v. *karrūb*, 'carob'.

<sup>709</sup> Karnak, 1986, IV, pl. 4, 17 (O); cf. Abel, 1940, p. 227-228.

<sup>710</sup> *La devise des chemins de Babiloine* (Michelant, 1882, p. 242). The spelling 'Kharroubler' and 'Kharoubler' in Schefer, 1884, p. 90.94 is not correct.



### 3. The area between Raphia and Rinokoloura

'Next from Zaheca to Karrobler 5 liues.

Next from Karrobler to Hariss 4 liues.'

According to Schefer the spelling 'Karrobler' can be accounted for as the Arabic name el-Kharrub(a) followed by the Turkish ending for plural (-ler) ('the carob trees'), but for Hartmann it is a mere scribal mistake for 'Karrobier' (i.e. 'caroubier' in modern French)<sup>711</sup>.

According to the 14th century author el-Omari 'the two trees' of el-Shadjaratain have nothing to do with the large, but younger trees found in his own time in el-Kharruba. This place, which used to be called el-Ushsh, has a khan or caravan serai and a water supply system filling a basin out of which travellers can drink (2)<sup>712</sup>. In another context el-Omari lists the road stations between Cairo and Syria, including el-Arish, el-Kharruba and el-Za'aqa, and he specifies that the khan and the water supply system were built by the Mameluke secretary Fakhr el-Din, who died in 1331/1332 AD. el-Kharruba is the most eastern road station run by the local Beduin (3)<sup>713</sup>.

In 1355 AD Ibn Battuta (4) describes his journey from Cairo to Gaza in the summer of 1326 AD, during which he passed through the stations el-Arish and el-Kharruba. Every station on the track had a serai for travellers and their riding animals; outside that serai were a public watering place and a shop where all the necessary things could be bought<sup>714</sup>.

In 1464 AD Qalqashandi junior lists the road stations el-Arish, el-Kharruba and el-Za'aqa (5)<sup>715</sup>. The same postal stations are referred to by Khalil el-Zahiri, who wrote before 1468 AD (6)<sup>716</sup>, and by Abu'l-Mahasin, who wrote before 1470 AD (7)<sup>717</sup>.

In 1482 AD Joos van Ghistele (8) travelled from Gaza to Cairo via Geraba (el-Kharruba) and Larijs (el-Arish). In Geraba he noticed a large, somewhat dilapidated building (probably the serai), and he remarked that one needed his own equipment to

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<sup>711</sup> Cf. Schefer, 1884, p. 90; Hartmann, 1916a, p. 16, n. 4.

<sup>712</sup> el-Omari (translated in Hartmann, 1916a, p. 16); cf. Gaudefroy-Demombynes, 1923, p. 6, n. 2; Mouton, 2000, p. 33. See s.v. el-Shadjaratain.

<sup>713</sup> el-Omari (translated in Hartmann, 1916a, p. 488).

<sup>714</sup> Ibn Battuta (translated in Gibb, 1958, I, p. 71); cf. Defrémery, 1854 in Monteil, 1969, I, p. 111-112.

<sup>715</sup> Qalqashandi junior (mentioned in Hartmann, 1910, p. 689.691); cf. Sprenger, 1864, p. 9, n. 1.

<sup>716</sup> Khalil el-Zahiri (translated in Gaulmier, 1950, p. 201); cf. Hartmann, 1910, p. 689.

<sup>717</sup> Abu'l-Mahasin, *Chronicle* (mentioned in Popper, 1955, I (15), p. 47).

### 3. *The area between Raphia and Rinokoloura*

get water out of the well; the water itself, however, was quite good. Geraba lies a mile and a half (ca. 2,5 km) from the Mediterranean<sup>718</sup>.

## **ABI ISHAQ**

### **Topographical situation**

The road station Abi Ishaq, attested in the 10th century AD, is situated some 6 miles (ca. 12 km) northeast of el-Arish, some 6 miles (ca. 12 km) southwest of el-Shadjaratain, and some 18 miles (ca. 36 km) southwest of Rafah (**1; 2**). There were two large wells and some little shops for local vendors.

### **Identifications**

Cytryn-Silverman tentatively places Abi Ishaq among the early islamic sites investigated during the Israeli survey east of el-Arish<sup>719</sup>.

### **Analysis of the sources**

According to the 10th century Arab author el-Muhallabi (**1**), quoted by the 13th century author Yaqut (**2**), the road between el-Arish and Rafah passed by the stations Abi Ishaq, el-Shadjaratain (the Syrian border) and el-Barmakia, each situated at 6 miles (ca. 12 km) one from another. In Abi Ishaq there were two large wells where the caravans stopped to let their animals drink, and - in the immediate neighbourhood - some huts for the vendors<sup>720</sup>.

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<sup>718</sup> *Tvoyage van Mher Joos van Ghistele* (Gaspar, 1998, p. 168); cf. Demaekere, 1936, p. 77, who incorrectly abbreviates the passage.

<sup>719</sup> Cf. Cytryn-Silverman, 2001, p. 22.

<sup>720</sup> el-Muhallabi in Yaqut (Wüstenfeld, 1868, III, p. 661; translated in Toussoun, 1926, I, p. 63); cf. Wüstenfeld, 1864, p. 466; Blochet, 1901, p. 542, n. 6; Hartmann, 1910, p. 685; Gaudefroy-Demombynes, 1923, p. 7; Marmardji, 1951, p. 139; Figueras, 2000, p. 56 (who incorrectly refers to 'boats of the merchants' coming to the place); Mouton, 2000, p. 164 and p. 172, n. 17; Cytryn-Silverman, 2001, p. 9.22 (who incorrectly speaks of ten wells).

## *Modern period*

### **EL-GORA**

According to Clédat the cultivated region along the coast between Rafah and el-Arish is called el-Gora by the locals<sup>721</sup>.

### **TWAJJEL EL-EMIR**

In 1898 Musil mentions two sidr or lotus trees on a hill named Twajjel el-Emir, halfway between Rafah and Maqrunat Umm el-Arais, which mark the site of an ancient site<sup>722</sup>.

### **MAQRUNAT UMM EL-ARAIIS**

#### **Topographical situation**

Maqrunat Umm el-Arais is situated some 4-5 km southwest of Rafah immediately east of the road to Sheikh Zuweid<sup>723</sup>. In 1886 Schumacher noticed two sidr or lotus trees on a hill rising some 55 m above the sea, with remains of several small marble columns, evidently the grave of an islamic saint, unto whom the Beduin wives consecrated glass pearls and other common finery<sup>724</sup>. This description recalls Musil's remarks about the nearby Twajjel el-Emir<sup>725</sup>, and one wonders whether perhaps something has been mixed up.

#### **Identifications**

Hartmann tentatively identifies Maqrunat Umm el-Arais with the city of Ariza mentioned by Hierokles in the 6th century AD, probably because of the vague phonetic similarity<sup>726</sup>. Ariza was indeed situated in southern Palestine, but nothing is

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<sup>721</sup> Clédat, 1915a, p. 15.

<sup>722</sup> Musil, 1907, II 1, p. 226.

<sup>723</sup> Abel, 1939, p. 228: 5 km; the map Schumacher, 1886, p. 171: ca. 3,5 km.

<sup>724</sup> Schumacher, 1886, p. 185.

<sup>725</sup> Musil, 1907, II 1, p. 226. See s.v. Twajjel el-Emir.

<sup>726</sup> Hartmann, 1913, p. 196. See s.v. Ariza.

### 3. *The area between Raphia and Rinokoloura*

known for certain about its location, and an identification with Maqrunat Umm el-Arais seems rather unlikely.

Abel wonders whether the two trees of el-Shadjaratain, attested in the 9th-15th century AD, in some way are linked with the two trees at Maqrunat Umm el-Arais<sup>727</sup>, but there are no real indications that both facts are related.

#### **EL-MASURAH**

el-Masurah lies on the road between Rafah and Sheikh Zuweid, perhaps some 5 km southwest of Rafah<sup>728</sup>.

#### **KRUM EL-BAHRI - KRUM MATALLAT EL-SHEIKH ZUWEID**

##### **Topographical situation**

Krum ('garden') el-Bahri lies some 8 km southwest of Rafah and some 7 km northeast of Sheikh Zuweid, immediately east of the main road. According to Schumacher it was also called Krum Matallat el-Sheikh Zuweid<sup>729</sup>.

##### **Archaeological finds**

It is not impossible that the site Tell Matallah, which Clédat visited in 1913, corresponds with Krum Matallat el-Sheikh Zuweid. He describes it as an egg-shaped tell that might have been an important place in the Roman period, but that he does not identify as a fortress<sup>730</sup>.

#### **TELL EL-BAQAR**

##### **Topographical situation**

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<sup>727</sup> Abel, 1939, p. 228. See s.v. el-Shadjaratain.

<sup>728</sup> de Jong, 2000, p. 654-655.

<sup>729</sup> Schumacher, 1886, p. 185.195 and the map p. 171; cf. Wehr, 1979, p. 962, s.v. karm, 'vine, grapes, grapevines, vineyard, garden, orchard'.

<sup>730</sup> Valbelle, 1999a, p. 77.

### *3. The area between Raphia and Rinokoloura*

In 1898 Musil was pointed out a palm grove with the name Tell el-Baqar some 3 to 4 km south of Maqrunat Umm el-Arais. The place supposedly had a stone well<sup>731</sup>. It is not impossible that actually Krum el-Bahri was referred to, especially since both names are phonetically quite similar.

#### **Identifications**

Musil links Tell el-Baqar with the medieval road station el-Baqqara<sup>732</sup>, but the latter was actually situated between el-Arish and el-Farama.

#### **TELL OUASHI**

In 1913 Clédat visited Tell Ouashi, which he situated at some 75 minutes from Sheikh Zuweid and near Tell Matallah, but its exact position is not known. He noticed some limestone columns, brick walls and sherds, but he does not give any further information<sup>733</sup>.

#### **KRUM EID IBN ABED**

Krum ('garden') Eid ibn Abed, which lies some 2 km east of Krum el-Bahri, was in 1886 a grove with fig trees and pomegranates cultivated by Sawarka Beduin. The pottery and building stone fragments probably are the remains of an old site<sup>734</sup>.

#### **SADOT**

##### **Topographical situation**

The Israeli settlement ('moshav') Sadot, which administratively belonged to Yamit, is situated some 8 km southwest of Rafah, south of the main road<sup>735</sup>. It is probably created ca. 1975 and dismantled in 1982.

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<sup>731</sup> Musil, 1907, II 1, p. 226.

<sup>732</sup> Musil, 1907, II 1, p. 226 and p. 303 n. 10. See s.v. el-Baqqara.

<sup>733</sup> Valbelle, 1999a, p. 76.77.

<sup>734</sup> Schumacher, 1886, p. 189-190 and the map p. 171.

### **Archaeological finds**

Near Sadot, at site R10, remains of a huge Nabataean caravan serai were found, extending over an area of some 8.000 m<sup>2</sup>. The ruins include storerooms, stables and living quarters<sup>736</sup>. No precise date for this site has been mentioned.

### **ABU TAWILAH**

Abu Tawilah lies on the road between Rafah and Sheikh Zuweid, perhaps some 12 km southwest of Rafah<sup>737</sup>.

### **RASM EL-ZAIZEH**

In 1913 Clédat visited Rasm el-Zaizeh, which he situated in the dunes at about one hour from Sheikh Zuweid, but its exact position is not known. It is a large site where the walls are preserved till 2 m high and where large limestone blocks surface<sup>738</sup>.

### **YAMIT**

The Israeli settlement Yamit, probably created ca. 1975 and dismantled in 1982, is situated near the Mediterranean coast, some 5 km southwest of Rafah<sup>739</sup>.

### **THE R-SITES OF THE ISRAELI SURVEY SOUTHWEST OF RAFAH**

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<sup>735</sup> The distances differ: ca. 5 km (Oren, 1981a, p. 26, fig. 2); ca. 8 km (Figueras, 2000, p. 244); ca. 21 km (Oren, 1990, the map p. 6 - probably a mistake). Figueras, 2000, p. 244 possibly mixes up with Yamit when he situates Sadot 'on the coast'.

<sup>736</sup> Cf. Oren, 1977e, p. 62 (Hebrew) (non vidi); Ya'aqovi, 1977, p. 62 (Hebrew) (non vidi); Oren, 1978b, p. 60-61 (Hebrew); Oren, 1980b, p. 144 (Hebrew); Oren, 1993a, p. 1396 (mentioning a Nabataean site 'in the vicinity of Yamit'); Figueras, 2000, p. 244.

<sup>737</sup> de Jong, 2000, p. 654-655.

<sup>738</sup> Valbelle, 1999a, p. 77.

<sup>739</sup> Cf. Oren, 1981a, p. 26, fig. 1-2.

### 3. *The area between Raphia and Rinokoloura*

The Israeli North Sinai Expedition inventoried a lot of archaeological sites in the region between Rafah and Sheikh Zuweid that can be dated to the earliest periods and that are therefore not discussed here in detail.

Some 5 km southwest of Yamit a cluster of Chalcolithic sites (ca. 4500-3300 BC) has been found<sup>740</sup>. In the same area also some Middle Bronze Age I sites (ca. 2250-2150 BC) occur<sup>741</sup>.

#### **TELL ABU SHENNAR**

In 1913 Clédat described Tell Abu Shennar as a large area made out of small tells; certain walls there were several meters thick, which lead Clédat to the conclusion that it might have been a fortress<sup>742</sup>. In 1937 Petrie marks two sites 'Small' and 'Large' 'Tell Abu Shenah' (sic) on his map between Rafah and Tell el-Aheimer, but he stresses that their position is very approximate, since he did not visit them<sup>743</sup>. The 'Small' Tell Abu Shennar probably corresponds with the Tell Abu Shennar of Clédat, and it is not impossible that the 'Large' Tell Abu Shennar actually refers to the site of Tell Roumelat<sup>744</sup>.

#### **TELL ROUMELAT**

Some 7 km northeast from Sheikh Zuweid and about 1,5 km east of Tell el-Aheimer, Clédat knows the place Tell Roumelat, at about 1 km from the Mediterranean coast. He noticed a mud brick construction, 10 x 15 m, with walls still 2 m high, and more to the east traces of other constructions and numerous sherds<sup>745</sup>. It does not seem impossible that Tell Roumelat is identical with the 'Large' Tell Abu Shennar mentioned by Petrie<sup>746</sup>.

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<sup>740</sup> Cf. Oren, 1981a, p. 25-44; Oren, 1993a, p. 1387; de Miroschedji, 1998, p. 21-22. Oren, 1981a, p. 29 locates the main site R48 some 2 km west of Yamit, but the map p. 26, fig. 2 rather points to a distance of some 5 km. A violin figurine found in R48 is incorrectly said to be found in el-Arish by Oren, 1982a, p. 7, fig. 4.

<sup>741</sup> Cf. Oren, 1990, the map p. 6 and p. 12-13.

<sup>742</sup> Valbelle, 1999a, p. 76.

<sup>743</sup> Petrie, 1937, pl. 5a.

<sup>744</sup> See s.v. Tell Roumelat.

<sup>745</sup> Clédat, 1915a, the map p. 18; Valbelle, 1999a, p. 76.

<sup>746</sup> See s.v. Tell Abu Shennar.

### 3. *The area between Raphia and Rinokoloura*

Clédat states that the cultivated region along the coast between Gaza and Rafah is called Roumelat by the locals<sup>747</sup>, a name that no doubt has to be linked to the Remelat Beduin who used to live in that area<sup>748</sup>. From the early 19th century AD on these Beduin inhabit a narrow strip of land on the Mediterranean coast between Rafah and Sheikh Zuweid, so probably also the name Tell Roumelat refers to these people.

#### **TELL EL-ASLIG**

The site Tell el-Aslig is situated at the coast of the Mediterranean some 1,5 km northeast of Tell el-Aheimer<sup>749</sup>. The place is probably identical with the nameless 'R(uins)' on the map of Schumacher, where he noticed few ancient remains in 1886<sup>750</sup>.

#### **TELL EL-AHEIMER**

##### **Topographical situation**

Tell el-Aheimer lies some 4,5 km north of Sheikh Zuweid and some 10 km southwest of Rafah, at the coast of the Mediterranean. The hill, some 4,5 m high and with a diameter of about 15 m, is covered with pottery, which explains its name 'Red hill', since according to Schumacher the element 'aheimer' represents the Beduin pronunciation of the common 'ahmar'<sup>751</sup>. The place is possibly identical with site R54 of the Israeli survey<sup>752</sup>.

##### **Archaeological finds**

In 1886 Schumacher noticed on the tell the remains of a red brick circular building with a diameter of some 2,5 m; the interior was plastered; no identification has been suggested. Between the tell and the sea he found the remains of small

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<sup>747</sup> Clédat, 1915a, p. 15.

<sup>748</sup> For the Remelat ('Rmēlāt') Beduin, cf. de Jong, 2000, p. 7 and the map p. 656.

<sup>749</sup> Margovsky, 1969, p. 45 (Hebrew) and the map p. 46 (no. 3).

<sup>750</sup> Schumacher, 1886, p. 189 and the map p. 171.

<sup>751</sup> Schumacher, 1886, p. 188-189 and the map p. 171. The location of Tell el-Aheimer on Petrie, 1937, pl. 5a seems to be too far east and too much inland.

<sup>752</sup> See s.v. R54.



### 3. *The area between Raphia and Rinokoloura*

circular vaults in sandstone, with the interior plastered, and he suggests that the construction was a bath<sup>753</sup>. In 1913 Clédat passed by the tell, which measured 200 to 100 m; the schematic plan that he made, is still unpublished<sup>754</sup>. In 1935 Petrie considered the site a Hellenistic and Roman city mound, but he did not excavate the place<sup>755</sup>.

Cytryn-Silverman knows four sites (R40, R44, R48 and R49) in the neighbourhood of Tell el-Aheimer with a lot of material of the Early Islamic period (8th-10th century AD). Site R48, where Arabic remains were found on dunes covering earlier Chalcolithic material, seems to have been the most important. The places continued to exist in later periods, but material from these periods became scarce, so they apparently lost their importance<sup>756</sup>. It is not clear how these sites relate to the findings of Schumacher.

#### **Identifications**

Cytryn-Silverman tentatively identifies site R48 with the road station el-Barmakia, which is attested for the 10th-13th centuries and indeed lay some 12 km southwest of Rafah<sup>757</sup>.

#### **Homonyms**

The name Tell el-Ahmar is also used for three sites in the neighbourhood of Tell Abu Seifa<sup>758</sup>.

## **R54**

#### **Topographical situation**

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<sup>753</sup> Schumacher, 1886, p. 188-189 with fig.

<sup>754</sup> Valbelle, 1999a, p. 76.

<sup>755</sup> Petrie, 1937, p. 3.

<sup>756</sup> Cytryn-Silverman, 2001, p. 19.20.21.22 and the maps p. 32-34; for the Islamic remains at site R48, see also Oren, 1981a, p. 29.

<sup>757</sup> Cytryn-Silverman, 2001, p. 22. See s.v. el-Barmakia.

<sup>758</sup> See s.v. Tell el-Ahmar.

### *3. The area between Raphia and Rinokoloura*

Site R54 of the Israeli survey lies at the Mediterranean coast some 3 km north of Sheikh Zuweid<sup>759</sup>. The place possibly corresponds with Tell el-Aheimer (or Tell el-Aslig).

#### **Archaeological finds**

In 1976 the Israeli North Sinai Expedition conducted salvage excavations in a mud brick fortress of the Persian period with four towers on the corners and a large open square surrounded by rooms. They excavated a massive corner bastion, storerooms, and various cooking and storage installations. The pottery, which included a lot of Greek material, dates from the 5th-4th centuries BC<sup>760</sup>.

#### **EL-SEYAAH**

el-Seyaah is apparently the name of an area some 3 to 4 km north of Sheikh Zuweid. On his map Clédat indicates three spots with ruins there, but further information is lacking<sup>761</sup>. The site is perhaps identical with Tell Emedian mentioned by Petrie.

#### **TELL EMEDIAN**

In 1937 Petrie marks Tell Emedian on his map between Tell el-Aheimer and Sheikh Zuweid, but he stresses that its position is very approximate, since he did not visit the site<sup>762</sup>. The place is perhaps identical with the site el-Seyaah mentioned by Clédat.

#### **SHEIKH ZUWEID**

Medieval name: el-Za'aqa

#### **Topographical situation**

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<sup>759</sup> Oren, 1993a, p. 1393.

<sup>760</sup> Oren, 1982a, p. 18; Oren, 1993a, p. 1393; Oren, 1998, p. 76-77.

<sup>761</sup> Clédat, 1915a, p. 18.

<sup>762</sup> Petrie, 1937, pl. 5a.

### 3. The area between Raphia and Rinokoloura

The road station el-Za'aqa is attested from the 12-13th till the 17th century AD. By 1697 there was still a well, but the place was uninhabited<sup>763</sup>. Its most remarkable feature then, however, was the wely of Sheikh Zuweid (1), a tomb with a cupola, which could still be visited in the early 20th century<sup>764</sup>. Nothing is known for certain about this Sheikh, but since he is not mentioned in sources before 1697, it seems not unlikely that he died in the 17th century AD; the story that he was one of the companions of the prophet Mohammed is clearly fictitious<sup>765</sup>. The name el-Za'aqa fell mainly into disuse<sup>766</sup>, and in the 19th-20th century the place was usually named Sheikh Zuweid, after the wely of the saint. The spot was apparently not always inhabited, but at the latest in 1886 near the wely and the well a new village grew, which existed of a few huts that were used as stores, and some palm and other groves. A telegraph line, following the road from Rafah to el-Arish, ran through this village. Sheikh Zuweid was also a station on the railway between Egypt and Palestine in the early 20th century. The water of the well was rather brackish, so the local Beduin for their drinking water usually preferred to go to a well closer to the sea<sup>767</sup>.

In medieval sources el-Za'aqa was situated some 16 km southwest of Rafah and some 32 km northeast of el-Arish. Modern maps place Sheikh Zuweid some 15 km from Rafah<sup>768</sup> and some 28-30 km from el-Arish<sup>769</sup>.

The name Sheikh Zuweid is often used as a general indication for the archaeological sites of Tell Temilat (Tell Abu Selima), Tell Eqneiyin (Tell Junein), Tell Abu Ghanem and Tell el-Sheikh in the immediate neighbourhood, which is

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<sup>763</sup> See s.v. el-Za'aqa.

<sup>764</sup> In 1913 Clédat made a plan of the wely and he wrote down the Arabic inscription, but both items are still unpublished; cf. Valbelle, 1999a, p. 76

<sup>765</sup> Paoletti, 1903, p. 109 and Clédat, 1915a, p. 19, however, seems to accept this story without questions.

<sup>766</sup> Musil, 1907, II 1, p. 227-228 refers to Khirbet ('ruins') el-Za'aqa (sc. ruins east of the wely) and Bir ('well') el-Za'aqa (sc. a well near the sea) as actual toponyms in 1898, but they do not occur in other traveller's reports.

<sup>767</sup> Cf. Sepp, 1863, II, p. 532; Guérin, 1869, I 2, p. 236.250; Schumacher, 1886, p. 185-186.189 and the map p. 171; Paoletti, 1903, p. 109; Musil, 1907, II 1, p. 227-228; Clédat, 1915a, p. 15-19 and 1923a, p. 148; Abel, 1939, p. 209 and 1940, p. 226-227.

<sup>768</sup> The distances differ: 15 km (cf. Schumacher, 1886, the map p. 171; Abel, 1939, p. 228); ca. 20 km (cf. Hommel, 1926, p. 965; de Jong, 2000, p. 654-655); 20,5 km (cf. Paoletti, 1903, p. 109: 13 miles, but in contradiction with the 8 miles (ca. 13 km) on the map - since the map has only 25 miles (ca. 40 km) between el-Arish and Rafah, I guess the map is not correct).

<sup>769</sup> The distances differ: ca. 20 km (cf. de La Jonquière, 1904, p. 151 and 1899-1907, IV, p. 213 n. 2 (non vidi) in Clédat, 1915a, p. 19 n. 1: 4 or 5 'lieues'); 22,5 km (cf. Schumacher, 1886, p. 186: 14 miles); 27,2 km (cf. Paoletti, 1903, p. 109: 17 miles); 28 km (cf. Mouton, 2000, p. 172, n. 18); 30 km (cf. Clédat, 1915a, p. 19: more than 30 km); 40 km (de Jong, 2000, p. 655; the map on p. 654, however, only has some 25 km). The location of Sheikh Zuweid in the eastern Delta by Bilabel, SB III, 1927, p. 16 is a mere mistake.

### 3. *The area between Raphia and Rinokoloura*

sometimes quite confusing. I will therefore reserve the name Sheikh Zuweid for the village around the wely, and refer to the other sites with their specific names.

#### **Archaeological finds**

The wely was surrounded by a cemetery, where Schumacher in 1886 saw some fragments of marble columns and statues and sandstone capitals, no doubt transported there from the nearby archaeological sites<sup>770</sup>.

Four predynastic jars came on the market in the late 1960s. They were said to be looted by Beduin from an ancient depot on a previously unknown site, then covered by sand dunes, within the environs of Sheikh Zuweid<sup>771</sup>.

#### **Identifications**

van Senden incorrectly locates Sabkhat Bardawil and Hadjar Bardawil, which is also called Sheikh Yehud, between el-Arish and the Wadi Rafah. There is little doubt that he mixed up Sabkhat Bardawil and Sabkhat el-Sheikh, while the name Sheikh Yehud seems to be a deformation of the Sheikh Zuweid<sup>772</sup>.

#### **Analysis of the sources**

In 1697 AD el-Nabulusi (1) found in el-Za'aqa a well with salty water, but the place was further uninhabited. Near that well he noticed a white dome and a large building in which Sheikh Zuweid was buried, a holy man of the desert Beduin. This place is considered to be so sacred that the local Beduin store their gold, silver and other precious objects in the tomb, with the door open, and that these things are never stolen. The tomb also serves as an asylum for people who are threatened<sup>773</sup>.

## **KHASAHA**

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<sup>770</sup> Schumacher, 1886, p. 185-186.188 with fig.

<sup>771</sup> van den Brink, 2004, p. 487-506.

<sup>772</sup> van Senden, 1851, I, p. 83. See s.v. Sabkhat el-Sheikh and s.v. Hadjar Bardawil.

<sup>773</sup> el-Nabulusi (translated in Hartmann, 1916a, p. 15, n. 5); cf. von Kremer, 1850b, p. 823; Goldziher, 1890, II, p. 320; Hartmann, 1910, p. 691; Gaudefroy-Demombynes, 1923, p. 6 n. 2.

### **Topographical situation**

Ca. 1798-1801 Junot noticed some ruins near Sheikh Zuweid that he called Khasaha<sup>774</sup>. It is not clear whether he refers to Tell Temilat, Tell el-Eqneiyin, Tell el-Sheikh or some other site in the neighbourhood.

### **Identifications**

Clédat tentatively identifies Khasaha with two New Kingdom toponyms on the Karnak relief of Sethos I and in P.Anastasi, which - in his interpretation - contained the elements 'Khasou' and 'Khasa'<sup>775</sup>. This reading, however, is no longer accepted, and there are no further arguments to support any link.

## **TELL TEMILAT (TELL ABU SELIMA)**

### **Topographical situation**

Tell Temilat lies some 300 m west of Sheikh Zuweid, at some 2,5 km of the seacoast<sup>776</sup>. Clédat knew the site as Tell Temilat, but according to Petrie the place was usually called Tell el-Zuweid, while it was also known as Tell Abu Selima<sup>777</sup>. The site most likely corresponds with the 'Hill ruin' on the map of Schumacher<sup>778</sup>. In the Israeli survey it was labelled R51<sup>779</sup>.

### **Archaeological finds**

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<sup>774</sup> de La Jonquière, 1904, IV, p. 122 (non vidi) in Clédat, 1923b, p. 157, n. 2.

<sup>775</sup> Clédat, 1923b, p. 157, n. 2 (cf. p. 148.150); cf. Karnak, 1986, IV, pl. 4, 19 (T): N-ḥ-s n p3 sr ['N-ḥ-s of the Prince' - Clédat: '(la khnoumit de) la Khasou du prince'] and P.Anastasi I, 27, 6-7 (11): N-ḥ-s [Clédat: 'la contrée marécageuse de la Khasa']. This suggestion was already rejected by Gauthier, 1926, III, p. 154 and 1927, IV, p. 154. Gauthier assumed that Clédat also identified these toponyms with the place Ḥ3siw (in the Delta) in P.Cairo dem. 31169, 2, 17, but the latter apparently only referred to an etymological relation, not to an actual identification.

<sup>776</sup> Cf. Clédat, 1915a, p. 19 and the map p. 18. Picard, 1916, p. 357 incorrectly mixes up Tell Temilat and Tell el-Sheikh.

<sup>777</sup> Petrie, 1937, p. 2; cf. Abel, 1939, p. 540.

<sup>778</sup> Schumacher, 1886, p. 171.

<sup>779</sup> Oren, 1993a, p. 1396. Oren confusingly uses both the names Tell Abu Selima and Tell el-Sheikh Zuweid for the same site.

### 3. *The area between Raphia and Rinokoloura*

In 1913 Clédat noticed some ruins on Tell Temilat, which he considered the remains of a small Roman village<sup>780</sup>. In 1935-1936 Petrie excavated the northeastern part of the site<sup>781</sup>. He was able to identify thirteen strata of buildings and floors (A to N), which he dated from ca. 1350 BC to the early Roman period. The dates, however, that he suggested for every stratum, are hardly to be trusted since they are based upon the false assumption that every 34 inches (ca. 86 cm) in the stratigraphy mathematically corresponds with a period of one century. The oldest stratum (N) Petrie dated to the 14th century BC, but also scarabs of the Hyksos have been found, so perhaps the site was already older. This New Kingdom site was destroyed by fire, but after some time - according to Petrie from 1275 BC on - the place was inhabited again. In stratum G the northeastern wing of a mud brick fortress was discovered, and one of the rooms, paved with square baked bricks and with a broad staircase leading to it, was identified as a temple. Petrie ascribed this temple to the Babylonian period (ca. 580 BC), while Abel suggested a date under Psammetichos I in the 7th century BC, but for Stern and Reich both the fortress and the temple were built in the 8th or early 7th century BC in the Assyrian period. The Persian period is represented among other objects by small stone incense altars and Greek pottery. Coins of Alexander the Great and the Ptolemaioi, Rhodian (4-27), Knidian (28) and other (29-63) stamped handles, and sherds bearing Aramaic inscriptions (1-3) show that the site was inhabited in the Hellenistic period (strata E, D, C). Stratum B was dated between 64 BC and the end of the century, and since no Roman pottery or coins were found, Petrie supposed that this was the end of the settlement. The sandstone blocks of a building decorated with fine stucco that he found in stratum A, were therefore interpreted as an isolated shrine placed on the deserted mound of ruins in the early Roman period. Such an isolated building, however, does not seem to make much sense. Anyway, according to the Israeli survey the site was still inhabited in the Roman period<sup>782</sup>, and this can be corroborated by the head of a Roman hairpin excavated by Petrie. On the other hand, as long as no further Roman remains are published, I remain sceptical whether Tell Temilat was actually a substantial town in the Roman or Byzantine period.

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<sup>780</sup> Cf. Clédat, 1915a, p. 19.

<sup>781</sup> Petrie, 1937; cf. Abel, 1939, p. 540-541; Stern, 1975, p. 37, n. 7; Reich, 1981, 283-287 (Hebrew) and p. 84\*-85\* (English summary); Reich, 1984, p. 32-38; Ahituv, 1984, p. 129; Weippert, 1988, p. 499 (pottery), p. 694 (ostraka), p. 715 (altars); Reich, 1993, p. 15.

<sup>782</sup> Cf. Ahituv, 1984, p. 129 and n. 319.

### 3. The area between Raphia and Rinokoloura

Figueras suggests a Nabataean presence at the sites R50 to R55, which include Tell Temilat and Tell el-Sheikh<sup>783</sup>, but it is not clear whether he actually refers to archaeological remains or just phrases a hypothesis.

In 1993 there were no remains anymore at the site, for whatever earth was left unexcavated by Petrie, was removed by the local inhabitants to improve their fields<sup>784</sup>.

#### *Aramaic ostraka*

In 1935-1936 Petrie excavated three ostraka with Aramaic writing, which he dated to the (early) Ptolemaic period, but which are very difficult to read<sup>785</sup>.

(1) Petrie, 1937, p. 13 and pl. 51 no. 575:

Hur, Nby br Hur (?)

'Horos and Nouby son of Horos (?)'

The Egyptian personal name Horos (Ḥr) is well attested. According to Petrie also Nouby (Nwby / Nby) is an Egyptian name with the meaning 'goldsmith', but since I could not find any parallels for its use as a man's name<sup>786</sup>, I am not really convinced by the translation suggested by Petrie.

(2) Petrie, 1937, pl. 51 no. EM 577

(3) Petrie, 1937, pl. 51 no. EM 575

No transcription, translation or comment has been published.

#### *Amphora stamps from Rhodos*<sup>787</sup>

(4) SB III, 6111 (Clédat, 1915a, p. 48, no. 36):

[Ἰ]αγαθοκλεῦς - 'Of Agathokles'

Börker ascribes this kind of stamp to the manufacturer Agathokles (II) of period III (ca. 205-175 BC)<sup>788</sup>.

(5) SB III, 6104 (Clédat, 1915a, p. 46-47, no. 28):

ἐπὶ Ἀγ|εμάχου - 'Under (the priesthood of) Agemachos' - with the head of Helios to the left

An eponymous priest Agemachos is known for 195 BC, in period III<sup>789</sup>.

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<sup>783</sup> Figueras, 2000, p. 244.

<sup>784</sup> Cf. Reich, 1993, p. 15.

<sup>785</sup> Petrie, 1937, p. 6.13 and pl. 51; cf. Abel, 1939, p. 540; Reich, 1993, p. 15; Figueras, 2000, p. 53.

<sup>786</sup> The name does not occur in the DNB, and in Ranke, 1935, I, p. 192, 13 (cf. p. 192, 15) Nby is only listed as a woman's name ('the golden one?') in the Middle and the New Kingdom.

<sup>787</sup> This list also includes the amphora stamps found by Clédat in the area of Tell el-Sheikh, since he did not specify whether they were found on the surface or during actual excavations. For the chronology of stamps from Rhodos in general, cf. Börker, 1998, p. 14.78.

<sup>788</sup> For the manufacturer Agathokles II, cf. Nachtergaele, P.Hombert I, 1978, p. 27; Criscuolo, 1982, p. 79-80.138; Börker, 1998, p. 41-42.79.147.153; Nachtergaele, 1999, p. 171.

### 3. The area between Raphia and Rinokoloura

(6) Petrie, 1937, pl. 51 no. CW? 648:

ἐπὶ [Ἀγ]ήμονος (?) - 'Under (the priesthood of) Hagemon (?)'

The eponymous priest Hagemon probably lived in the 3rd or 2nd century BC<sup>790</sup>.

(7) Petrie, 1937, pl. 51 CW? s.n.:

Ἀγοράν[ακ]τος. | Ἀγριανίου - 'Of Agoran[ax]. In (the month) Agrianios'

A manufacturer Agoranax is known ca. 221-199 BC, in periods II and III<sup>791</sup>.

(8) SB III, 6114 (Clédat, 1915a, p. 48, no. 41):

ἐπὶ Αἰνῆτορος - 'Under (the priesthood of) Ainetor' - with the head of Helios to the left

An eponymous priest Ainetor is known for period III (ca. 205-175 BC)<sup>792</sup>.

(9) SB III, 6105 (Clédat, 1915a, p. 47, no. 29):

ἐπὶ Ἀριστομάχου. | Δαλίου - 'Under (the priesthood of) Aristomachos. In (the month) Dalios'

An eponymous priest Aristomachos is known for period IV (ca. 175-146 BC) and another one for period VI (ca. 108-88 BC). It is not clear for Criscuolo to which of them this stamp can be ascribed<sup>793</sup>.

(10) Petrie, 1937, pl. 51 no. CW? 660:

ἐπὶ Ἄρμ[ο]σίλα. | Πανάμου - 'Under (the priesthood of) Harmosilas. In (the month) Panamos'

An eponymous priest Harmosilas is known for period II (ca. 240-205 BC)<sup>794</sup>.

(11) Petrie, 1937, pl. 51 no. CK 600:

Ἀρτίμα - 'Of Artimas'

The manufacturer Artimas was probably active in the 3rd or 2nd century BC<sup>795</sup>.

(12) SB III, 6112 (Clédat, 1915a, p. 48, no. 39; cf. Picard, 1916, p. 358, n. 3):

Ἀγριανίου. Ἀρχέλα - 'In (the month) Agrianios. Of Archelas'

A manufacturer Archelas is known for period II (ca. 240-205 BC)<sup>796</sup>.

(13) SB III, 6110 (Clédat, 1915a, p. 47, no. 35):

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<sup>789</sup> For the eponymous priest Agemachos, cf. Nachtergaele, P.Hombert I, 1978, p. 35-37; Criscuolo, 1982, p. 29.137; Börker, 1998, p. 17-19.79-80.147.157.

<sup>790</sup> For the eponymous priest Hagemon, cf. Nilsson, 1909, p. 524, no. 800; Hiller von Gaertringen, s.v. Rhodos, in RE, Suppl. V, col. 835, no. 4; Börker, 1998, p. 157.

<sup>791</sup> For the manufacturer Agoranax, cf. Grace, 1970, p. 375; Criscuolo, 1982, p. 80-81.138; Börker, 1998, p. 42-43.80.147.153.

<sup>792</sup> For the eponymous priest Ainetor, cf. Grace, 1952, p. 528; Börker, 1998, p. 21.53.81.147.157.

<sup>793</sup> For the eponymous priests Aristomachos I and II, cf. Nachtergaele, P.Hombert I, 1978, p. 27-28; Criscuolo, 1982, p. 39-40.137; Börker, 1998, p. 84-85.147.157.

<sup>794</sup> For the eponymous priest Harmosilas, cf. Grace, 1970, p. 375; Criscuolo, 1982, p. 137; Börker, 1998, p. 157; Nachtergaele, 1999, p. 171.

<sup>795</sup> For the manufacturer Artimas, cf. Nilsson, 1909, p. 397, no. 124, 1-27; Grace, 1952, p. 526; Börker, 1998, p. 153.

<sup>796</sup> For the manufacturer Archelas, cf. Sztetyllo, 1990, p. 169, no. 9; Börker, 1998, p. 153.



### 3. The area between Raphia and Rinokoloura

Ἀσκλη|πιάδα - 'Of Asklepiadas' - with an unrecognizable object (perhaps a grape?) to the right

The manufacturer Asklepiadas was probably active in the 3rd or 2nd century BC<sup>797</sup>.

(14) SB III, 6106 (Clédat, 1915a, p. 47, no. 31):

Δίσκου - 'Of Diskos' - with a krater to the right

Criscuolo ascribes this stamp to the manufacturer Diskos (II) of period III (ca. 205-175 BC)<sup>798</sup>.

(15) Clédat, 1915a, p. 48, no. 37 (cf. Picard, 1916, p. 358):

[ἐπὶ? Εὐάνο]ρος - 'Under (the priesthood of) Euanor'

An eponymous priest Euanor is known for period V or VI (ca. 146-88 BC)<sup>799</sup>.

(16) SB III, 6115 (Clédat, 1915a, p. 48, no. 43):

ἐπὶ Θεωδώρου. | Ἀγριανίου - 'Under (the priesthood of) Theodoros. In (the month) Agrianios'

An eponymous priest Theodoros (Theodoros) is known for period II (ca. 240-205 BC)<sup>800</sup>.

(17) SB III, 6102 (Clédat, 1915a, p. 46, no. 26):

ἐπὶ Θευφάνεως. | Πεδαιγαιτνύου

'Under (the priesthood of) Theuphanes. In (the month) Pedageitnyos'

An eponymous priest Theuphanes (Theophanes) is known ca. 227 BC, in period II<sup>801</sup>.

(18) SB III, 6109 (Clédat, 1915a, p. 47, no. 34), a round stamp with a rose in the middle:

Ἱπποκράτους. [ ] - 'Of Hippokrates. [In (the month) ...]'

A manufacturer Hippokrates is known ca. 184-150 BC, in periods IIIc and IV<sup>802</sup>.

(19) SB III, 6108 (Clédat, 1915a, p. 47, no. 33; cf. Picard, 1916, p. 357), a round stamp with a rose in the middle:

Κλεισιμβροτίδα. Καρνείου - 'Of Kleisimbrotidas. In (the month) Karneios'

A manufacturer Kleisimbrotidas is known for period II (ca. 240-205 BC)<sup>803</sup>.

<sup>797</sup> For the manufacturer Asklepiadas, cf. Nilsson, 1909, p. 402, no. 138, 1-10; Grace, 1952, p. 526; Börker, 1998, p. 154.

<sup>798</sup> For the manufacturer Diskos II, cf. Nachtergaele, P.Hombert I, 1978, p. 44; Criscuolo, 1982, p. 90-91.138; Börker, 1998, p. 46.148.154.

<sup>799</sup> For the eponymous priest Euanor, cf. Börker, 1998, p. 89.148.158; Nachtergaele, 1999, p. 174-175. Picard, 1916, p. 358 restored [Εὐάνο]ρος, but since Euanor is not attested as a manufacturer (cf. Börker, 1998, p. 154.158), most likely [ἐπὶ] has to be added. The stamp Εὐά[ ]ροσ in SB I, 1360 perhaps has to be corrected into Εὐφρά[ ]ροσ (for manufacturers with the name Euphranor, cf. Criscuolo, 1982, p. 138; Börker, 1998, p. 154).

<sup>800</sup> For the eponymous priest Theodoros, cf. Melaerts, 1994, p. 344-345; Börker, 1998, p. 90.148.158.

<sup>801</sup> For the eponymous priest Theuphanes, cf. Nachtergaele, P.Hombert I, 1978, p. 19, n. 11; Börker, 1998, p. 158; Nachtergaele, 1999, p. 176.

<sup>802</sup> For the manufacturer Hippokrates, cf. Criscuolo, 1982, p. 99-100.138; Nachtergaele, P.Hombert I, 1978, p. 41; Börker, 1998, p. 48.91.148.154.

### 3. The area between Raphia and Rinokoloura

(20) Petrie, 1937, pl. 51 no. CN? 634, a round stamp, retrograde, with a rose in the middle:

Κλεισιμβροτίδα. Σμίνθιος(?) - 'Of Kleisimbrotidas. (The month) Sminthios(?)'<sup>804</sup>

For the manufacturer Kleisimbrotidas, see the previous stamp.

(21) Clédat, 1915a, p. 47, no. 30 (cf. Picard, 1916, p. 357):

[Κ]λευδί[κ]ου. | [ ]ου - 'Of Kleudikos. In (the month) [ ]os.'

The manufacturer Kleudikos was probably active in the 3rd or 2nd century BC<sup>805</sup>.

(22) SB III, 6103 (Clédat, 1915a, p. 46, no. 27; cf. Picard, 1916, p. 358, n. 3):

ἐπὶ Παυσανία - 'Under (the priesthood of) Pausanias'

Three eponymous priests with the name Pausanias are known for the periods II (ca. 240-205 BC) and IV (ca. 175-146 BC). This stamp perhaps belongs to Pausanias I of period II<sup>806</sup>.

(23) SB III, 6113 (Clédat, 1915a, p. 48, no. 40), with a separate stamp on each of the two handles of an amphora:

(1) ἐπ' ἱερέως - (2) Παισα[νί]α - 'Under priest Pausanias'

It is not clear to which of the three eponymous priests with the name Pausanias this stamp belongs.

(24) SB III, 6107 (Clédat, 1915a, p. 47, no. 32):

ἐπὶ Πρατοφάνεως. | Ἀγριανίου

'Under (the priesthood of) Pratophanes. In (the month) Agrianios'

An eponymous priest Pratophanes is known for period III (ca. 205-175 BC)<sup>807</sup>.

(25) Clédat, 1915a, p. 48, no. 38 (cf. Picard, 1916, p. 358):

ἐπὶ Φιλιοδάμου. | Πεδάγειτνύου

'Under (the priesthood of) Philodamos. In (the month) Pedageitnyos'

An eponymous priest Philodamos is known for period III (ca. 205-175 BC)<sup>808</sup>.

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<sup>803</sup> For the manufacturer Kleisimbrotidas, cf. Grace, 1952, p. 527; Criscuolo, 1982, p. 100.138; Melaerts, 1994, p. 345-346, no. 15; Börker, 1998, p. 155.

<sup>804</sup> Petrie's facsimile seems to have Σιαμνθιος, but since this spelling is not attested, I suppose that the drawing is incorrect and that the stamp actually read Σμίνθιος, although this month is not yet attested in combination with Kleisimbrotidas.

<sup>805</sup> For the manufacturer Kleudikos, cf. Börker, 1998, p. 155. Since there does not seem to be enough space to restore ἐπὶ Κ]λευδί[κ]ου, it is less likely that the better known eponymous priest Kleudikos of period VI (ca. 108-88 BC) is referred to.

<sup>806</sup> For the eponymous priests Pausanias, cf. Nachtergaele, P.Hombert I, 1978, p. 19.47.53-56; Criscuolo, 1982, p. 21.71-73.86.88.94.98.135-137; Börker, 1998, p. 97.149.158. A similar stamp might be Criscuolo, 1982, p. 72-73, no. 61.

<sup>807</sup> For the eponymous priest Pratophanes, cf. Nachtergaele, P.Hombert I, 1978, p. 46; Criscuolo, 1982, p. 82; Börker, 1998, p. 37.98.149.158.

<sup>808</sup> For the eponymous priest Philodamos, cf. Nachtergaele, P.Hombert I, 1978, p. 44-46; Börker, 1998, p. 38-39.101-102.150.158. Clédat has Φ[ι]λιοδάμου, but since this does not match any name known on other stamps, his reading is probably not to be trusted.

### 3. The area between Raphia and Rinokoloura

(26) Petrie, 1937, pl. 51 CW? s.n.:

[ ] Δάλιου. | [ ] αιοοκ - 'In (the month) Dalios. [ ] aiiook (?)'

Petrie's facsimile has 'AIOOK', which is no doubt a mistake, but it is not clear which name was actually written.

(27) Clédat, 1915a, p. 48, no. 42, a round stamp with a rose in the middle. Clédat does not mention any inscription<sup>809</sup>.

#### *Amphora stamp from Knidos*

(28) Petrie, 1937, pl. 51 no. CW? x:

ἐπὶ [ ] Ἱεροκλεῦς. | 'Αναξάνδρου

'Under (the priesthood of) Hierokles. Of Anaxandros' - below: a club

The eponymous priest Hierokles of Knidos can be dated ca. 125-100 BC<sup>810</sup>.

#### *Unidentified inscriptions and stamps on amphorae and other vessels<sup>811</sup>*

(29) Petrie, 1937, p. 13 and pl. 51 no. EF? 598: one or two characters and the Egyptian 'nfr' sign

(30) Petrie, 1937, p. 13 and pl. 51 no. ED? 630: a late Ptolemaic stamp on a handle with ten small strokes and three (Phoenician?) characters, perhaps NMU (?)

(31) Petrie, 1937, p. 13 and pl. 51 no. CW 608: a small circular stamp with the (Phoenician?) characters NO

(32) Petrie, 1937, p. 13 and pl. 51 no. EF 570, a scratching on a black vase fragment:

ΑΡΚΚ ΟΗΝ

(33) Petrie, 1937, p. 13 and pl. 51 no. ED 566, ink-written on the base of a vase:

ΩΝΙΡΑ

(34) Petrie, 1937, pl. 51 no. CW? 626:

[ ] λης. | [ ] Ἀριστοδάμου - '[ ] les. Of [Aris]todamos'

(35) Petrie, 1937, pl. 51 CW? s.n.:

[ ] ΤΕΡΕΟ | [ ] ΙΟΕΘΕ

(36) Petrie, 1937, pl. 51 no. CW? x:

Νικυθός - 'Of Nikys (?) - Nikythos (?)'

(37) Petrie, 1937, pl. 51 no. CA 590:

'Αλεξ | ιν - with a helmet (?) to the right

<sup>809</sup> For other stamps showing a rose but no inscription, cf. Nilsson, 1909, p. 523, no. 783-786.

<sup>810</sup> For the eponymous priest Hierokles of Knidos and the manufacturer Anaxandros (who also occur together in SB III, 6537), cf. Grace, 1970, p. 330.377 and 326-327.375.

<sup>811</sup> The Roman stamps found by locals in the neighbourhood but brought to Petrie at Tell Temilat, are discussed under Tell el-Sheikh.

### 3. The area between Raphia and Rinokoloura

- (38) Petrie, 1937, pl. 51 no. CN 636, a circular stamp:  
at the rim: ἐπὶ Ἀ[.]νσιο[ ] - 'Under (the priesthood of) A[.]nsio[ ]'  
in the centre: Ἀξιου and a ligature with M?
- (39) Petrie, 1937, pl. 51 no. ES 528:  
Ο | ΑΛΣΙ
- (40) Petrie, 1937, pl. 51 CK? s.n., a circular stamp:  
ΔΙΟΛ | ΧΟ. Υ
- (41) Petrie, 1937, pl. 51 no. CF 575:  
ΟΙΟC | Δ.Ε
- (42) Petrie, 1937, pl. 51 no. CF 570:  
ΕΙC | ΟΠΟΥ
- (43) Petrie, 1937, pl. 51 no. CN 620: a rectangular stamp with in the four corners the letters Σ - Τ - Ω - Α; in the centre an unidentified object
- (44) Petrie, 1937, pl. 51 no. EC 586:  
Δ | ΔΛΣ
- (45) Petrie, 1937, pl. 51 no. ED 556:  
Π | ΟΡΑ
- (46) Petrie, 1937, pl. 51 no. ED? x:  
[ ]σιμου - 'Of [ ]simos (?)'<sup>812</sup>
- (47) Petrie, 1937, pl. 51 no. ED? s.n. (or EB 569? or EB? 581):  
(retrograde) THIE
- (48) Petrie, 1937, pl. 51 no. EB? 552:  
ΤΕΧ[ ]
- (49) Petrie, 1937, pl. 51 no. ED? 633:  
(with the first and the last letter written in different directions) EAK
- (50) Petrie, 1937, pl. 51 no. EN 570 (or EB 569? or EB? 581):  
ΟΛ
- (51) Petrie, 1937, pl. 51 no. CA 606:  
Ε
- (52) Petrie, 1937, pl. 51 no. ED? 590, a circular stamp:  
ΥΛΥ
- (53) Petrie, 1937, pl. 51 ED? s.n.:  
ΒΟΚΚΟ[ ]

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<sup>812</sup> Possible restorations are names such as Simos, Onasimos or Chresimos (which are all attested as manufacturers from Rhodos; cf. Börker, 1998, p. 156).

### 3. The area between Raphia and Rinokoloura

A name such as Bokkos is not attested on stamps, but perhaps BOICKQ[Υ], 'Of Boiskos', has to be read. The manufacturer Boiskos of Kos can be dated in the 2nd-1st century BC<sup>813</sup>.

(54) Petrie, 1937, pl. 51 no. EW 581, a circular stamp:

(retrograde) API | C

(55) Petrie, 1937, pl. 51 no. EG 537: a circular stamp with a ligature of Φ and Ω?

(56) Petrie, 1937, pl. 51 no. EG? 621: a rectangular stamp with two letters? a drawing?

(57) Petrie, 1937, pl. 51 no. EG? 576: a circular stamp with an A

(58) Petrie, 1937, pl. 51 no. CD 566: a circular stamp with a labrys (?)

(59) Petrie, 1937, pl. 51 CD? s.n.: a circular stamp with an unidentified object

(60) Petrie, 1937, pl. 51 no. CD? x: a circular stamp with an A

(61) Petrie, 1937, pl. 51 no. EB? s.n.:

(Latin?) NAS · [ ]

(62) Petrie, 1937, pl. 51 no. ED? 616, a circular stamp:

(Latin?) SI

(63) Petrie, 1937, pl. 51 CD? s.n.:

(Latin) [ ] R · ROC

### Identifications

Abel tentatively identifies Tell Temilat with one of the New Kingdom stations and wells on the Karnak relief of Sethos I or in P.Anastasi<sup>814</sup>, which seems very likely, although an exact identification with one of the stations mentioned in the texts remains hazardous. Already before the discovery of the New Kingdom settlement Clédat made a similar suggestion for Sheikh Zuweid without referring to a specific site<sup>815</sup>.

Aharoni tentatively identified Tell Temilat with the city of Laban, which is attested in Egyptian sources of the 13th and the 10th century BC (Rb3n3 - Rb(w)n), in

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<sup>813</sup> For the manufacturer Boiskos from Kos, cf. Börker, 1998, p. 113 and pl. 34 no. 511.

<sup>814</sup> Abel, 1939, p. 540 (cf. p. 544, and see also s.v. Ienysos).

<sup>815</sup> Clédat, 1923b, p. 157 (cf. p. 148.150) proposed an identification with Karnak, 1986, IV, pl. 4, 19 (T): N-ḥ-s n p3 sr ('N-ḥ-s of the Prince'); Karnak, 1986, IV, pl. 4, 20 (S): T3 ḥnm.t (Mn-m3<sup>c</sup>.t-R<sup>c</sup>) ('The well (of) Men-ma'at-Ra'); and P.Anastasi I, 27, 6-7 (11): N-ḥ-s; cf. Gauthier, 1926, III p. 154 and 1927, IV, p. 201.

### 3. *The area between Raphia and Rinokoloura*

the bible (Laban - Libna) and in an Assyrian inscription of 716 BC (La-ba-an)<sup>816</sup>. The geographical information about Laban, however, is too vague to make a certain identification.

In two Assyrian sources of king Sargon II 'the sealed harbour of Egypt' is mentioned, probably for the year 716 BC, but no further geographical information is given, and a lot of identifications have been suggested. Reich so identifies the Assyrian stratum at Tell Temilat with this 'sealed harbour of Egypt'<sup>817</sup>. This is not impossible, but remains a mere hypothesis.

Abel links Tell Temilat with the city of Ienysos, which is attested in the 6th-5th century BC<sup>818</sup>. This is a plausible hypothesis, but Herodotos' description of the place is unfortunately too vague to be able to cut the knot with certainty.

The places Bytl and P3-s3-nfr, attested in the 3rd century BC, probably lay near each other, but further information is lacking. It is not unlikely that they both lay in the neighbourhood of Sheikh Zuweid. Abel locates Bytl in Tell el-Sheikh and P3-s3-nfr in Tell Temilat, while he considers P3-s3-nfr the Egyptian name of Ienysos<sup>819</sup>. The identification of Bytl and Tell el-Sheikh, however, is not certain since little Ptolemaic remains have been found there in situ. At Tell Temilat Ptolemaic strata are present, but an identification with P3-s3-nfr remains a mere hypothesis.

Petrie identified Tell Temilat with the city of Anthedon, which has rightly been rejected by Abel. Petrie's main argument was the alleged position of Anthedon in the work of Ptolemaios, but this passage has been corrected in more recent editions<sup>820</sup>.

## **TELL EL-EQNEIYIN (TELL JENEIN)**

### **Topographical situation**

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<sup>816</sup> Aharoni, 1974, p. 88-90 (Hebrew) and 1979, p. 48.152.329.377.438 and the map p. 343; cf. Ahituv, 1984, p. 129 and pl. 4; Reich, 1984, p. 32, n. 4; for Laban, cf. also Gauthier, 1926, III, p. 135; Simons, 1938, p. 180.186; Alt, 1945, p. 227-231; Karnak, 1954, III, pl. 6, 3a; Tadmor, 1958, p. 78; Helck, 1971, p. 244; Odelain, 1978, p. 228.232; Eph'al, 1982, p. 104.

<sup>817</sup> Reich, 1981, 283-287 (Hebrew) and p. 84\*-85\* (English summary); Reich, 1984, p. 32-38; Reich, 1993, p. 15; cf. Eph'al, 1982, p. 103 n. 341. See s.v. The sealed harbour of Egypt.

<sup>818</sup> Abel, 1939, p. 544. See s.v. Ienysos.

<sup>819</sup> Abel, 1939, p. 544. See s.v. Bytl - P3-s3-nfr and s.v. Tell el-Sheikh.

<sup>820</sup> Petrie, 1937, p. 2-3 (still followed by Weippert, 1988, p. 499); cf. Abel, 1939, p. 541-542; Figueras, 2000, p. 158.162. For Ptolemaios, 4, 5, 7 (Müller, 1901, I 2, p. 683), see s.v. Bitylion.

### 3. The area between Raphia and Rinokoloura

Tell el-Eqneiyin lies less than 1 km north of Sheikh Zuweid<sup>821</sup>, and some 2,5 km southwest of Tell el-Sheikh<sup>822</sup>. Schumacher knew the place in 1886 as Tell el-Eqneiyin, but Petrie in 1935 only mentions the name of Tell Jenein.

#### Archaeological finds

In 1886 Schumacher noticed that Tell el-Eqneiyin was covered with pottery and remains of bricks and stones, but he did not find any 'antiquity of interest'<sup>823</sup>. In 1913 Clédat considered the high tell a Roman fortress, and he could clearly distinguish constructions and walls, but he did not excavate the site<sup>824</sup>. In 1935 Petrie considered the site a Hellenistic and Roman city mound, but he did not excavate either<sup>825</sup>. According to Abel the remains are quite recent, and he suggests a date in the Arab period<sup>826</sup>. The Israeli survey yielded some Ptolemaic, Nabataean, Roman, Byzantine and Arab pottery<sup>827</sup>, but the site still remains to be studied.

#### Identifications

Petrie identifies Tell Jenein as one of the three tells that made up the ancient city of Anthedon, a name he interprets as 'flower of delight'; he accordingly translates the name Tell Jenein as 'mound of gardens', and considers both names a reference to the once fertile region there<sup>828</sup>. Anthedon, however, lies north of Gaza, and the fact that the name Tell Jenein is not attested before 1935, makes one wonder whether it might just be an incorrect rendering of the name Tell el-Eqneiyin known since 1886. Anyway, a 'tell of gardens' in the middle of high sandy dunes would be quite surprising.

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<sup>821</sup> Schumacher, 1886, p. 171.

<sup>822</sup> Figueras, 2000, p. 252 (who on p. 172, however, gives a distance of 1,5 km).

<sup>823</sup> Schumacher, 1886, p. 186.

<sup>824</sup> Clédat, 1915a, p. 19.20.

<sup>825</sup> Petrie, 1937, p. 3.

<sup>826</sup> Abel, 1939, p. 541.544.

<sup>827</sup> Aharoni, 1974, p. 88.91-94 (Hebrew); Schmitt, 1995, p. 115.

<sup>828</sup> Petrie, 1937, p. 1.3; followed by Rothenberg, 1961, p. 22.120; cf. Wehr, 1979, p. 164, s.v. *junaina*, 'little garden'.

### 3. *The area between Raphia and Rinokoloura*

Abel is apparently tempted by the phonetic resemblance between the city of Ienysos attested in the 6th-5th century BC and Tell Jenein, which he therefore considers its Arabic successor<sup>829</sup>, but there is little to support this hypothesis.

Figueras identifies Tell Eqneiyin with the places P3-s3-nfr, attested in 217 BC, and Boutaphios, attested in the 4th century AD, but this remains a mere hypothesis<sup>830</sup>.

Schmitt distinguishes an inland Bitylion, which he identifies with Tell Eqneiyin, and a coastal Bitylion, which he identifies with Tell el-Sheikh<sup>831</sup>, but I do not see any reason to expand the name Bitylion over two different sites.

## **TELL ABU GHANEM**

Tell Abu Ghanem is situated some 3 km northwest of Sheikh Zuweid and at less than 1 km from the Mediterranean. According to Clédat it might have been a small Roman fortress<sup>832</sup>. The place is probably identical with the nameless 'Ruins' on the map of Schumacher immediately east of Tell el-Sheikh<sup>833</sup>.

## **TELL EL-SHEIKH**

Ancient name: Bitylion

### **Topographical situation**

Tell el-Sheikh lies some 3-5 km northwest of Sheikh Zuweid<sup>834</sup>, close to the sea, and was named after that village. In 1886 the hill was 17 m high, and extended some 180 m east - west and some 45 m north - south. The local guide of Schumacher asserted that Tell el-Sheikh was originally named Khirbet el-Melek Iskander ('Ruin of king Alexander (the Great)'), but Schumacher stresses that this information is hardly to be trusted<sup>835</sup>. In the Israeli survey the site was labelled R55<sup>836</sup>.

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<sup>829</sup> Abel, 1939, p. 544. See s.v. Ienysos.

<sup>830</sup> Figueras, 2000, p. 53.228. See s.v. P3-s3-nfr and s.v. Boutaphios.

<sup>831</sup> Schmitt, 1995, p. 114-115; cf. TAVO B VI 10, 1993. See s.v. Bitylion.

<sup>832</sup> Clédat, 1915a, p. 20 and the map p. 18.

<sup>833</sup> Schumacher, 1886, p. 171.

<sup>834</sup> The distances differ: 3 km (Schumacher, 1886, the map p. 171); ca. 5 km (Oren, 1982a, p. 27: 5 km; Oren, 1993a, p. 1396: 'about 5 km (3 mi.)').

<sup>835</sup> Schumacher, 1886, p. 186-188 and the map p. 171.

<sup>836</sup> Johnson, 1979, p. 171; Oren, 1993a, p. 1396.



### **Archaeological finds**

When Schumacher passed by in 1886<sup>837</sup>, not only on the tell itself but also the area extending some 700 m northwards and eastwards was covered with pottery, metal ornaments, marble, granite and sandstone, which marked it as an important site. On the tell he noticed mud brick walls, bits of a black and white mosaic, and a part of a white marble statue. Some 225 m northeast of the tell there were traces of a large square sandstone building, and some 270 m further on of a circular building, ca. 2,5 m in diameter and plastered on the inside, near other heaps of building stones, which Schumacher interpreted as a bath.

In 1913 Clédat excavated the site<sup>838</sup>, which he dated in general to the 2nd-4th centuries AD. At the western side of the tell, which was some 10 to 15 m above sea level, he found some buildings which he considered part of a fortress. Here Clédat excavated some rooms with white and coloured mosaics, among them a mosaic with three figurative registers and accompanying Greek texts in a splendid state (1). A nearby room was decorated with painted ships. He also found two white marble statues of Aphrodite and numerous other fragmentary statues and reliefs, one of them with a Greek inscription (3). Clédat did not find any clear traces of a wall surrounding the place, and since both the ground plan and the findings in my opinion do not immediately support the identification as a fortress, I am not convinced of the military character of the site<sup>839</sup>. At the northeastern side of the tell Clédat excavated a Roman bath (the same one as noticed by Schumacher?), decorated with white marble plates and mosaics. In the frigidarium the mosaic had a Greek inscription (2). Southwest of the tell Clédat discovered an isolated mud brick building, which he could not identify, but for which Abel suggests a religious function. On top of a massive construction (9,80 x 6,70 m), which somewhat resembles a mastaba, a terrace could be reached by means of a limestone staircase. On this terrace stood a small building with one room (3,20 x 2,20). East of the tell a necropolis extended with some larger mausolea, but no epitaphs have been found. Numerous smaller objects have been described, such as coins ranging from 138 till 361 AD, lamps, a terracotta seal (4), pottery stamps (8-12;

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<sup>837</sup> Schumacher, 1886, p. 186-188, with five drawings.

<sup>838</sup> Clédat, 1915a, p. 15-48, with fig. 1-22 and pl. 1-9; Valbelle, 1999a, p. 76; cf. Picard, 1916, p. 357-358; Abel, 1939, p. 539-540.

<sup>839</sup> Cf. also the doubts expressed by Gallavotti, 1963, p. 461.462, Ovadiah, 1991a, p. 181 and n. 2 (who considers the building with the mosaics a villa) and Gatier, 1994, p. 148, n. 18.

### 3. *The area between Raphia and Rinokoloura*

cf. **13-14**), stamped mortaria from northern Syria of the second half of the 3rd and the early 4th century AD (**15-38**), some hundred lead objects (with a magical character?), a lead weight from Gaza of the 3rd century AD (**5**), a lead bracelet (**6**), a fragmentary Phoenician inscription (**7**), a steatite statue of Harpocrates, a bronze statue of Eros, and a bronze head of Serapis. Unfortunately Clédat does not always indicate whether the objects were found in situ or not, and especially for the amphora stamps from Rhodos, which can be dated to the 3rd-2nd century BC, one can wonder whether they were really found in Tell el-Sheikh and were not brought in from some nearby site such as Tell Temilat.

Tell el-Sheikh was surveyed in 1956 by the Israel Department of Antiquities and again after 1972 by the team from the Beer-Gurion University. These investigations showed that the site was occupied from the Hellenistic to the Arab period, but the majority of the findings came from the Roman and Byzantine period; further details, however, are lacking<sup>840</sup>. A bowl decorated with a ritualistic scene, found by an Israeli team, was made in Korinthos in the second half of the 2nd century or the first half of the 3rd century AD<sup>841</sup>.

About 1965 a coin hoard of some 14.000 folles has been found at a tell 'just to the west of the village' of Sheikh Zuweid. Since Tell Temilat seems to be a less important site in Roman time than Tell el-Sheikh, it is a plausible hypothesis that the hoard was found in the neighbourhood of the latter. Most of the coins date from 295 till 311 AD, and the hoard was possibly buried about 314-315 AD<sup>842</sup>. Apparently in the same area another hoard of 16.000 Antoniniani of the 3rd century AD has been found about 1963, but further details are lacking<sup>843</sup>.

Most of the remains at Tell el-Sheikh seem to belong to the 2nd-4th century AD and there is little known about its previous habitation. When Abel therefore assumes a Semitic foundation preceding a Ptolemaic town<sup>844</sup>, this is a mere hypothesis. Some scholars also consider Tell el-Sheikh the maritime site of the more inland town Tell Temilat<sup>845</sup>, but since the latter flourished mainly from the New Kingdom till the Ptolemaic or early Roman period, and the former from the Roman

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<sup>840</sup> Cf. Aharoni, 1974, p. 88 (Hebrew); Johnson, 1979, p. 172; Schmitt, 1995, p. 115.

<sup>841</sup> Johnson, 1979, p. 171-174 and pl. 19. Figueras, 2000, p. 256 incorrectly refers to two bowls.

<sup>842</sup> Cf. King, 1977, p. 64-112, especially p. 66-67, and 1979, p. 210.

<sup>843</sup> Cf. King, 1977, p. 66, n. 3.

<sup>844</sup> Abel, 1939, p. 540.

<sup>845</sup> Cf. Aharoni, 1974, p. 88-90 (Hebrew) mentioned in Figueras, 2000, p. 172-173; Oren, 1982a, p. 27 and 1993a, p. 1396.

### 3. The area between Raphia and Rinokoloura

till the early Byzantine period, I am not convinced that both sites ever co-existed as equal towns.

#### *Mosaic inscriptions*

(1) I.Métriques 122 (Clédat, 1915a, p. 22-28; SEG I, 584):

The figurative mosaic carpet in hall A of the building excavated by Clédat in 1913 can perhaps be dated on stylistically grounds to the period 350-450 AD<sup>846</sup>. The upper panel represents a scene from the myth of Phaidra and Hippolytos, the middle panel has a Dionysiac procession or thiasos in two registers, and the lower panel shows different kind of birds. The building has apparently been constructed on behalf of a man named Nestor. Ovadiah supposes that the mosaic has been made by a workshop from Gaza, rather than from Alexandria. The mosaic can nowadays be visited in the museum of Ismailia.

#### *Upper panel*

(above the representation)

ναοῖς Νέστορα τὸν φιλόκαλον κτίστην

'To the temples, Nestor the builder, lover of beauty'

(above the figures)

Φέδρα - 'Phaidra'

Ἔρως - 'Eros'

τρόφος - 'nurse'

Ἰππόλυτος - 'Hippolytos'

κυναγοί - 'hunters'

(below the representation: a metrical inscription with one hexameter and three pentameters)

1 δεῦρ' ἴδε τὰς χάριτας χαίρων, φίλε, ἄστινας ἡμῖν

τέχνη ταῖς ψήφοις ἔμβαλε πηξαμένη,

2 τὸν φθόνον ἐκ μέσσου καὶ ὄμματα βασκανίης

τῆς ἰλαρῆς τέχνης πολλάκις εὐξάμενος.

Bernand: 'Ici vois avec plaisir, ami, les plaisantes choses que pour nous l'art a représentées avec ces pierres, en les assemblant, et souhaite plusieurs fois que l'Envie et le Mauvais Oeil s'écartent de cet art heureux.'

Ovadiah: 'Friend, observe here with pleasure the charming things which art has placed in the mosaic cubes petrifying | and repelling jealousy and the eyes of envy. You are one who is proud of the enjoyable art.'

#### *Middle panel*

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<sup>846</sup> For these mosaic inscriptions, cf. (a.o.) Clédat, 1915a, p. 22-28 and pl. 2-5; Plassart, 1916, p. 359-360; Perdrizet, 1922b, p. 93-100 and pl. II; SEG I 2, 1924, p. 137, no. 584; Abel, 1940, p. 225-226; Gallavotti, 1963, p. 459-462; Bernand, I.Métriques, 1969, p. 483-488, no. 122 and pl. 84-87; Ovadiah, 1987, p. 51-53, no. 69 and pl. XL; BE, 1989, p. 471, no. 809; Ovadiah, 1991a, p. 181-191 and pl. 22-27; Ovadiah, 1991b, p. 122-126 (Hebrew); Feissel, Denis, BE, 1992, p. 505, no. 432 and p. 546, no. 652; SEG XL, 1990 [= 1993], p. 517, no. 1672; SEG XLI, 1991 [= 1994], p. 548, no. 1636; SEG XLII, 1992 [= 1995], p. 466, no. 1580; Gatier, 1994, p. 148 and n. 18; SEG XLVII, 1997 [= 2000], p. 597, no. 1975 and p. 640, no. 2136. It is not clear why Gatier suggests a date in the 6th or 7th century AD. For the metrical texts I mainly follow the text and punctuation of Bernand; I add both the French translation of Bernand and the English translation of Ovadiah, who often chooses for a different punctuation.

### 3. The area between Raphia and Rinokoloura

(above the figures)

τελετή - 'rite'

Διόνυσος - 'Dionysos'

Ἔρως - 'Eros'

Ἡρακλῆς - 'Herakles'

σκίρτος - 'dancing' (or Σκίρτος - 'Skirtos', the name of a satyr)

*Lower panel*

(an inscription of four hexameters within a tabula ansata:)

1 εἴ με φιλεῖς, ὦνθρωπε, χαίρων ἐπίβαινε μελάθρων,  
ψυχὴν τερπόμενος τεχνήμασιν, οἷσιν ποθ' ἡμῖν  
πέπλον ἱμερόεντα Χαρίτων ἢ Κύπρις ὕφανεν,

4 λεπταλέῃ ψηφίδι χάριν δ' ἐνεθήκατο πολλήν.

Bernard: 'Si tu es un ami, mon bon, entre avec plaisir dans cette demeure, le coeur réjoui de voir que l'art avec lequel Kypris jadis a lissé pour nous le voile charmant des Grâces lui a fait mettre tant de grâce dans ces petites pierres délicates.'

Ovadiah: 'If you love me, gentleman, enter gladly into this grand hall | and then your soul will enjoy the works of art herein. | Kypris wove the splendid peplos of the Charites by a mosaic | of delicate cube stones, into which she put a lot of charm.'

(2) Clédat, 1915a, p. 31-32:

The geometric mosaic in the floor of the frigidarium (hall F) of the thermae excavated by Clédat in 1913 can perhaps - like the previous inscription - be dated to the period 350-450 AD<sup>847</sup>.

1 καλ-  
ὦς λ-  
3 ούη  
'Wash well'

*Inscriptions on stone and other objects*

(3) Clédat, 1915a, p. 30 and pl. 9, 1:

A fragmentary white marble statue of a child possibly accompanied by an animal has an inscription on the basis. It was excavated by Clédat in 1913 in the house with the mosaics. The excavator did not suggest a specific date for this statue, but no doubt he considered it contemporary with his other findings, which he dated to the 2nd-4th century AD.

1 Ἀρίστων α[ ]  
2 βελῆς στεφα[ ]  
'Ariston (?) ...'

The nature of the inscription is not certain. The first line might start with the nominative of the Greek name Ἀρίστων followed by a word beginning with α[ ] - the accusative Ἀρίστωνα seeming less likely - or with another name such as Ἀριστωνᾶ[ς] or Ἀριστωνᾶ[ξ]. The basis is broken to the right and it is not clear how

<sup>847</sup> Clédat, 1915a, p. 31-32; Gallavotti, 1963, p. 462 (with the correct spelling); Ovadiah, 1987, p. 53; Ovadiah, 1991a, p. 187.

### 3. The area between Raphia and Rinokoloura

many letters of the inscription are missing. The beginning of the second line is perhaps the continuation of the last word of the previous line in the genitive (|βελης), although a nominative cannot be excluded; one might think e.g. of names such as Kybele, Babele, Sesibeles, Abel(es), Kalabeles or Bel(l)es, but nothing is certain. The second word of this line might be the beginning of the personal name Stephanos, but also the noun στέφανος, 'wreath', or compositions with this word, both nouns and verbs, cannot be excluded.

(4) Clédat, 1915a, p. 39, no. 1 and fig. 12:

A terracotta seal, found by Clédat in 1913:

1 Ζη-  
νοβ-  
3 ιφ  
Ζηνόβι(σ), Ζηνοβί(σ) or - if the last letter is a sigma lunata - Ζηνόβι<σ>  
'Zenobios' or 'Of Zenobios'

The Greek name Zenobios is quite common.

(5) Clédat, 1915a, p. 41, no. 4 and fig. 15 (SEG XLV, 1979):

A human-shaped lead weight from Gaza dated ca. 200-250 AD has a rectangular stamp on the back perhaps containing some characters, next to another illegible inscription<sup>848</sup>. The weight has been found by Clédat in 1913. No drawing of the inscription has been published.

(6) I.Métriques, p. 487-488 (Clédat, 1915a, p. 41-42, no. 5 and fig. 16):

A retrograde inscription on a decorated lead bracelet, found by Clédat in 1913<sup>849</sup>.

1 ἔξω  
βάσ-  
3 κανος  
'Outside, you who bewitches!' - 'Hors d'ici le jeteur de sorts!'

#### *A Phoenician inscription*

(7) Clédat, 1915a, p. 44, no. 14 and fig. 22:

A fragmentary white marble slab with a Phoenician inscription, found by Clédat in 1913. He could only read the last two characters of the lower line: ... 𐤓𐤓<sup>850</sup>.

#### *Inscriptions and stamps on amphorae and other vessels*<sup>851</sup>

<sup>848</sup> Clédat, 1915a, p. 41, no. 4 and fig. 15; Gatier, 1994, p. 148-149; SEG, XLV, 1995 [= 1998], p. 575, no. 1979. In SEG the date is incorrectly given as 'BC' instead of 'AD'.

<sup>849</sup> Clédat, 1915a, p. 41-42, no. 5 and fig. 16; Perdrizet, 1922b, p. 93, n. 1; Gallavotti, 1963, p. 462-463; Bernand, I.Métriques, 1969, p. 487-488.

<sup>850</sup> Clédat, 1915a, p. 44, no. 14 and fig. 22; cf. Abel, 1940, p. 226.

### 3. The area between Raphia and Rinokoloura

(8) Clédat, 1915a, p. 44, no. 13 (a):

An amphora with the Greek text ZONAI painted in red, excavated by Clédat in 1913.

(9) Clédat, 1915a, p. 44, no. 13 (b) and fig. 21:

An amphora with the letter N and another letter (?) painted in red, excavated by Clédat in 1913.

(10-11) Clédat, 1915a, p. 46, no. 24:

The Greek retrograde stamp ABA found on two different amphora handles by Clédat in 1913.

(12) Clédat, 1915a, p. 46, no. 25:

A Greek stamp with Φ? and M in ligature on the neck of a vessel.

(13) Petrie, 1937, p. 13 and pl. 51 bottom [8]:

A retrograde Latin (?) stamp in relief on a Roman mortarium (?) found by locals in the area, without a precise place of origin<sup>852</sup>.

. VRVC .  
COSMD

(14) Petrie, 1937, p. 13 and pl. 51 bottom [12]:

A Latin (?) stamp in relief on a Roman mortarium (?) found by locals in the area, without a precise place of origin.

MAXIM  
[ .]M?IA?O

#### *Stamps on mortaria*

This type of pelves ('basins') or mortaria with the name of the manufacturer in a stamp on the rim possibly comes from the northern coast of Syria and can be dated to the second half of the 3rd and the earlier part of the 4th century AD<sup>853</sup>. The stamps published by Petrie were 'brought from late sites in the district', so it is not unlikely that also these, like the ones published by Clédat and Aharoni, came from the Tell el-Sheikh area.

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<sup>851</sup> The amphora stamps of Rhodos published by Clédat, 1915a, p. 46-48 no. 26-48, which were often found out of archaeological context (cf. p. 39), are listed together with those excavated in Tell Temilat.

<sup>852</sup> According to Hayes, 1967, p. 343 this stamp and the next one (13) do not belong to the well-known series of mortaria from Syria discussed further on.

<sup>853</sup> For this type of vessels, cf. Hayes, 1967, p. 337-347; Criscuolo, 1982, p. 26.133-134, no. 200-201; Vallerin, 1994, p. 171-204. The stamps here were first published by Clédat, 1915a, p. 45-46, no. 17-23 (= SB III, 6098-6101), Petrie, 1937, p. 13 and pl. 51 bottom, and Aharoni, 1974, p. 94 and pl. 29, 4.6 [unfortunately I was not able to see the plates]. Both Hayes and Vallerin incorrectly consider the stamps from the Sheikh Zuweid area and from Anthedon as coming from two different sites.

### 3. The area between Raphia and Rinokoloura

(15) Hayes, 1967, p. 343, no. 58 (Petrie, 1937, pl. 51 bottom [9]):

Διονεί- | [folium] κου folium folium - 'Of Dionikos'

(16) Hayes, 1967, p. 343, no. 59 (Petrie, 1937, pl. 51 bottom [10]):

Διονε[ί]- | folium κου [folium] [folium] - 'Of Dionikos'

(17) Hayes, 1967, p. 343, no. 49 (Clédat, 1915a, p. 45, no. 18; SB III, 6099):

Διοφάντου βου(λευτοῦ) - 'Of councillor Diophantes'

(18) Hayes, 1967, p. 343, no. 62 (Petrie, 1937, pl. 51 bottom [3]):

[Διοφάντου βου(λευτοῦ) - 'Of councillor Diophantes'

(19) Aharoni, 1974, p. 94 and pl. 29, 6:

Διοφάντου βου(λευτοῦ) - 'Of councillor Diophantes'

Figueras refers to a fragmentary inscription 'Bu[ ]' (BOΥ[ ]?) on an amphora from Sheikh Zuweid that he supplements as 'Bu[taphis]' (BOΥ[τάφισ]?)<sup>854</sup>. He does not give any bibliographical reference, but I guess that he actually refers to this inscription, which he incorrectly interpreted.

(20) Hayes, 1967, p. 343, no. 63 (Petrie, 1937, pl. 51 bottom [7]):

Δόμ- pine cone | folium νου - 'Of Domnos'

(21) Aharoni, 1974, p. 94 and pl. 29, 4:

Δόμ- pine cone | folium νου - 'Of Domnos'

(22) Hayes, 1967, p. 343, no. 52 (Clédat, 1915a, p. 46, no. 21):

[Δόξα (?) - 'Of Doxas (?)'

(23) Hayes, 1967, p. 343, no. 51 (Clédat, 1915a, p. 45, no. 20; SB III, 6101):

Εἰρηναί, | εὐτύχι folium - 'Eirenaios, be well'<sup>855</sup>

(24) Hayes, 1967, p. 343, no. 55 (Petrie, 1937, pl. 51 bottom [1]):

Εἰρηναί, | εὐτύχι [folium] - 'Eirenaios, be well'

(25) Aharoni, 1974, p. 94 and pl. 29, 6:

[Εἰρηναί], | [εὐτύχι [folium] - 'Eirenaios, be well'

(26) Hayes, 1967, p. 343, no. 56 (Petrie, 1937, pl. 51 bottom [5]):

εὐτυχῶς | [Εἰρηνέω - 'Success for Eirenaios'

(27) Hayes, 1967, p. 343, no. 57 (Petrie, 1937, pl. 51 bottom [4]):

[ ]ΥΤΧΧ[ ] | [ ]ΒΗΧΕ[ ]

perhaps [εὐτυχῶς] | [Εἰρηνέω] - 'Success for Eirenaios'

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<sup>854</sup> Figueras, 2000, p. 53.

<sup>855</sup> For εὐτύχι, read εὐτύχει. The element Εἰρηναί has been interpreted by scholars in different ways and supplemented and accentuated accordingly; Siebourg, 1907, p. 4 e.g. suggests that it is the vocative Εἰρηναί (= Εἰρηναίε) of the name Εἰρηναίος (which in Hayes, 1967, p. 340 is accentuated as Εἰρηναί); one could also consider the genitive case Εἰρηναί(ου), 'Of Eirenaios, be well', but because of the similar stamp εὐτυχῶς | Εἰρηνέω (read Εἰρηναίω), 'success for Eirenaios', such a genitive seems less likely.

### 3. The area between Raphia and Rinokoloura

(28) Aharoni, 1974, p. 94 and pl. 29, 4:

εὐτυχῶ[ς] | Εἰρηνέ[ω] - 'Success for Eirenaios'

(29) Hayes, 1967, p. 343, no. 48 (Clédat, 1915a, p. 45, no. 17; SB III, 6098), repeated at least twice on the rim of the vessel:

Ἑρμογένου[ς] ι - 'Of Hermogenes 10 (?)'

perhaps Ἑρμογένου[ς] ἱ(ερέω[ς]?) - 'Under priest (?) Hermogenes'<sup>856</sup>

(30) Hayes, 1967, p. 343, no. 64 (Petrie, 1937, pl. 51 bottom [11]):

Ἑρμογένου[ς] ι - 'Of Hermogenes 10 (?)'

(31) Aharoni, 1974, p. 94 and pl. 29, 4:

Ἑρμ[ογ]ένου[ς] [ι] - 'Of Hermogenes 10 (?)'

(32) Aharoni, 1974, p. 94 and pl. 29, 4:

ΟΥΛΙΑΝ | ΕΥΤΥΧ

perhaps [Ι?]ουλιαν[έ?], | εὐτύχ[ι?] - 'Iulianus (?), be well (?)'<sup>857</sup>

(33) Hayes, 1967, p. 343, no. 60 (Petrie, 1937, pl. 51 bottom [2])

Κασσι[α]νοῦ [folium] - 'Of Kassianos'

(34) Aharoni, 1974, p. 94 and pl. 29, 6:

[Κ]ασσι[α]νοῦ folium - 'Of Kassianos'

(35) Hayes, 1967, p. 343, no. 50 (Clédat, 1915a, p. 45, no. 19; SB III, 6100):

Λαδά[ρ]ος [folium] - 'Of Ladas'

(36) Hayes, 1967, p. 343, no. 53 (Clédat, 1915a, p. 46, no. 22):

[Σα]λλαμ[οῦ] | [Ἀ]λεξάνδ[ρου] - 'Of Sallamos (son of?) Alexandros'

(37) Hayes, 1967, p. 343, no. 61 (Petrie, 1937, pl. 51 bottom [6])

[Σ]αλλαμ[οῦ] | [Ἀ]λεξάνδ[ρου] - 'Of Sallamos (son of?) Alexandros'

(38) Hayes, 1967, p. 343, no. 54 (Clédat, 1915a, p. 46, no. 23): repeated three times on the rim of the vessel:

[ε]ὐτύχι folium? - 'Be well'

### Identifications

It is not unlikely that Tell el-Sheikh is the site of the Byzantine city of Bitylion attested in the 4th-7th century AD and situated in the sources near the sea some 18 km south of Raphia<sup>858</sup>. One can wonder, however, whether it is also the site of the place

<sup>856</sup> For the interpretation of this stamp, cf. Criscuolo, 1982, p. 26.133-134, no. 201.

<sup>857</sup> This stamp is apparently not yet attested elsewhere, but the name Iulianus does occur in Hayes, 1967, p. 342, no. 5 (Ἰουλει[α]νοῦ). It is not clear why Vallerin, 1994, p. 178 and n. 77 seems to list this stamp under the name Σαλλαμοῦ | Ἀλεξάνδρου.

<sup>858</sup> Abel, 1939, p. 539-540.544. See s.v. Bitylion.



### 3. *The area between Raphia and Rinokoloura*

Bytl, attested in the 3rd century BC, since so little Ptolemaic remains have been recorded<sup>859</sup>.

Hommel tentatively identifies Tell el-Sheikh with the city of Ienysos<sup>860</sup>, but no remains of the 5th century BC have been recorded there. He suggested an etymological link between the name Ienysos and the god Dionysos, but the Dionysos theme on the mosaic found in Tell el-Sheikh (1) can hardly be considered a firm argument for this hypothesis.

## **MINET EL-AHSEIN**

Minet ('anchorage') el-Ahsein is a wide and well-sheltered bay of the Mediterranean some 4 km southwest of Tell el-Sheikh and some 5 km west of Sheikh Zuweid, used by boatmen as a shelter in stormy weather. Schumacher was told about a site there named Khirbet ('ruin') Minet el-Ahsein, covered with sand<sup>861</sup>.

## **TELL MAHIZA'**

### **Topographical situation**

Tell Mahiza' probably lies southwest of Minet el-Ahsein, somewhat more inland<sup>862</sup>. For Margovsky it was the most western site of the whole area that was inhabited from the Ptolemaic till the Byzantine period<sup>863</sup>, but further information is lacking.

### **Identifications**

Schmitt identifies Tell Mahiza' with the ancient places Bethaphou and Boutaphios<sup>864</sup>, but this is a mere hypothesis.

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<sup>859</sup> See s.v. Bytl - P3-s3-nfr.

<sup>860</sup> Hommel, 1926, p. 965. See s.v. Ienysos.

<sup>861</sup> Schumacher, 1886, p. 188 and the map p. 171. Schumacher estimates a distance of 3,5 miles (ca. 5,5 km) between Minet el-Ahsein and Tell el-Sheikh, but his map shows only 2,5 miles (ca. 4 km). According to Abel, 1939, p. 542 Minet el-Ahsein lies 2 miles (ca. 3 km) northwest of Sheikh Zuweid, but on the map of Schumacher the distance seems rather 5 km.

<sup>862</sup> Margovsky, 1969, p. 46 no. 8; Cytryn-Silverman, 2001, p. 32.

<sup>863</sup> Margovsky, 1969, p. 45 (Hebrew); cf. Schmitt, 1995, p. 103.

<sup>864</sup> Schmitt, 1995, p. 102-103; cf. TAVO B VI 10, 1993. See s.v. Bethaphou and s.v. Boutaphios.

### *3. The area between Raphia and Rinokoloura*

Schmitt tentatively identifies Tell Mahiza' with Tell el-Qabr<sup>865</sup>, but the latter site seems to be situated more inland.

## **TELL EL-SITT**

In 2001 the mission of the Islamic and Coptic Antiquities Sector of the Egyptian Supreme Council of Antiquities (SCA) finished excavations in Tell el-Sitt, apparently a site in the neighbourhood of Sheikh Zuweid. They found a Roman residential area and some bronze Ptolemaic and Roman coins<sup>866</sup>. Further information is lacking.

## **SABKHAT EL-SHEIKH**

### **Topographical situation**

Less than 2 km west of Sheikh Zuweid and somewhat west of Tell Temilat Sabkhat ('lake') el-Sheikh extends along the road between Rafah and el-Arish<sup>867</sup>. The lake has salty water and is in some parts flanked by a palm grove. In 1898 the Sawarka Beduin extracted salt from the lake, which was sold all over the area, and in 1982 the inhabitants of Sheikh Zuweid apparently still gained salt using ancient methods<sup>868</sup>.

### **Identifications**

In 1851 van Senden describes a lake between el-Arish and the Wadi Rafah that is covered with salt, and that he identifies with Sabkhat Bardawil<sup>869</sup>. There is little doubt, however, that he actually refers to Sabkhat el-Sheikh.

## **DIKLA**

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<sup>865</sup> Schmitt, 1995, p. 103. See s.v. Tell el-Qabr.

<sup>866</sup> North Sinai, 2001 (internet).

<sup>867</sup> Cf. the map Clédat, 1915a, p. 18.

<sup>868</sup> Musil, 1907, II 1, p. 228; Oren, 1982a, p. 25.

<sup>869</sup> van Senden, 1851, I, p. 81. See s.v. Sabkhat Bardawil.

### 3. The area between Raphia and Rinokoloura

The village Dikla, which is attested for the first time in 1973, lies 32 km east of el-Arish and 9 km west of Sadot, somewhat south of Sheikh Zuweid, immediately north of the modern road between el-Arish and Palestine / Israel, and south of the old railway<sup>870</sup>.

## TELL EL-QABR - BIR GABR AMIR

### Topographical situation

The old village Tell el-Qabr was situated some 20 km southwest of Rafah and some 5 km southwest of Sheikh Zuweid<sup>871</sup>, near the Bir ('well') Gabr Amir, 'Gabr' being the Beduin pronunciation of the Arabic 'Qabr'. According to Musil the village was also called Tell el-Barmakia in 1898, but since the medieval road station el-Barmakia lay more to the north, this identification is doubtful<sup>872</sup>. Figueras suggests that the tell contains the remains of a Byzantine village<sup>873</sup>, but this seems to be a mere hypothesis.

### Identifications

Tell el-Qabr has been identified with Bethaphou and Boutaphios, both attested in the 4th century AD at some 19,5 - 21 km southwest of Raphia. This seems not impossible, but has to be confirmed by further archaeological information<sup>874</sup>.

Abel at first identified Bir Gabr Amir with the medieval road station el-Kharruba, but later on he rightly rejected himself this identification<sup>875</sup>.

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<sup>870</sup> Cf. Oren, 1981a, p. 26, fig. 2; Baumgarten, 1990, map. On the map of Abd el-Maksoud, 1998a, p. 61 Dikla is incorrectly situated north of Sheikh Zuweid.

<sup>871</sup> The distances differ: 4 km (Abel, 1939, p. 209); 5 km (Abel, 1939, p. 547 and 1940, p. 227; Tsafirir, 1994, p. 92; Figueras, 2000, p. 172.229). Figueras, 2000, p. 229 locates Tell el-Qabr 'near the coast', which is only true in a general way of speaking.

<sup>872</sup> Musil, 1907, II 1, p. 228; followed by Abel, 1940, p. 227 and Schmitt, 1995, p. 102; rejected by Hartman, 1910, p. 685. See s.v. el-Barmakia.

<sup>873</sup> Figueras, 2000, p. 111.

<sup>874</sup> Cf. Abel, 1939, p. 547 and 1940, p. 227; Roberts, P.Ryl. IV, 1952, p. 124; Alt, 1954, p. 162-163; Tsafirir, 1994, p. 92; Figueras, 2000, p. 172.229. See s.v. Bethaphou and s.v. Boutaphios.

<sup>875</sup> Cf. Abel, 1939, p. 209 and 1940, p. 227, n. 2. See s.v. el-Kharruba.

### 3. *The area between Raphia and Rinokoloura*

Schmitt tentatively identifies Tell el-Qabr with Tell Mahiza<sup>876</sup>, but the latter site seems to be situated more to the coast.

## **TELL EZIAZA**

Tell Eziaza lies some 7 km southwest of Sheikh Zuweid and some 2 km north of the main road between Rafah and el-Arish<sup>877</sup>. No further information about this site is available.

## **A335 - A346**

### **Topographical situation**

Cytryn-Silverman locates the sites A335 and A346 somewhat east of el-Kharruba in the area of Bir el-Masa'id<sup>878</sup>. Since this is the only attestation for the latter name in the area, I suspect that it has been incorrectly inferred from the well-known Bir el-Masa'id some 5 km west of el-Arish, which is also mentioned elsewhere in her article<sup>879</sup>.

### **Archaeological finds**

Sites A335 and A346 yielded pottery from the Early and Middle Islamic period (ca. 700-1300 AD). The largest number of sherds came from the Early Islamic period (ca. 700-1000 AD). The population of the area apparently concentrated around these two sites ca. 1050-1200 AD, abandoning the many satellite settlements of the earlier period. From 1250 AD on the importance of the two sites most probably declined, while other small sites were created in the area<sup>880</sup>.

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<sup>876</sup> Schmitt, 1995, p. 103. See s.v. Tell Mahiza'.

<sup>877</sup> Cf. the map Petrie, 1937, pl. 5a. Is this perhaps the place referred to on Description, 1826, Atlas, pl. 32 as nameless 'ruines d'une citerne et de quelques bâtiments' somewhat north of the road between Sheikh Zuweid and el-Kharruba?

<sup>878</sup> Cytryn-Silverman, 2001, p. 19 and the map p. 32.

<sup>879</sup> See s.v. Bir el-Masa'id.

<sup>880</sup> Cytryn-Silverman, 2001, p. 19-20 and the maps p. 32-34. For the nearby Early Arab site A301, cf. Oren, 1981a, p. 27 and n. 3.

## **(KHIRBET UMM) EL-KHARRUBA - KHIRBET EL-BURDJ**

Medieval name: el-Kharruba

### **Topographical situation**

The medieval road station el-Kharruba ('Carob tree') is attested in sources of the 13th-15th century AD, and seems to have been abandoned from the 16th century AD on<sup>881</sup>. In the 19th and 20th centuries the names el-Kharruba, Bir el-Kharruba, (Khirbet) Umm el-Kharruba, Khirbet el-Burdj and Bir el-Burdj all occur in the same area, but since no detailed map of the area has been published, the exact relationship between these toponyms is somewhat confusing. The name el-Kharruba apparently reappears ca. 1798-1801 near a well<sup>882</sup>. In 1863 Guérin noticed the unimportant remains of a 'burdj' or military road post at a place that was called Khirbet el-Burdj ('Ruin of the tower'), along the road between Rafah and el-Arish; next to the small fortress was a well and some traces of constructions<sup>883</sup>. In 1898 Musil noticed the ruins of probably the same tower and a village at a place that was called Khirbet Umm el-Kharruba ('Ruin of the mother of the carob tree'), apparently a variation on the old name, and that he identified with medieval el-Kharruba<sup>884</sup>. In 1903 Paoletti again used the old name el-Kharruba; at the well the chief of the Sawarka Beduin tribe lived with a lot of his men; because of the frequent rain it was possible to cultivate barley<sup>885</sup>. According to Clédat el-Kharruba is the centre of the Sawarka Beduin, and next to their huts and tents are the ancient ruins named Khirbet el-Burdj; Clédat identified the place with the medieval road station el-Kharruba<sup>886</sup>. Abel referred to the place as Bir el-Burdj ('Well of the tower'), but he apparently distinguished Bir el-Burdj, which he identified with Umm el-Kharruba, from 'the two wells of el-Kharruba' 1,6 km more to the north<sup>887</sup>. One of the latter apparently corresponds with the Bir el-Kharruba close to the Mediterranean referred to by Cytryn-Silverman, which she also seems to call simply el-Kharruba<sup>888</sup>. I have the

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<sup>881</sup> See s.v. el-Kharruba.

<sup>882</sup> Description, 1826, Atlas, pl. 2.32 and 1830, XVIII, p. 173; cf. Fontaine, 1955, p. 94.

<sup>883</sup> Guérin, 1869, I 2, p. 236-237; cf. Wehr, 1979, p. 63, s.v. burj, 'tower, castle'.

<sup>884</sup> Musil, 1907, II 1, p. 228.

<sup>885</sup> Paoletti, 1903, p. 109. For the Sawarka Beduin, cf. de Jong, 2000, p. 7 and the map p. 656

<sup>886</sup> Clédat, 1923b, p. 152.157.

<sup>887</sup> Abel, 1940, p. 227.

<sup>888</sup> Cytryn-Silverman, 2001, the maps p. 32.35.36 and p. 19.22.

### 3. The area between Raphia and Rinokoloura

impression that this el-Kharruba corresponds with site A289 where Oren excavated the New Kingdom fortress and that he considered the site of the medieval el-Kharruba, although he does not refer explicitly to any Islamic archaeological remains at the spot<sup>889</sup>. There is little doubt that the medieval road station el-Kharruba was indeed situated in this area; Clédat locates it in Khirbet el-Burdj, while Oren seems to place it at site A289. As long as the Israeli survey has not been fully published, I am inclined to follow Clédat and to consider Khirbet el-Burdj with the remains of the tower as the site of the medieval el-Kharruba, especially since one of the sources situated the latter at some 2,5 km from the Mediterranean.

(Umm) el-Kharruba / Khirbet el-Burdj is situated along the road between Rafah and el-Arish, at some 30-32 km west of Rafah<sup>890</sup>, some 15 km west of Sheikh Zuweid<sup>891</sup>, some 10 km southwest of Tell el-Qabr<sup>892</sup> and some 16 km northeast of el-Arish<sup>893</sup>.

A shallow inlet at the Mediterranean coast, a few kilometres to the north, was an anchorage used about 1980 by fishing boats in search of shelter<sup>894</sup>.

#### Archaeological finds

Figueras stresses that no traces of a Roman or Byzantine settlement have been found during the Israeli survey<sup>895</sup>, so the few archaeological remains mentioned at Khirbet el-Burdj probably belong to the medieval road station el-Kharruba.

At site A289, apparently somewhat north of (Umm) el-Kharruba, a New Kingdom fortress (50 x 50 m) has been excavated by the Israeli survey in 1979-1982.

It was in use from the 13th till the early or mid 12th century BC during the 19th-20th

<sup>889</sup> Cf. Oren, 1982a, p. 12: 'sur le site de Harroubah, l'ancien Caroubier des Croisés, tout près d'Harrouvit', while the map of Oren, 1987a, p. 79 seems to point to a position north of the main road and therefore north of Umm el-Kharruba.

<sup>890</sup> According to Guérin, 1869, I 2, p. 237 Khirbet el-Burdj is situated at 14 miles (ca. 21 km) southwest of Rafah, but this figure is unacceptably low.

<sup>891</sup> The distances differ: ca. 11 km (Paoletti, 1903, p. 109 and map: 7 miles); 15 km (Abel, 1940, p. 227: 5 plus 10 km); 26 km (de Jong, 2000, p. 655; the map on p. 654, however, shows some 15 km).

<sup>892</sup> Cf. Abel, 1940, p. 227.

<sup>893</sup> The distances differ: ca. 12 km (Oren, 1987a, p. 84 and 1993a, p. 1390; followed by Abd el-Maksoud, 1998b, p. 27); 14 km (de Jong, 2000, p. 655; the map on p. 654, however, only has some 10 km); ca. 15 km (Baumgarten, 1990, map); ca. 16 km (Paoletti, 1903, p. 109 and map: 10 miles); 18 km (Mouton, 2000, p. 172, n. 18).

<sup>894</sup> Cf. Oren, 1981a, p. 27 (with the map p. 26, fig. 2) ('Haruvit anchorage') and 1987a, p. 114, n. 8 ('Haruba anchorage').

<sup>895</sup> Figueras, 2000, p. 172.

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dynasties. There are indications for two construction phases. Some Egyptian pottery was stamped with the cartouche of Sethos II (1214-1204 BC). Material of the 18th dynasty predating the construction of the fortress apparently belonged to a small settlement. After the destruction of the fortress the place was probably still inhabited for a while in the 11th or early 10th century BC<sup>896</sup>.

Site A345, some 400 m north of the fortress and near the coastline of the Mediterranean, yielded a New Kingdom administrative centre of the 18th dynasty dated to the 14th century BC, which was excavated in 1980-1982. It also contained magazines and an industrial quarter with some potter's kilns. There were two construction phases, the second one apparently representing a reorganization of the site on a much grander scale<sup>897</sup>.

In the same area, A343 is an encampment site with a group of stone installations for baking and cooking, and quantities of Egyptian, Canaanite and Cypriote pottery. One of the Egyptian vessels was a locally produced 'beer bottle' that was stamped with a cartouche of Sethos I (1306-1290 BC) of the 19th dynasty<sup>898</sup>. Also other, minor New Kingdom sites were found in the area.

At site A259 in the vicinity of el-Kharruba a Nabataean caravan serai (10 x 20 m<sup>2</sup>) was excavated, but further information is lacking<sup>899</sup>.

#### Identifications

The ancient place Bethaphou was situated some 14 miles (ca. 21 km) from Raphia. According to Guérin the place corresponded with Khirbet el-Burdj, which he also located at 14 miles from Rafah; since the actual distance between Khirbet el-

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<sup>896</sup> For site A289, cf. Goldwasser, 1980, p. 34; Oren, 1980a, p. 26-31 (Hebrew); Oren, 1982a, p. 1.12-13; Oren, 1984b, p. 47-48; Oren, 1985a, p. 224-225; Oren, 1987a, p. 84.87-97.108.110-111.115; Oren, 1989b, p. 12-13 (Hebrew); Oren, 1987b, p. 638-639 (Hebrew); Oren, 1993a, p. 1390; see also Abd el-Maksoud, 1998a, p. 64; Abd el-Maksoud, 1998b, p. 27.32.110.111.113 (who p. 111, n. 69 incorrectly numbers the site as 'H.289'); Figueras, 2000, p. 95.172.195; Morris, 2005, p. 511-514.742-743.

<sup>897</sup> For site A345, cf. Oren, 1980a, p. 32-33 (Hebrew); Oren, 1982a, p. 13; Oren, 1987a, p. 80.84.97-107.108.110.115; Oren, 1987b, p. 638-641 (Hebrew); Oren, 1993, p. 1390-1391; see also Abd el-Maksoud, 1998b, p. 27.122; Morris, 2005, p. 299-322.

<sup>898</sup> For site A343, cf. Oren, 1987a, p. 84-87; Morris, 2005, p. 512, n. 439.

<sup>899</sup> Cf. Oren, 1993a, p. 1396; Figueras, 2000, p. 195 (who incorrectly numbers the site as 'R259').

### 3. *The area between Raphia and Rinokoloura*

Burdj and Rafah is rather 30 km and since the former yielded no Roman remains, this identification is no longer valid<sup>900</sup>.

Kitchen tentatively identifies the New Kingdom sites near el-Kharruba with H-b-r-t, the first place west of Raphia mentioned in P.Anastasi, but this remains a mere hypothesis that does not take into account the presence of the New Kingdom settlement at Tell Temilat<sup>901</sup>.

#### **Homonyms**

In the northwestern Sinai the place Bir el-Burdj and the site Tell el-Burdj are known<sup>902</sup>. In Palestine also other places with the name (Khirbet) el-Burdj occur<sup>903</sup>.

#### **HARUVIT**

The Israeli settlement ('moshav') Haruvit, created in 1975 and dismantled in 1983, is situated some 16 km northeast of el-Arish. It was named after the nearby place (Umm) el-Kharruba<sup>904</sup>. It was the basis for the team of Eliezer Oren excavating in the area<sup>905</sup>.

The Beersheba survey discovered a lot of archaeological sites in the region of Haruvit all the way up to site A306, some 14 km more to the east, which in their reports - for convenience's sake, but somewhat inaccurately - are often referred to as being situated in 'Haruvit' or in 'Haruba'.

#### **THE A-SITES OF THE ISRAELI SURVEY NORTHEAST OF EL-ARISH**

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<sup>900</sup> Guérin, 1869, I 2, p. 230.237; cf. Tsafirir, 1994, p. 92; rejected by Abel, 1940, p. 227, n. 4. See s.v. Bethaphou.

<sup>901</sup> P.Anastasi I, 27, 7 (12); cf. Kitchen, 1993, Notes, I, p. 16.

<sup>902</sup> See s.v. Bir el-Burdj and Tell el-Burdj.

<sup>903</sup> Cf. Tsafirir, 1994, p. 93.

<sup>904</sup> Cf. Figueras, 2000, p. 172.195. See s.v. (Khirbet Umm) el-Kharruba.

<sup>905</sup> Cf. Oren, 1987a, p. 115, n. 13.



### *3. The area between Raphia and Rinokoloura*

The Israeli North Sinai Expedition inventoried a lot of archaeological sites in the region between Sheikh Zuweid and el-Arish that can be dated to the earliest periods and that are therefore not discussed here in detail.

The survey identified Palaeolithic<sup>906</sup>, Chalcolithic (ca. 4500-3300 BC)<sup>907</sup>, Early Bronze Age I-II / Late Predynastic / Early Archaic (ca. 3300-2700 BC)<sup>908</sup> and Middle Bronze Age I (ca. 2250-2150 BC)<sup>909</sup> sites in the area.

#### **LAHAEMMET**

In 1863 Sepp mentions the well Lahaemmet, where some palm trees grow, at four hours (ca. 17 km?) southwest of Sheikh Zuweid and at three hours (ca. 13 km?) northwest of el-Arish<sup>910</sup>. Since it is the only place that Sepp mentions between Sheikh Zuweid and el-Arish, one wonders whether perhaps actually el-Kharruba is referred to.

#### **EL-RISAH**

el-Risah lies on the road between Rafah and el-Arish, some 10 km southwest of (Umm) el-Kharruba and some 4 km northeast of el-Arish<sup>911</sup>.

#### **SIBIL AIN**

The well Sibil Ain lies on the road between Rafah and el-Arish, an hour (sc. some 4 km?) northeast of el-Arish<sup>912</sup>.

#### **EL-BARRA**

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<sup>906</sup> Cf. Oren, 1981a, p. 25-27 (especially sites A306 and A302).

<sup>907</sup> Cf. Oren, 1981a, p. 25-44 (sites A295, A300, A304, A305 and especially A301).

<sup>908</sup> Cf. Oren, 1989a, p. 389-405, with the map on p. 391.

<sup>909</sup> Cf. Oren, 1990, p. 6-22 (Hebrew) and p. 101\* (English summary), with the map on p. 6.

<sup>910</sup> Cf. Sepp, 1863, II, p. 532.

<sup>911</sup> de Jong, 2000, p. 655; the map on p. 664, however, only shows some 5 km between el-Kharruba and el-Risah.

<sup>912</sup> van Senden, 1851, I, p. 80-81.

### *3. The area between Raphia and Rinokoloura*

In 1898 Musil described el-Barra as the successively sandy and rocky area between Khirbet Umm el-Kharruba and the Wadi el-Arish. According to Abel at some spots in this area agriculture was sometimes possible<sup>913</sup>.

#### **KHIRBET EL-FATH**

In 1898 Khirbet ('ruin') el-Fath was pointed out to Musil, south of the road, somewhat east of the Wadi el-Arish, but he did not visit the site himself<sup>914</sup>.

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<sup>913</sup> Cf. Musil, 1907, II 1, p. 228; Abel, 1939, p. 209-210.

<sup>914</sup> Musil, 1907, II 1, p. 228.

## 4. Rinokoloura

### *Summary*

*Late and Graeco-Roman periods*

**Rinokoloura - Phakidia**

**Laura - Ariza**

*Arab and modern periods*

**el-Arish**

### *Summary*

At present el-Arish is the major Egyptian centre in the northeastern Sinai. It lies at the Mediterranean, some 190 km east of the Suez Canal and some 40 km west of the border with Israel. There is little doubt that the city of Rinokoloura, known in Greek, Latin and Coptic sources possibly from the late 4th century BC on, was located near el-Arish. We do not know its Syrian or Egyptian name, if this ever existed. Diodoros, possibly quoting Hekataios, tells a highly imaginative story how an Ethiopian king Aktisanes, having conquered Egypt on king Amasis, had criminals cut off their nose and founded for them a city at the edge of the desert near the border of Egypt and Syria, which was called Rinokoloura after this punishment. Seneca offers a more plausible explanation that a Persian king cut off the noses of a tribe in Syria, which led to the name Rinokoloura. If the etymology of the name is indeed connected with 'cutting off noses' - and for the moment we do not have a better proposal -, the actions in Syria of the Persian kings Artaxerxes II or Artaxerxes III in the 4th century BC may indeed have led to the creation of the name, if not of the place itself.

From about 301 to 199/198 BC Rinokoloura was part of the Ptolemaic empire, together with the rest of Palestine. In 168 BC it was probably situated at the Egyptian side of the border, but the situation changed and at the latest in 79 BC it was part of the Judaeian kingdom of Alexandros Iannaios. Until the middle of the 1st century AD Rinokoloura was considered part of Syria, but soon afterwards an administrative change must have taken place and in 70 AD Rinokoloura belonged again to Egypt, a situation that continued till the Arab period.

Not much is known about the internal organisation of the city. Probably in the 1st century BC Rinokoloura lay on the Nabataean trade road to the Mediterranean and it may have possessed a harbour. In the 4th century AD the hamlet Phakidia probably lay in the immediate neighbourhood of the city. At least from 339 till 615 AD

#### 4. Rinokoloura

Rinokoloura had its own bishop. Military presence in Rinokoloura is sure from the 2nd till the 6th century AD, but the camp of Laura is probably not to be looked for in this region. At the time of the Arab invasion of 639 AD the place was apparently no longer defended.

In the 7th century AD the name Rinokoloura disappears. A new Arab toponym el-Arish, meaning 'the hut', appears in the 9th century AD and was apparently used retroactively to indicate the old city of Rinokoloura during the Arab conquest. Although the oldest archaeological remains in the el-Arish area do not antedate the 2nd century BC, it is most likely that el-Arish was built near Rinokoloura. Some Arab stories link el-Arish with a biblical and pharaonic past, but they are of little historical value. The place was well-known as a road station from the 9th till the 19th century AD - although its importance varied in time - and in our days it is a rather large town.

#### *Late and Graeco-Roman periods*

### **RINOKOLOURA**

Modern name: el-Arish

#### **Topographical situation**

The town of Rinokoloura, near the Mediterranean (**15**), is attested in the sources from the 4th century BC till the 7th century AD. Iosephos (**14**) places Rinokoloura at a distance of one day marching east of Ostrakine and of one day marching west of Raphia. This is compatible with the location of Rinokoloura given by Ptolemaios (**18**) at  $64^{\circ} 40'$  -  $31^{\circ} 10'$ . Rinokoloura so lies 25' east of Ostrakine, at a distance of about 167 stadia (ca. 31 km), and 20' west of Raphia, at a distance of about 133 stadia (ca. 25 km). These absolute distances are a bit too low - among other things because of Ptolemaios' assumption of too small a value for the length of a degree -, but apparently he places Rinokoloura closer to Raphia than to Ostrakine, which is surprising.

Three sources from the 4th century AD give distances between Rinokoloura and Ostrakine, the first city west of Rinokoloura. The *Itinerarium provinciarum Antonini Augusti* (**32**) and P.Ryl. IV, 627 (**33**) give 24 miles (ca. 36 km), which is

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quite consistent with the distance of 23 miles (ca. 34,5 km) in the *Tabula Peutingeriana* (50).

The sources are less accurate about the distances toward the east. The *Itinerarium provinciarum Antonini Augusti* (32) mentions Raphia at 22 miles (ca. 33 km), which again places Rinokoloura closer to Raphia than to Ostrakine. Since the distance between el-Arish, the traditional setting of Rinokoloura, and Rafah is about 46 km<sup>915</sup>, some scholars consider the distance of 22 miles a mistake for 32 miles (ca. 48 km), but also other figures between 30 and 34 have been suggested<sup>916</sup>. In P.Ryl. IV, 627 (33) the distances from Rinokoloura via Boutaphios to Raphia - a one-day's journey - are partially lost, but perhaps a distance of some 19 miles (ca. 28,5 km) to Boutaphios and of 32 miles (ca. 48 km) to Raphia can be restored. On the *Tabula Peutingeriana* (50) Raphia and Gaza are not mentioned and the distance of 15 miles (ca. 22,5 km) between Rinokoloura and Askalon is unacceptable.

The 'viculus' or hamlet Phakidia (46), which is accounted for from the 4th till the 7th century AD, probably belonged to the city of Rinokoloura, but we have no indications about its exact position<sup>917</sup>.

Diodoros (5), probably quoting Hekataios of Abdera (1), gives a fairly detailed description of the living conditions in Rinokoloura, and there are no reasons to doubt his words<sup>918</sup>. The city lies not far from the coast, in a very unfriendly environment: the region is full of salt and the little water in the pits within the city walls is bad and tastes bitter. Despite the poor natural conditions the people manage to keep alive by catching birds, which is described in detail: they cut reeds in a neighbouring region, cleave them and make long nets out of them, with which they catch large groups of quails flying in from overseas.

Near Rinokoloura a wadi ran, as it is clear from the story of Hesychios of Jerusalem (76). The Septuaginta (4) translates 'the brook of Egypt', which indicates the southern border of Israel, in one instance as Rinokoloura, and perhaps they were

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<sup>915</sup> See s.v. el-Arish.

<sup>916</sup> Guérin, 1869, I 2, p. 247, Abel, 1939, p. 547 and 1940, p. 228 and Timm, 1984, I, p. 152, n. 13 think that 32 (Roman) miles (ca. 48 km) is to be read; Miller, 1916, col. 813 suggests 34 (Roman) miles (ca. 51 km); also Ball, 1942, p. 148-149 and Alt, 1954, p. 163, n. 29 consider the figure of 22 miles an error of the *Itinerarium*. Medieval itineraries often give a distance of some 48 km between el-Arish and Rafah (see s.v. el-Arish).

<sup>917</sup> See s.v. Phakidia.

<sup>918</sup> Clédat, 1923b, p. 142 (followed by Abel, 1940, p. 229; Ibrahim, 1992, p. 750; Carrez-Maratray, 1998, p. 91-92) unnecessarily thinks that Diodoros exaggerates.

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also aware of the presence of such a 'brook' near the latter city; in general, however, one gets the impression that the link between Rinokoloura and the 'brook of Egypt' is rather due to the contemporary political border between Egypt and Syria, which had shifted down more to the south since the 8th century AD<sup>919</sup>.

According to Diodoros, probably again quoting Hekataios, there were no safe harbours between Paraitonion in Libye and Ioppe in Koile Syria except for Alexandria, because of dangerous sandbanks and shallow water along the shore<sup>920</sup>. This description fits the northern Sinai and indeed there are no clear indications that Rinokoloura possessed a real harbour, although it must always have been possible for shallow boats to approach the beach. Strabon (9) talks about perfumes being transported from Leuke Kome via Petra to Rinokoloura and so further on to other destinations. For some scholars this passage implies that Rinokoloura did have a harbour<sup>921</sup>, but it is just as well possible that the transport from Rinokoloura continued by land along the road to Pelousion or to Raphia.

Military presence in Rinokoloura is proven in ChLA X, 410 (20) (2nd century AD), ChLA XI, 479 (30) (3rd century AD), in the *Notitia dignitatum* (66) (5th century AD) and in P.Ness. III, 15 (96) (6th century AD), but the sources give no indications about the military accommodations in or near the city.

In the early 4th century AD the official Theophanes passed by Rinokoloura and P.Ryl. IV, 630\* (35) gives an account of the bread, fruit, vegetables, eggs, wine and oil that he bought there. It is clear that the rigorous conditions of the 4th century BC, as described by Diodoros (5), have been changed for the better<sup>922</sup>.

Some ten bishops of Rinokoloura - often relatives of each other - are known by name from 339 till 615 AD. Sozomenos (77), talking about the 4th century AD, mentions a church and an episcopal dwelling, probably in the neighbourhood of the church, where apparently the whole clergy of the city lived and ate together. A sacristy, where the sacred vessels are kept, is mentioned by Ioannes Rufus (97) for the 5th century AD, and might be part of the same church.

Sozomenos (77) considers Rinokoloura a centre of scholarship and speaks about a 'meditation school' (φροντιστήριον) in the desert north of the city. The

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<sup>919</sup> See also s.v. Brook of Egypt.

<sup>920</sup> Diodoros, 1, 31, 2-5 (= Hekataios of Abdera, FGrHist no. 264, F 25).

<sup>921</sup> Cf. Sepp, 1863, II, p. 532; Clédat, 1923b, p. 143; Oren, 1982a, p. 23.26; Timm, 1984, I, p. 147; Wenning, 1987, p. 182.185; TAVO BV 21, 1989; Ibrahim, 1992, p. 759; Figueras, 2000, p. 240.

<sup>922</sup> Figueras, 2000, p. 79 tentatively suggests that Rinokoloura also produced dates, but this is not confirmed by any source; dates, however, are known for el-Arish in the 10th century AD.

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setting, however, is rather odd, since one does not expect a deserted piece of land between the city and the shore of the Mediterranean Sea, which lies somewhat north of the city.

#### **Administrative situation**

In most sources Rinokoloura is situated near the border between Egypt on the one hand and Koile Syria (3)<sup>923</sup>, Syria (5, 24-25, 28), Judaea (18) or Palestine (40, 41, 53, 62, 75, 79, 102) on the other<sup>924</sup>.

The city apparently did not always belong to the same country, a process that reflects the military activities in the region. At first sight the founding history in Hekataios (1) / Diodoros (5) could imply an Egyptian origin for the city, but some improbabilities in the story and a confrontation with the story in Seneca (11) might suggest that the city was founded in Syria in the 4th century BC by a Persian king. Also for Eratosthenes (2) the place apparently belonged to Koile Syria. The whole region was part of the Ptolemaic empire from about 301 BC throughout the whole 3rd century BC. Probably somewhere in this period Rinokoloura became Egyptian *stricto sensu* and no longer Syrian. Anyway, in 217 BC Polybios (3) called Raphia the first city of Koile Syria, leaving Rinokoloura at the Egyptian side of the border. Although the remainder of Syria had been lost to the Seleucids about 199/198 BC, it is not impossible that the Egyptian border then lay in the neighbourhood of Rinokoloura, since in 168 BC - according to Livius (6) - an Egyptian embassy met Antiochos IV in that place. Also the fact that the Septuaginta (4) in one instance renders the 'brook of Egypt', which indicates the biblical border between Palestine and Egypt, as 'Rinokoloura', might suggest a location near that border.

It is not clear whether in the later 2nd century BC Rinokoloura belonged to the Ptolemaic or to the Seleucid empire. Anyway, about 79 BC it was the most southern city of the Judaeen kingdom of Alexandros Iannaios (15)<sup>925</sup>. Further information

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<sup>923</sup> See also the account of Livius, 45, 11, 9 (cf. 6), where Antiochos IV went to Koile Syria before arriving in Rinokoloura. For the geographical meaning of Koile Syria through the centuries, cf. Bickerman, 1947, p. 256-268.

<sup>924</sup> Pape, 1911, p. 1308 and Beer, Georg, s.v. Rinocolura, Rinocorura, in RE, I A 1, 1914, col. 841 state that Rinokoloura sometimes did not belong to any of the two countries at both sides of the border, but this does not make sense.

<sup>925</sup> Alexandros Iannaios maybe conquered the city together with Raphia and Gaza in 102-101 BC (cf. Iosephos, *Bellum Iudaicum*, 1, 4, 2 (87); *Antiquitates Iudaicae*, 13, 13, 3 (357-358)); cf. Abel, 1938, II, p. 138 and 1952, II, p. 230; Möller, 1976, p. 160.

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about Rinokoloura in the 1st century BC is lacking<sup>926</sup>. In the early 1st century AD Strabon considered the whole coastal region from Koile Syria to Pelousion as part of Phoenicia (8) and he explicitly referred to 'Rinokoloura, which is in Phoenicia near Egypt' (9); because, however, the name Phoenicia is usually confined to the coastal region north of Palestine, Strabon might have followed here a rather deviant geographical point of view that does not necessarily reflect the real political situation. For Seneca (11) Rinokoloura was a Syrian town, although it is not impossible that he only refers to the founding of the city.

In 70 AD - on the journey of Titus from Alexandria to Jerusalem - Raphia is called the first city in Syria, which implies that Rinokoloura again belonged to Egypt. Since Iosephos (14) wrote his work ca. 73-79 AD and therefore reflected the actual situation, the seventies might be considered a *terminus ante quem* for an administrative reorganisation, which possibly took place during the reign of Nero or Vespasianus and maybe was linked with the 'bellum Iudaicum' of 66-73 AD<sup>927</sup>.

In 77 AD Plinius (12) places Rinokoloura in Idumaea and Palestine, but as so often he might reflect a superseded situation. Also P.Oxy. XI, 1380 (17) mentions Rinokoloura among Syrian towns. The literary papyrus is written under Traianus or Hadrianus, but the invocation itself is possibly composed in the 1st century AD; the geographical situation of Rinokoloura might therefore give 70 AD as the *terminus ante quem* for the composition of the text or at least for the date of one of its sources<sup>928</sup>. Anyway, I am inclined to think that both Plinius and the papyrus reflect the situation before the reorganisation. All later sources situate the city inside Egypt<sup>929</sup>, although according to Hieronymus (52) and Kyrillos (78) the people of Rinokoloura in the 5th century AD still spoke Syrian, and contacts with the Palestinian city of Nessana (96) indicate that the city was still partly oriented towards its eastern neighbours.

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<sup>926</sup> Abel, 1939, p. 546 thinks that Rinokoloura in 57-55 BC belonged to Egypt and not to Syria because the place is not mentioned in the list of the towns restored by Gabinius (cf. Iosephos, *Bellum Iudaicum* 1, 8, 4 (165-166) and *Antiquitates Iudaicae*, 14, 5, 3 (87-88)), but since this list is not an exhaustive description of the Syrian territory, nothing can be stated about the position of Rinokoloura.

<sup>927</sup> In this period also the beginning of the Roman road network in Palestine can be placed; cf. Roll, I., Roman roads, in Tsafirir, 1994, p. 21. Against Lesquier, 1918, p. 385 (and Abel, 1939, p. 547, n. 1), who places the reorganisation between Plinius and Ptolemaios and looks for a link with the formation of the province of Arabia in 106 AD.

<sup>928</sup> Cf. already Grenfell, P.Oxy. XI, 1915, p. 191.213. Bricault, 1995 (draft), p. 15-16 gives 77 AD as *terminus ante quem* for the document and suggests a composition date ca. 73-74 AD.

<sup>929</sup> Cf. Lesquier, 1918, p. 385; Maspero, 1912, p. 8-9.



#### 4. Rinokoloura

Ptolemaios (18) states that Rinokoloura belonged to the Kasiotis, a region named after mount Kasion, which is situated half way between Pelousion and Rinokoloura. The name Kasiotis probably does not reflect an administrative unit, but is most likely only a geographical setting<sup>930</sup>. It is not known if or how Rinokoloura was incorporated in the system of Egyptian nomes in the Ptolemaic and early Roman periods. Only for the Byzantine period some information is available. Ammianus Marcellinus (47) places Rinokoloura in the late 4th century AD in the province of Augustamnica and so does probably the *Notitia dignitatum* (66). In the 6th century AD Hierokles (99) and Georgios of Cyprus (105) - followed by the more recent *Notitia Alexandrina* (167-169) - situate the city in Augustamnica I. Because Hierokles (99) places Rinokoloura on top of the list of toponyms of that province, Delmaire thinks that the city was the capital of the Augustamnica I at that moment, but Hierokles' list clearly follows a geographical, and not an 'administrative' order<sup>931</sup>.

Already in 79 BC Rinokoloura was considered a city (πόλις) (15), while also Diodoros' mythical story tells about the foundation of a city (5)<sup>932</sup>. In the Roman and Byzantine periods Rinokoloura is called πόλις (10, 19, 31, 40, 67, 75-79, 100), 'oppidum' (12, 53), 'civitas' (45, 61, 62, 83, 144, 160, 161), and 'urbs' (46), and in the only official document mentioning Rinokoloura the expression ἡ Ῥινοκοροουριτῶν (πόλις), 'the city of the Rinokorouritai', is used (96).

#### Identifications

There is little discussion that Rinokoloura was situated near the modern town of el-Arish<sup>933</sup>.

In 1740 Le Quien, discussing the bishops of the Arab city of el-Farama, identified that place with Rinokoloura<sup>934</sup>. He was perhaps misled by an author as Jacques de Vitry, who ca. 1220-1223 AD gave a very mixed-up description of the

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<sup>930</sup> Against Kees, Hermann, s.v. Σιρβωνίς λιμνη, in RE, III A 1, 1927, col. 287.

<sup>931</sup> Delmaire, 1988, p. 234; refuted by Évieux, 1995, p. 40-41 and n. 48.

<sup>932</sup> Jones, 1971, p. 342-343 (cf. Lallemand, 1964, p. 101.106 and Martin, 1996, p. 65, n. 149 and p. 82-83), however, thinks that the station Rinokoloura became a city in the late 3rd century AD due to a reorganization of the region, but he gives no arguments for this statement, nor does he explain why he considers the place described in Ammianus Marcellinus, 22, 16, 3 (47) a 'municipium'.

<sup>933</sup> See s.v. el-Arish.

<sup>934</sup> Le Quien, 1740, II, col. 541-544; followed by Gams, 1873, p. 460-461; Fedalto, 1988, p. 607-608; cf. Tonneau, 1926, p. 596, n. 1.

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cities of el-Farama, el-Arish and Bilbeis, the latter being incorrectly identified with Pelousion<sup>935</sup>.

On the map of Sicard of 1722, followed by a Greek-Arab map of that same year, the name Ostrakine is linked with el-Arish and the name Rinokoloura with el-Za'aqa<sup>936</sup>. The latter place is known in Arab authors from the 13th century AD on and lies some 15 km south of Rafah, in the neighbourhood of Sheikh Zuweid. Because from the time of the Mamelukes on the Egyptian border lay between el-Za'aqa and Rafah, Sicard might have linked the border towns Rinokoloura and el-Za'aqa<sup>937</sup>. The ancient geographical information about Rinokoloura, however, points to a location far more west than el-Za'aqa, as already noticed by d'Anville. Probably on the basis of this map, however, Sauget accepts the identification of Rinokoloura with the Arab el-Za'aqa<sup>938</sup>.

An identification of Rinokoloura with any of the wells or stations on the Karnak relief of Sethos I, in P.Anastasi or in P.Harris<sup>939</sup> is not supported by any real evidence.

On the 10th century BC geographical list of Sheshonq I in Karnak the five last (?) toponyms mentioned are Šrdd (unidentified), Rph (Raphia), Rb(w)n (Laban),

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<sup>935</sup> Jacques de Vitry, *Historia orientalis* (mentioned in Cytryn-Silverman, 2001, p. 11, n. 57). See s.v. el-Arish.

<sup>936</sup> Sicard, 1982 [= 1722], II, p. 219 and III, p. 70-71.180; rejected by d'Anville, 1766, p. 103; cf. Munier, 1943, p. 58.60; Honigmann, 1961, p. 182. See also s.v. Ostrakine, s.v. el-Arish and s.v. el-Za'aqa.

<sup>937</sup> A similar argumentation can explain the position of Rinokoloura north-east of el-Za'aqa on the old map of Pococke, 1746 (?) in Tzachou-Alexandri, 1995, p. 16.

<sup>938</sup> Sauget, Joseph-Marie, s.v. Melas, in BS, IX, 1967, col. 289, followed by Lukaszewicz, 1978, p. 361 and Fedalto, 1988, p. 607.

<sup>939</sup> Many different identifications have been proposed:

P.Anastasi I, 27, 6 (9): Ib-s-q-b (cf. Brugsch in Hommel, 1926, p. 964, n. 3);

Karnak, 1986, IV, pl. 4, 14-15 (P-R) (with the obsolete reading Hrbt) and P.Anastasi I, 27, 7 (12): (r?) H-b-r-t (cf. Alt, 1914, p. 65, n. 2 and 1926, p. 240, n. 2; Dalman, 1924, p. 48);

Karnak, 1986, IV, p. 21-22 (E): P3 mktr n (Mn-m3<sup>c</sup>.t-R<sup>c</sup>) ('The migdol of Men-ma'at-Ra') or pl. 6, 39 (G): W3dy.t n (Sty-mry-n-Pth) ('W3dy.t of Sethos Mer-n-Ptah') (cf. Clédat, 1923a, p. 70) [completely unacceptable and Clédat himself afterwards changed his mind];

Karnak, 1986, IV, pl. 4, 17-18 (O-N): T3 hnm.t ndm ('The well (called) Sweet') - T3 hnm.t (Mn-m3<sup>c</sup>.t-R<sup>c</sup>) '3 nht.w ('The well (called) Men-ma'at-Ra, great of victories') [often incorrectly considered as two different wells] - P.Anastasi I, 27, 6 (10): 'y-n-n ('The two wells') [the identification with the two previous Karnak toponyms is not supported by any evidence] - P.Harris I, 77, 7: 'yn [usually, but not decisively identified with the previous toponym in P.Anastasi] (cf. Clédat, 1923b, p. 141-142.156; Gauthier, 1927, IV, p. 201-202; Grandet, 1994, I, p. 338 and II, p. 254);

Karnak, 1986, IV, pl. 4, 17-18 (S-T): T3 hnm.t (Mn-m3<sup>c</sup>.t-R<sup>c</sup>) ('The well (of) Men-ma'at-Ra') and N-h-s n p3 sr ('N-h-s of the Prince') (cf. Kitchen, 1993, Notes, I, p. 16);

cf. also Figueras, 1988, p. 55 (without a specific identification with one of the stations on the Karnak relief).

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ʿngrn (unidentified) and H3m (unidentified)<sup>940</sup>. Schmitt locates ʿngrn in the area of Gaza and Raphia, sees a certain similarity with the name Rinokoloura and thinks that it fits the position of el-Arish, although he stresses that there are no archaeological remains to strengthen his suggestion<sup>941</sup>. The etymological interpretation, however, is not evident and the hypothesis has therefore little to recommend it.

Rinokoloura has sometimes been identified with the city of Arza, situated next to the 'brook of Egypt' and plundered by the Assyrians in 679/678 BC, but since this 'brook' most likely is identical with the Nahal Besor in Palestine, an identification with Rinokoloura is impossible<sup>942</sup>.

Herodotos mentions the city of Ienysos between lake Serbonis and Kadytis (Gaza). It is not impossible that Ienysos is indeed the predecessor of Rinokoloura, but a positive argument for this identification is lacking<sup>943</sup>.

In the so-called Raphia decree of 217 BC the Egyptian border is situated east of the villages Bytl and P3-s3-nfr. Discussing the same events, Polybios (3) considers Rinokoloura the last city before Koile Syria. It has been suggested therefore that Rinokoloura could be identical with one of these two villages<sup>944</sup>, but there are few arguments to support such an identification.

In 610 AD the army of Bonosos went from 'the house of Ptolemais (?)', which perhaps has to be looked for in Syria, to Egypt. According to Ioannes of Nikiou he passed by the cities of 'Bikuran' and el-Farama (Pelousion) and arrived in Athribis. Zotenberg tentatively suggests an identification of Bikuran and Rinokoloura, but the context is too vague to be decisive<sup>945</sup>.

#### Orthographic variants

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<sup>940</sup> Karnak, 1954, III, pl. 6, 1a-5a. For ʿngrn, cf. Gauthier, 1925, I, p. 147 (ân paroun) and p. 150 (ângroun, ângloun); Simons, 1937, p. 92, n. 1 and p. 180.186; Helck, 1971, p. 244; Ahituv, 1984, p. 56 ('Ain-Goren, 'the spring of the threshing floor').

<sup>941</sup> Schmitt, 1989, p. 64-66 ('ʿngrn ist nahe genug an Rhinokoroura oder Rhinokoloura'); cf. TAVO Register, 1994, p. 129.1174 (to which TAVO B IV 1, 1993 can be added).

<sup>942</sup> See s.v. Arza.

<sup>943</sup> See s.v. Ienysos.

<sup>944</sup> Spiegelberg, 1925, p. 18; cf. Alt, 1926, p. 240, n. 2. See s.v. Bytl - P3-s3-nfr.

<sup>945</sup> Ioannes of Nikiou, *Chronicon*, 107, 34 (Ethiopian) (translated in Zotenberg, 1883, p. 545 (cf. n. 6) - 'Pikoûrân'); cf. Charles, 1916, p. 171.207 ('Bîkûran').

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Most Greek and Latin authors till the 1st century AD apparently gave the neuter and plural form Ῥινοκόλουρα, with a λ<sup>946</sup>; this spelling is corroborated by the form Ῥεινοκόρουλα in P.Oxy. XI, 1380 (17)<sup>947</sup>, but does no longer occur from the 2nd century AD on, not even as a variant. The Septuaginta (4) reads Ῥινοκόρουρα and from Iosephos (13-16) on this is the regular form, although often mixed up with Ῥινοκούρουρα. That Ῥινοκόρουρα was the 'official' form in the early 4th century AD is illustrated by P.Ryl. IV, 627 and 628 (33-34), where the draft read Ῥινοκόρωνα<sup>948</sup> and the fair copy Ῥινοκόρουρα. Vulgar speech (or bad memory) probably accounts for the form Νινοκο[ρ]εμε found in SB XXVI, 16607 (93)<sup>949</sup>.

While the neuter and plural form seems to be the more regular, the feminine and singular form is found as a variant from the earliest sources on and is certainly used in the *Vetus Latina* (29) and in later sources. From the 4th century AD on occasionally also other forms occur.

#### Etymology<sup>950</sup>

The name Rinokoloura, known in Greek, Latin and Coptic sources, has been explained already by the earliest classical authors as a compound of ῥίς ('nose') and κολούω ('cut short')<sup>951</sup> and has by modern scholars often been translated as such<sup>952</sup>.

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<sup>946</sup> Cf. Miller, 1916, col. 813. Timm, 1984, I, p. 147 thinks that the form Ῥινοκόλουρα is derived from the etymological explanation of the name by Diodoros (5), Strabon (8) and Seneca (11) and therefore is not authentic; the fact, however, that also Polybios (3), Livius (6), Plinius (12) and probably also P.Oxy. XI, 1380 (17) use that form, without any etymological connotation, makes me doubt Timm's point of view.

<sup>947</sup> I do not see any reason for the accentuation Ῥεινοκορούλα in Bricault, 1995 (draft), p. 41.

<sup>948</sup> This form Rinokorona corresponds closely with the Rinocoruna in the *Notitia dignitatum* (66); see also the variants Rinocouran (Augustinus (61) and <Ri>nicouronu (Guido (158)).

<sup>949</sup> The beginning 'Nino-' has a single parallel in the variant Νινοκόρουρα of the Septuaginta (4), although more variants of the name Rinokoloura beginning with 'Ni-' are known - Nirocorura (Cassiodorus (104)), <Ri>nicorura (Pseudo-Eucherius (130)), <Ri>nicouronu (Guido (158)). Cf. the Egyptian personal name Rnp.t-nfr.t rendered both as Rempnophris (Ῥεμπνωφρις) and Nempnophris (Νεμπνωφρις) (Quaegebeur, 1983, p. 70-71, n. 45).

<sup>950</sup> Müller, 1901, I 2, p. 683 mentions the rather odd explanation of Hitzig that the name Rinokoloura is not Greek and would mean 'aqua turbida cameli scabiosi' ('the turbulent water of a scabious camel'); the element 'aqua turbida' is apparently based upon Hieronymus' description of the 'brook of Egypt' (cf. also Beer, Georg, s.v. Rinocolura, Rinocorura, in RE, I A 1, 1914, col. 841), but further information is lacking. Hommel, 1926, p. 722, n. 1 looks for an etymology with the Hebrew (and Arab) words 'ranan' ('be jubilant') [rino-] and 'kinnôr' ('zither') [-koloura], to establish a link with Dionysos and its counterpart Linos ('aus Rhinos?') and so with Ienysos and Nysa, but all this is rather fantastic.

<sup>951</sup> Diodoros, 1, 60, 5 (5) (ἀποτεμών δ' αὐτῶν τοὺς μυκτῆρας); Strabon, 16, 2, 31 (8) (ἡκρωτηριασμένων τὰς ῥίνας - ἀποτέμων τὰς ῥίνας) [cf. *Chrestomathiae ex Strabonis Geographorum*, 16, 34 (10) (ῥινοτομοῦντες)]; Strabon is also partially quoted in Stephanos, s.v. Ῥινοκούρουρα (100) (cf. Herodianos, *De prosodia catholica*, 11 (19)); Seneca, *De ira*, 3, 20, 1 (11)

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Similar compounds are the adjective ῥινοκολοῦρος<sup>953</sup> and the substantive ῥινοκολούστης<sup>954</sup>. The verb \*ῥινοκολούω is not attested, while the expressions ῥινοτομέω and ῥινοκοπέω seem to be more common<sup>955</sup>.

As it is not possible for the moment to link the name Rinokoloura or one of its variants with a Syrian, an Egyptian or another name in the region<sup>956</sup> and as Seneca (11) relates a plausible context for the creation of the name in the 4th century BC, the Greek name Rinokoloura was perhaps due to Greek mercenaries in the area<sup>957</sup>.

In the 4th century AD Epiphanius (42) offered a different etymology, which however is not a real tradition, but only a sophisticated assumption in order to prove that Rinokoloura did not only form the border of the regions that Noe gave to his three sons (as told in Hippolytos (21-28)), but was actually the place where Noe cast the lots<sup>958</sup>. In fact Epiphanius used the Septuaginta translation (4) of the Hebrew 'Neel' or 'Nahal' ('brook') by Rinokoloura and the double meaning of that Hebrew root (both 'brook' and 'inheritance') to make a link with the division of the earth for the sons of Noe<sup>959</sup>. If he adds that the locals in his time still call Rinokoloura by the name of 'Neel', this cannot refer to the city of Rinokoloura itself, but only to a river, a brook in the neighbourhood - unless we consider also this saying to be the figment of Epiphanius' imagination<sup>960</sup>.

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(nares recidit) [cf. Maltby, 1991, p. 527]; cf. Klearchos, F 46 (in Athenaios, *Deipnosophistae*, 12, 524D) (ἡκρωτηρίαζον τὰς ῥίνας; no toponym mentioned).

<sup>952</sup> E.g. Guérin, 1869, I 2, p. 245: 'nez mutilés'; Pape, 1911, p. 1308: 'Stümmelneesen'; Basore, 1928, p. 307: 'Land-of-the-stump-nosed'; Jones, 1930, p. 279, n. 1: 'Docked-nose-ville'; Gulick, 1933, p. 364, n. a: 'Dock-Noses'; Oldfather, 1933, I, p. 209, n. 1: 'Nose-clipped'; Lloyd, 1988, III, p. 177: 'Cut-nose Town'. It has to be stressed that the element 'town' is not expressed in the name and is better left out of the translation.

<sup>953</sup> Example of a compound word containing a part of the body; mentioned in Erasistratos, quoted in Galenos, *Linguarum seu dictionum exoletarum Hippocratis explicatio* (Kühn, 1830, XIX, p. 142: 'mutilatis naribus').

<sup>954</sup> Nickname ('nose-clipper') of Herakles because he cut off the noses of the heralds of Orchomenos in order to insult them; mentioned in Pausanias, 9, 25, 4.

<sup>955</sup> Guérin, 1869, I 2, p. 246 thinks that also the form Rinokoroura / Rinokouroura has a similar origin and is derived from ῥίς and κείρω ('cut short'), but it seems more likely that all variants of the name, which is hard to pronounce correctly, are derived from one and the same original form.

<sup>956</sup> Cf. Clédat, 1921, p. 192-193.

<sup>957</sup> Cf. Abel, 1939, p. 538.

<sup>958</sup> For Timm, 1984, I, p. 152, n. 8 this story goes back on a Jewish tradition.

<sup>959</sup> Schematically: Rinokoloura (Septuaginta) = nahal / brook (*Isaias*) = nahal / inheritance (Hebrew language) = casting lots by Noe (Hippolytos) = place where Noe cast lots (Epiphanius). Also Hieronymus, *Commentarii in Hiezechielem*, 14, 48, 23-29 (57) notes explicitly the double meaning of 'nehela'.

<sup>960</sup> Against Gressmann, 1924, p. 244 and Abel, 1933, I, p. 301, who think that Nahal is the Hebrew name for Rinokoloura itself.

## Homonyms

In the 4th-3rd centuries BC Klearchos possibly talked about a toponym with a similar etymology as Rinokoloura, but the name itself is not preserved<sup>961</sup>.

About 600 AD Georgios of Cyprus knows another Ρινοκουρούρων in Mauretania I, but this reading is either corrected or considered an anticipation of the Egyptian Rinokoloura<sup>962</sup>.

## Analysis of the sources

*The foundation of Rinokoloura*  
*Rinokoloura in the Ptolemaic period*  
*Rinokoloura and the 'brook of Egypt'*  
*Rinokoloura in the Roman period*  
*Rinokoloura in the 4th century AD*  
*Rinokoloura and the language of Canaan*  
*Rinokoloura in the 5th-7th centuries AD*

### *The foundation of Rinokoloura*

The oldest report about Rinokoloura is found in Diodoros (5), who allegedly based the information in his first book upon the *Aegyptiaca* of Hekataios of Abdera (1), a work probably written in the late 4th century BC. The Ethiopian king Aktisanes conquered Egypt on king Amasis. Once in possession of the throne Aktisanes organised the internal affairs of Egypt and administered justice in a kindly manner. The king did not kill convicted criminals, but brought them together, had their nose cut off and created for them a city at the edge of the desert near the border of Egypt and Syria. This city was called Rinokoloura ('dock-noses'), reflecting the nature of their punishment. He wanted to remove the criminals from society and had them mutilated in order that they could be recognized if they reappeared into society. Interwoven with this story we get a fairly detailed description of the city and the region and of the way of life of its inhabitants<sup>963</sup>:

(4) ὅτε δὴ καὶ συνετέλεσεν ἴδιόν τι περὶ τοὺς ληστὰς, οὐτε θανατώσας τοὺς ἐνόχους οὐτε ὀλοσχερῶς ἀφείλς ἀτιμωρήτους· (5) συναγαγὼν γὰρ ἐξ ἀπάσης τῆς χώρας τοὺς ἐν

<sup>961</sup> See § Analysis of the sources (The foundation of Rinokoloura).

<sup>962</sup> Georgios of Cyprus, 669 (Honigmann, 1939a, p. 56); cf. Reland, 1714, p. 971; Gelzer, 1890, p. xxxi; Abel, 1939, p. 538.

<sup>963</sup> Diodoros, 1, 60, 4-10; Hekataios, FGrHist no. 264, F 25. Butler, 1978 [= 1902], p. 67-68, n. 3 incorrectly calls the king 'Artisanes'.

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ἐγκλήμασιν ὄντας κακουργίας, καὶ τὴν διάγνωσιν αὐτῶν δικαιοτάτην ποιησάμενος, ἤθροισεν ἅπαντας τοὺς καταδεδικασμένους, ἀποτεμῶν δ' αὐτῶν τοὺς μυκτῆρας κατώκισεν ἐν τοῖς ἐσχάτοις τῆς ἐρήμου, κτίσας πόλιν τὴν ἀπὸ τοῦ συμπτώματος τῶν οἰκητόρων Ρινοκόλουρα προσαγορευθεῖσαν. (6) αὕτη δὲ κειμένη πρὸς τοῖς μεθορίοις τῆς Αἰγύπτου καὶ Συρίας οὐ μακρὰν τοῦ παρήκοντος αἰγιαλοῦ πάντων σχεδὸν τῶν πρὸς ἀνθρωπίνην δίκαιαν ἀνηκόντων ἐστέρηται. (7) περιέχει μὲν γὰρ αὐτὴν χώρα πλήρης ἀλμυρίδος, ἐντὸς δὲ τοῦ τείχους ὀλίγον ἐστὶν ὕδωρ ἐν φρέασι, καὶ τοῦτο διεφθαρμένον καὶ παντελῶς τῇ γεύσει πικρὸν. (8) κατώκισε δ' αὐτοὺς εἰς ταύτην τὴν χώραν, ὅπως μὴτε τοὺς ἐξ ἀρχῆς ἐπιτηδευθέντας βίου διατηροῦντες λυμαίνωνται τοὺς μηδὲν ἀδικοῦντας, μὴτε κατὰ τὰς πρὸς τοὺς ἄλλους ἐπιμιξίας ἀγνοοῦμενοι λανθανῶσιν. (9) ἀλλ' ὅμως ἐκριφέντες εἰς χώραν ἔρημον καὶ πάντων σχεδὸν τῶν χρησίμων ἄπορον ἐπενόησαν βίον οἰκεῖον τῆς περὶ αὐτοὺς ἐνδείας, ἀναγκαζούσης τῆς φύσεως πρὸς τὴν ἀπορίαν πάντα μηχανᾶσθαι. (10) καλάμην γὰρ κείροντες ἐκ τῆς ὁμόρου χώρας, καὶ ταύτην σχίζοντες, λίνα παραμήκη κατεσκευάζον, ταῦτα δὲ παρὰ τὸν αἰγιαλὸν ἐπὶ πολλοὺς σταδίους ἰστάντες τὰς θήρας τῶν ὀρτύγων ἐποιοῦντο· φέρονται γὰρ οὗτοι κατ' ἀγέλας μείζονας ἐκ τοῦ πελάγους· οὓς θηρεύοντες ἤθροισον πλῆθος ἱκανὸν εἰς διατροφὴν ἑαυτοῖς.

'(4) For instance, (Aktisanes) had his own manner of dealing with thieves, neither putting to death such as were liable to that punishment, nor letting them go with no punishment at all; (5) for after he had gathered together out of the whole land those who were charged with some crime and had held a thoroughly fair examination of their cases, he took all who had been judged guilty, and, cutting off their noses, settled them in a colony on the edge of the desert, founding the city which was called Rinokoloura after the lot of its inhabitants. (6) This city, which lies on the border between Egypt and Syria not far from the sea-coast, is wanting in practically everything which is necessary for man's existence; (7) for it is surrounded by land which is full of brine, while within the walls there is but a small supply of water from wells, and this is impure and very bitter to the taste. (8) But he settled them in this country in order that, in case they continued to practise their original manner of life, they might not prey upon innocent people, and also that they might not pass unrecognized as they mingled with the rest of mankind. (9) And yet, despite the fact that they had been cast out into a desert country which lacked practically every useful thing, they contrived a way of living appropriate to the dearth about them, since nature forced them to devise every possible means to combat their destitution. (10) For instance, by cutting down reeds in the neighbourhood and splitting them, they made long nets, which they set up along the beach for a distance of many stadia and hunted quails; for these are driven in large coveys from the open sea, and in hunting them they caught a sufficient number to provide themselves with food.'

The text raises some major problems. According to Diodoros after Sesosis (Sesostris I - 1, 53-58) and an unnamed son (Amenemhat II?<sup>964</sup> - 1, 59) a lot of Egyptian kings did not do anything worth mentioning. Then came Amasis, who unjustly punished a lot of people, so that the Egyptians themselves helped the Ethiopian king Aktisanes to conquer Egypt (1, 60). Aktisanes' successor was Mendes or Marros, probably Amenemhat III<sup>965</sup> (1, 61). It is clear that the story of Amasis and Aktisanes does not fit into the Middle Kingdom, but it is not obvious where it does belong, as the identity of both Amasis and Aktisanes is problematic<sup>966</sup>. An identification of Amasis with the first king of the 18th dynasty<sup>967</sup> leaves us in a maze about Aktisanes unless we accept the (rather far-fetched) explanation that Aktisanes is to be identified with Amenhotep IV / Echnaton, who drove away the god of

<sup>964</sup> Cf. Burton, 1972, p. 179. Herodotos, 2, 111, 1 calls this king Pheron (sc. the title pr-'3 or 'pharaoh'). For Carrez-Maratray, 1998, p. 90 Sesostris II is meant.

<sup>965</sup> Cf. Burton, 1972, p. 181.

<sup>966</sup> Helck, Wolfgang, s.v. Aktisanes, in KP, I, 1964, col. 224 and Burton, 1972, p. 180 state that their identity can not be determined with any degree of certainty.

<sup>967</sup> Cf. Bertrac, 1993, p. 208, n. 4.

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Amasis<sup>968</sup>. Amasis, on the other hand, has also been identified with Echnaton, and Aktisanes with Haremheb<sup>969</sup>. Sometimes Aktisanes is identified with Pianchi, the Ethiopian king who invaded Egypt ca. 725 BC<sup>970</sup>, but also Shabaka, the first king of the Ethiopian 25th dynasty who ruled over the whole of Egypt, has been proposed<sup>971</sup>. In the first case maybe Osorkon VI could be meant with Amasis, in the second case Bokchoris, but neither suggestion is confirmed by any sources. One could think about Amasis of the 26th dynasty<sup>972</sup>, whose son Psammetichos III was beaten by the Persians in his very first year; this suggestion offers the interesting opportunity to link the story of Hekataios with that of Seneca (11) - discussed further on - where a Persian king in Syria punished a whole tribe by cutting of their noses, an action which led to the name Rinokoloura. An Ethiopian king, finally, with the name G3-ty-s-n (Ktsn) (?) possibly lived in Napata in Nubia ca. 323-305 BC (?); his name might reflect the Greek form Aktisanes<sup>973</sup>, but there are no further links whatsoever with Egypt or the northern Sinai in particular.

Neither the chronological framework nor the background of the founding report by Hekataios seems really acceptable. Cutting off noses and banishment are well-known punishments in Egyptian history, even in combination and even at the northeastern border of Egypt<sup>974</sup>, but founding a city to house criminals - apparently

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<sup>968</sup> Cf. Daressy, 1933, p. 188-189.

<sup>969</sup> Cf. Carrez-Maratray, 1998, p. 90-91 (who does not mention the account of Seneca). Both Aktisanes and Haremheb indeed imprisoned criminals at the Egyptian eastern border, but this is hardly sufficient to identify the two kings. The suggested phonetic link between the name Aktisanes and 3ḥt-Itm, the Egyptian name of the city of Tell el-Amarna, even enfeebles Carrez-Maratray's identification of Aktisanes and Haremheb, because there is no reason why the latter king should have been known under a name that is clearly linked with his opponent.

<sup>970</sup> Cf. Abel, 1939, p. 538, n. 3.

<sup>971</sup> Cf. Wiedemann, 1884, p. 582, n. 1; Pietschmann, Richard, s.v. Aktisanes, in RE, I 1, 1893, col. 1216; Oldfather, 1933, I, p. 207, n. 2; Burton, 1972, p. 180; Ibrahim, 1992, p. 745; Bertrac, 1993, p. 208, n. 4. A link can be made with Herodotos, 2, 137, who mentions that this king abolished the death penalty; cf. Wiedemann, 1884, p. 582 and Müller, 1888, p. 81.

<sup>972</sup> Oldfather, 1933, I, p. 207, marginal note; FHN, 1996, II, p. 520.

<sup>973</sup> Cf. Priese, 1977, p.345.347-349.353-355.366; FHN, 1996, II, p. 511-520.

<sup>974</sup> In the edict of Haremheb (18th dynasty) (Krucchten, 1981, l. 16.21.23) officials who abused their authority, are cut off their nose and banned to Tcharou, also at the northeastern border of Egypt. Lloyd, 1988, III, p. 177 mentions three further texts from the 19th and 20th dynasties, where also noses are cut off as a punishment, once in combination with a banishment to Ethiopia. A sculpture model (dated 7th to 3rd centuries BC) shows a man with a cut-off nose (cf. Keimer, 1954, pl. 14), but the suggestion of Keimer, 1954, p. 143 that it might be an inhabitant of Rinokoloura, is not convincing. The Egyptian 'habit' of cutting off noses is also attested in classical authors. Herodotos, 2, 162 describes how king Apries (26th dynasty) in a rage cut off the ears and nose of Patarbemis because he did not bring in his opponent Amasis; cf. Lloyd, 1988, III, p. 176-177. Diodoros, 1, 78, 5 himself gives another example: a woman who committed adultery, had her nose cut off in order to make her ugly. According to Burton, 1972, p. 181 the punishment of severing the nose was fairly common until quite recently throughout much of the Middle East.



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without guards<sup>975</sup> - is without parallels. Some scholars accept the story about the founding of Rinokoloura<sup>976</sup>, but already Guérin considered it a Greek invention<sup>977</sup> and I am inclined to share his view.

If the founding of the city in Hekataios remains rather problematic, the description of the desert region seems more trustworthy<sup>978</sup>. The city lies not far from the coast, in a very unfriendly environment: the region is full of salt and the little water in the pits within the city walls is bad and tastes bitter. Despite the poor natural conditions the people manage to keep alive by catching birds, which is described in detail: they cut reeds in a neighbouring region, cleave them and make long nets out of them with which they catch large flocks of quails flying in from overseas. Even in the first half of the 20th century AD these quails were a catch much sought after<sup>979</sup>, but clearly the life of the inhabitants of Rinokoloura did not entirely depend on those quails; they surely must have had additional food.

Strabon (8) basically tells the same story - although abridged - as Hekataios (1) / Diodoros (5), but he gives another explanation why the king cut off the noses of the criminals. According to Strabon he thought that they would be too ashamed about their looks to commit another crime, while according to Diodoros it would prevent

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<sup>975</sup> Daressy, 1933, p. 190, n. 1 tries to solve this problem by supposing that the convicts did not stay in the city itself, but in a camp outside the city at the other side of the border. Anyway, this is not what Diodoros said; he even explicitly stated that the banished people went to a neighbouring region to look for reed (1, 60, 10).

<sup>976</sup> Brugsch in Jacoby, 1905, p. 48; Müller, 1888, p. 81; Gardiner, 1920, p. 115; Daressy, 1933, p. 188-190; Kees, 1977, p. 107; Oren, 1982a, p. 26; Timm, 1984, I, p. 151, n. 4. Daressy suggests that the classical authors mentioning the story of Rinokoloura actually talked about Tcharou, but transferred the location of the border town Tcharou to the border town which in their time was situated between Ostrakine and Raphia. On the other hand, this does not explain the name Rinokoloura of that border town, since it is not likely that a newly founded city at the border with Syria would be named or an existing city would be renamed after an old story about another border town.

<sup>977</sup> Guérin, 1869, I 2, p. 246; cf. Beer, Georg, s.v. Rinocolura, Rinocorura, in RE, I A 1, 1914, col. 841; Miller, 1916, col. 813; Priese, 1977, p. 353.

<sup>978</sup> For Carrez-Maratray, 1998, p. 91-92 the description does not match the present-day situation of the el-Arish region, and he therefore supposes that the name Rinokoloura is used by Diodoros to indicate the nearby city of Ostrakine [!] and that the name Rinokoloura is later transferred by some Alexandrian scholars to the el-Arish region. This argumentation, however, is far-fetched. With the position of lake Serbonis and its surrounding marshes constantly on the move, is it more likely that the el-Arish region was just less hospitable than it is nowadays and that Diodoros' account can be trusted.

<sup>979</sup> Cf. Jarvis, 1938, p. 30-31; Abel, 1940, p. 229-230. The Arab author Muqaddasi (ca. 986 AD) (translated in Collins, 1994, p. 179) mentions the same catch of quails in his days in the neighbourhood of el-Farama (Pelousion) and also el-Muhallabi (ca. 990 AD) in Yaqut, *Mu'qam al-buldan* (Wüstenfeld, 1867, II, p. 90; translated in Toussoun, 1926, I, p. 101) (cf. Wüstenfeld, 1864, p. 466), who is paraphrased by Qazwini (before 1283 AD) (mentioned in Tuch, 1847, p. 174, n. 1), describes this hunt in the Djifar (see s.v. Djifar). The link with the quails of the exodus (*Numeri*, 11, 31-32) is obvious.

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them from incognito mingling with the normal people. It seems clear that they both depend on a similar source<sup>980</sup>:

μετὰ δὲ Γάζαν Ῥαφία ... εἶτα Ῥινοκόλουρα, ἀπὸ τῶν εἰσφικισμένων ἐκεῖ τὸ παλαιὸν ἀνθρώπων ἠκρωτηριασμένων τὰς ῥίνας οὕτω καλουμένη· τῶν γὰρ Αἰθιοπῶν τις, ἐπελθὼν ἐπὶ τὴν Αἴγυπτον, ἀντὶ τοῦ ἀναιρεῖν τοὺς κακούργους ἀποτέμνων τὰς ῥίνας ἐνταῦθα κατῴκιζεν, ὡς οὐκ ἂν ἔτι τολμήσουσας κακουργεῖν διὰ τὴν αἰσχύνην τῆς ὄψεως.

'After Gaza one comes to Raphia ... Then to Rinokoloura, so called from the people with mutilated noses that had been settled there in early times; for some Ethiopian invaded Egypt and, instead of killing the wrongdoers, cut off their noses and settled them at that place, assuming that on account of their disgraceful faces they would no longer dare do people wrong.'

One might be inclined to discard every etymological explanation of the name of the city as a Greek fantasy, but the story of Seneca (11), who wrote in the middle of the 1st century AD, at least has a certain consistency. Illustrating the consequences of anger Seneca mentions a Persian king who cut off the noses of a whole tribe in Syria, which led to the name of Rinokoloura<sup>981</sup>:

sic rex Persarum totius populi nares recidit in Syria, unde Rhinocolura loco nomen est. pepercisse illum iudicas, quod non tota capita praecidit? novo genere poenae delectatus est.

'Thus, the king of the Persians cut off the noses of a whole population in Syria, whence the place gets its name of Rhinocolura. Do you think that he was merciful because he did not cut off their entire heads? No, he got some pleasure from a new kind of punishment.'

After an Ethiopian king in Egypt now a Persian king mutilates a tribe in Syria, not out of mildness, but for pleasure. The Persian king implies a date between 530 and 330 BC. Kambyses (529-522) would nicely fit the description, but as Herodotos, who discusses the region quite in detail, only mentions the city of Ienysos and is silent about Rinokoloura, a date in the 4th century BC might be preferable, when Artaxerxes II Mnemon (404-359) and Artaxerxes III Ochos (359-338) were indeed campaigning in Syria. The mutilation in itself, for that matter, is not incompatible with for instance other stories about the cruelty of Artaxerxes III. The Greek name of Rinokoloura might be accounted for by the presence of Greek mercenaries in the area. Abel looks for a link with the arrival of Chabrias and the Greek mercenaries about 380 BC<sup>982</sup>, but Greeks have been stationed near the eastern border at both Egyptian and Persian sides

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<sup>980</sup> Strabon, 16, 2, 31 (C 759), partially quoted in Stephanos, *Ethnica*, s.v. Ῥινοκόρουρα (Meineke, 1849, p. 545) (100); see also Herodianos, *De prosodia catholica*, 11 (Lentz, 1867, I, p. 264, 6-8) (19). Cf. *Chrestomathiae ex Strabonis Geographicorum*, 16, 34 (Müller, 1861, II, p. 627) (10): ὅτι μετὰ Γάζαν Ῥαφία πόλις καὶ Ῥινοκόρουρα πόλις· ὠνόμασται δ' οὕτως, ἐπειδὴ ποτε Αἰγύπτιοι τοὺς ἀλισκομένους κακούργους ῥινοτομοῦντες ἐκεῖ κατῴκιζον, οἱ οὐκέτι ἐτόλμων ὑποστρέφειν εἰς Αἴγυπτον διὰ τὸ παράσημοι εἶναι ('After Gaza comes the city of Raphia and the city of Rinokoroura; the latter is so called because the Egyptians once cut off the noses of the arrested wrongdoers and settled them there, while these men would no longer dare to return to Egypt because they were marked').

<sup>981</sup> Seneca, *De ira*, 3, 20, 1.

<sup>982</sup> Cf. Abel, 1939, p. 538. See also s.v. Chabriou Charax.

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during most of the 4th century BC, so it is difficult to find out who could have made up the name. The location of the city in Syria can be explained in two ways: in the first half of the 1st century AD Rinokoloura probably did not belong to Egypt, but to Syria, so Seneca might refer to the situation of his own time; on the other hand, the story may reflect the original location of Rinokoloura at the moment that it received its name in the 4th century BC. Seneca does not speak about the founding of a city, but only about the creation of the name Rinokoloura, which might also implicate the change of name of an existing place. The differences with Diodoros are manifest, but even more, the phrase 'Do you think that he was merciful because he did not cut off their entire heads?' might imply that Seneca deliberately reacted against the unlikely 'Egyptian' story<sup>983</sup>.

The possibility cannot be excluded that the name Rinokoloura has no Greek, but a Syrian, Egyptian or other origin, and that therefore the 'classical' etymology should not be trusted. It has, however, not been possible to definitely link the name of Rinokoloura with one of the toponyms known in the southern part of Palestine. Of course this lack of toponymic continuity can be due to our poor knowledge of the region, but for the moment the tradition of 'cutting off noses' - popular etymology or not - is the only one we have got, and the story of Seneca might supply an acceptable explanation of that name. Therefore I am inclined to think that a Persian king - possibly Artaxerxes II or III - campaigned in Syria in the 4th century BC and punished people by cutting off their noses. The place those people came from or the new place they went to, received a new name reflecting their mutilation. It is not impossible that the Greek name Rinokoloura existed right from the beginning, but it might also be a somewhat later translation of a name with the same meaning in another language. Once the city became part of the Ptolemaic empire<sup>984</sup>, an Egyptian 'tradition' came into being possibly changing the Persian king into an Ethiopian king Aktisanes and incorporating some old stories about criminals with their noses cut off banned to the northeastern border region of Egypt.

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<sup>983</sup> Seneca's following example (*De ira*, 3, 20, 2-4) involves the expedition of Kambyses against the Ethiopians in 525 BC; this is described in full by Herodotos, 3, 17-26, but was probably also dealt with in a lost fragment of Diodoros (cf. Diodoros, 10, 14, 3). One can wonder whether Seneca knew both stories from this author, but could confront the Rinokoloura story of Diodoros with information about the Persian king from another source.

<sup>984</sup> Since Hekataios wrote already about 322-316 BC, when Rinokoloura was still a Syrian town, one can be in doubt whether the passage in Diodoros originates from Hekataios - as is generally accepted - or from a later source.

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An alleged reference to Rinokoloura appears in a fragment of the philosopher Klearchos of Soloi (about 350-250 BC). He tells how the Scythians cut off the noses of all the people they attacked; the descendants of those people moved away and still carried a name that refers to that violent act<sup>985</sup>:

τρυφήσαντες δὲ καὶ μάλιστα δὴ καὶ πρῶτοι πάντων τῶν ἀνθρώπων ἐπὶ τὸ τρυφᾶν ὀρμήσαντες εἰς τοῦτο προήλθον ὕβρεως ὥστε πάντων τῶν ἀνθρώπων εἰς οὓς ἀφίκοντο ἠκρωτηρίαζον τὰς ῥίνας· ὧν οἱ ἀπόγονοι μεταστάντες ἔτι καὶ νῦν ἀπὸ τοῦ πάθους ἔχουσι τὴν ἐπωνυμίαν.

'But having become luxurious, and having in greatest degree and first of all men rushed eagerly into luxurious living, they proceeded so far in insolence that they cut off the noses of all men into whose lands they penetrated; and the descendants of these men migrated to other places and bear to this very day a name derived from that outrage.'

Klearchos' text does not offer any precise chronological or geographical data. He seems to have taken some information about the Scythians from Herodotos and, as the story is similar to that about Rinokoloura, some scholars think that he intended to move the people of the story to this place<sup>986</sup>. I have to stress the hypothetical character of this suggestion, especially because Klearchos does not speak about a town, but about the name of a people that is connected with this crime.

#### *Rinokoloura in the Ptolemaic period*

Eratosthenes (2), quoted by Strabon (7), mentions lakes and 'barathra' or pits in the neighbourhood of Rinokoloura and mount Kasion, a description that probably refers to lake Serbonis and its surroundings. For Eratosthenes all those places apparently belonged to Koile Syria<sup>987</sup>:

Ἐρατοσθένης δὲ τῶν λιμνῶν μνησθεὶς τῶν πρὸς τῇ Ἀραβίᾳ, φησὶ τὸ ὕδωρ ἀπορούμενον διεξόδων ἀνοίξει πόρους ὑπὸ γῆς καὶ δι' ἐκείνων ὑποφέρεσθαι μέχρι Κοιλοσύρων· ἀναθλίβεσθαι δὲ εἰς τοὺς περὶ Ῥινokόλουρα καὶ τὸ Κάσιον ὄρος τόπους καὶ ποιεῖν τὰς ἐκεῖ λίμνας καὶ τὰ βάραθρα.

'Eratosthenes, when he mentions the lakes near Arabia, says that when the water is deprived of exits it opens up underground passages and through these flows underground as far as the country of Koile Syria, and that it is pressed up into the region of Rinokoloura and mount Kasion and forms the lakes and the barathra there.'

Strabon discussing the passage apparently identifies this mount Kasion with mount Kasion near Antiocheia. This is probably a mere mistake, perhaps due to the mention of Koile Syria, and has no implications for the position of Rinokoloura.

<sup>985</sup> Klearchos, F 46 (Wehrli, 1969a, p. 23.58-59.62-63), quoted in Athenaios, *Deipnosophistae*, 12, 524 D.

<sup>986</sup> Gulick, 1933, p. 364, n. a; Wehrli, 1969a, p. 62-63.

<sup>987</sup> Strabon, 16, 1, 12 (C 741); Eratosthenes, F III B 36, (Berger, 1880, p. 264-265).

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The first exactly datable information about the place is due to Polybios (3). The armies of Antiochos III and Ptolemaios IV met in the neighbourhood of Raphia in 217 BC. In the itinerary of Ptolemaios Polybios considers Raphia the first city in Koile Syria near the Egyptian border, which makes Rinokoloura the last place in Egypt before entering Syria<sup>988</sup>:

διανύσας δ' ἐπὶ τὸ προκείμενον πεμπταῖος κατεστρατοπέδευσε πεντήκοντα σταδίου ἀποσχῶν Ῥαφίας, ἣ κείται μετὰ Ῥινοκόλουρα πρώτη τῶν κατὰ Κοίλην Συρίαν πόλεων ὡς πρὸς τὴν Αἴγυπτον.

'Reaching the spot he was bound for on the fifth day (Ptolemaios) encamped at a distance of fifty stadia from Raphia, which is the first city of Koile Syria on the Egyptian side after Rinokoloura.'

During the second invasion of Antiochos IV in the spring of 168 BC an embassy of Ptolemaios VI, his former ally, went to meet him in the neighbourhood of Rinokoloura (6)<sup>989</sup>:

ipse primo vere cum exercitu Aegyptum petens in Coelen Syriam processit. circa Rhinocolura Ptolemaei legatis agentibus gratias, ...

'In the early spring (Antiochus) himself advanced with his army into Koile Syria on his way to Egypt. Near Rhinocolura envoys from Ptolemaeus met him, offering thanks ...'

About 79 BC Rinokoloura belonged to the Judaeen kingdom of Alexandros Iannaïos (103-76), but it is not clear when he conquered it (15)<sup>990</sup>:

κατὰ τοῦτον δὲ τὸν καιρὸν ἤδη τῶν Σύρων καὶ Ἰδουμαίων καὶ Φοινίκων πόλεις εἶχον οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι, πρὸς θαλάσση μὲν Στράτωνος πύργον Ἀπολλωνίαν Ἰόππην Ἰάμνειαν Ἄζωτον Γάζαν Ἀνθηδόνα Ῥάφια Ῥινοκόρουρα.

'Now at this time the Jews held the following cities of Syria, Idumaea and Phoenicia: on the sea coast, Stratonos Pyrgos, Apollonia, Ioppe, Iamneia, Azotos, Gaza, Anthedon, Raphia, Rinokoloura.'

In 40 BC the Judaeen king Herodes I, expelled from Palestine, fled to Egypt. On his way to Pelousion he came to Rinokoloura, where he heard of the death of his brother (13)<sup>991</sup>:

<sup>988</sup> Polybios, 5, 80, 3.

<sup>989</sup> Livius, 45, 11, 9-10; cf. Aharoni, 1993, map 184. This embassy is not mentioned in the existing fragments of Polybios, 27-29 where this war is dealt with.

<sup>990</sup> Iosephos, *Antiquitates Iudaicae*, 13, 15, 4 (395). Cf. Tonneau, 1926, p. 595; Jones, 1971, p. 255.455; Oren, 1982a, p. 4; Aharoni, 1993, p. 158 and map 214; it is not clear why Rinokoloura is not included in the kingdom of Alexandros Iannaïos on Bengtson, 1978, map 16a.

<sup>991</sup> Iosephos, *Bellum Iudaicum*, 1, 14, 2 (277); the story also occurs with only slight changes in Iosephos, *Antiquitates Iudaicae*, 14, 14, 2 (374) (16): ἔπειτα δόξαν ἀναχωρεῖν, ἀπῆρι μάλα σωφρόνως τὴν ἐπ' Αἰγύπτου. καὶ τότε μὲν ἔν τιμι ἱερῷ κατάγεται (καταλελοίπει γὰρ αὐτόθι πολλοὺς τῶν ἐπομένων), τῆ δ' ὑπεραιά παραγενόμενος εἰς Ῥινοκόρουρα, ἐκεῖ καὶ τὰ περὶ τὸν ἀδελφὸν ἤκουσεν. ... πορρωτάτω γὰρ ἦν ἤδη σπεύδων τὴν ἐπὶ Πηλουσίου ('Then, on deciding to retire, he very prudently took the road to Egypt. And on that occasion he lodged in a certain temple where he had left many of his followers. The next day he came to Rinokoroura, where he heard of his brother's fate. ... He was by now a great way off, in his haste to reach Pelousion'); cf. the Latin adaptation of Pseudo-Hegesippos, *Historia*, 1, 29, 10 (Ussani, 1932, p. 51) (43): cui ingresso regiones, quas Rinocori inhabitant, ... (('Herodes) who had entered the areas where the

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Ἡρώδης ... ὑπέστρεψεν ἐπ' Αἰγύπτου. καὶ τὴν μὲν πρώτην ἑσπέραν κατὰ τι τῶν ἐπιχωρίων ἱερῶν αὐλίζετο τοὺς ὑπολειφθέντας ἀναλαβών, τῇ δ' ἑξῆς εἰς Ῥινοκόρουρα προελθόντι τὰ περὶ τὴν τᾶδελοφῶν τελευτὴν ἀπαγγέλλεται. προσλαβὼν δὲ πένθους ὅσον ἀπεθήκατο φροντίδων ἦει προσωτέρω. ... ἔφθανεν δὲ καὶ τούτους Ἡρώδης εἰς Πηλοῦσιον ἀφικόμενος.

'Herodes ... turned back towards Egypt. The first evening he encamped in one of the temples of the country, where he picked up those of his men who had been left in the rear. The next day he advanced to Rinokoloura, where he received the news of his brother's death. His load of anxiety thus replaced by as heavy a burden of grief, he resumed his march. ... But Herodes outstripped them, having already reached Pelousion.'

It is difficult to identify the temple at one day's march from Rinokoloura, since it is not clear which road Herodes took from Petra to Rinokoloura. Figueras tentatively suggests that the temple might have been at Bitylion or Boutaphios<sup>992</sup>, but this is a mere hypothesis.

#### *Rinokoloura and the 'brook of Egypt'*

In the biblical *Isaias*, 27, 12 the expression 'from the River till the brook of Egypt'<sup>993</sup> refers to *Genesis*, 15, 18, where God promised Abraham the land from the 'brook of Egypt' to the Euphrates<sup>994</sup>, indicating the southwestern and northeastern borders of this land. The Septuaginta (4) - somewhere in the second half of the 3rd, or in the 2nd century BC - translated the passage from *Isaias* as ἀπὸ τῆς διώρυγος τοῦ ποταμοῦ ἕως Ῥινοκορούρων ('from the channel of the river till Rinokoroura'), equating the 'brook of Egypt' with Rinokoloura<sup>995</sup>. It has generally been accepted that all the references to the brook in the Graeco-Roman period involve the same river at the Egyptian border and that the translator of *Isaias* mentioned instead of the river the city near that river<sup>996</sup>. On the other hand the possibility cannot be ruled out - as Hieronymus (53) already noticed - that the translator was not looking for the

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Rinocori live, ...' - the text does not mention the temple, nor Pelousion). Cf. Tonneau, 1926, p. 594; Jones, 1938, p. 40-42; Oren, 1982a, p. 36.

<sup>992</sup> Cf. Figueras, 2000, p. 41; see s.v. Bitylion and s.v. Boutaphios. Marcus, 1943, VII, p. 645 considers it an Idumaean temple, but he does not suggest a location.

<sup>993</sup> 'Brook' renders the Hebrew word 'nahal'; cf. Odelain, 1978, p. 379, s.v. Torrent; Holl, 1985, p. 125, n. 2. See s.v. Brook of Egypt.

<sup>994</sup> Cf. Odelain, 1978, p. 135, s.v. Euphrate.

<sup>995</sup> In the other books of the bible where the 'brook (of Egypt)' is mentioned, the expression is usually translated more literally (χειμάρρους, ποταμός, φάραγξ) and never with a toponym. See s.v. Brook of Egypt. The translation of the Septuaginta is followed in *Isaias*, 27, 12 of the *Vetus Latina* (29), version E (usque ad Rinocoruras, 'till Rinocorurae') and version O (usque ad Rinocoruram, 'till Rinocorura') (Gryson, 1987-1993, p. 574).

<sup>996</sup> This view is clearly shown on the map Abel, 1940, pl. 7.

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appropriate word to render the river, but only had the border between Egypt and Palestine in mind, which in his time was situated immediately east of Rinokoloura<sup>997</sup>.

Eusebios (31), who wrote in the first half of the 4th century AD, quotes the Septuaginta when he mentions an Egyptian city Rinokoloura in *Isaias*<sup>998</sup>:

Ῥινοκόρουρα. Ἡσαίας. πόλις Αἰγύπτου.  
'Rinokoroura. Isaias. A city of Egypt.'

In his comment on *Isaias*, 27, 12 (40) Eusebios discusses several translations and interpretations of the verse including the more correct translation by Symmachos (ἕως τοῦ χειμάρρου Αἰγύπτου, 'till the brook of Egypt')<sup>999</sup>, but he just locates Rinokoloura near the border of Egypt and Palestine without dwelling on this translation problem<sup>1000</sup>:

... ἕως Ῥινοκορούρων· πόλις δέ ἐστὶν αὕτη ἀμφὶ τοὺς ὄρους τοὺς μεταξὺ τῆς Αἰγύπτου καὶ τῆς Παλαιστίνης κειμένη.

'... till Rinokoroura; this is a city that lies near the borders between Egypt and Palestine.'

Translating Eusebios (31) into Latin ca. 389-391 AD, Hieronymus (45) adds a comment<sup>1001</sup>:

Rhinocorura. civitas Aegypti cuius meminit Esaias. sciendum autem quod hoc vocabulum in libris Hebraicis non habetur, sed a Septuaginta interpretibus propter notitiam loci additum est.

'Rhinocorura. A city of Egypt that Esaias mentions. One has to know, however, that this word is not mentioned in the Hebrew books, but was added by the Septuaginta translators because they were familiar with the place.'

The name Rinokoloura did not occur in the Hebrew version, but according to Hieronymus was added by the Seventy because they knew the geographical situation. Therefore in the *Vulgata* - Hieronymus' Latin bible translation written ca. 391-406 AD - he renders the original text more closely as 'ab alveo Fluminis usque ad torrentem Aegypti' ('from the channel of the River till the brook of Egypt')<sup>1002</sup>.

In his *Commentarii in Esaiam* (53) - written ca. 408-410 AD - Hieronymus elaborates upon this idea, stating that the translation 'Rinokoloura' represents the meaning rather than the exact words of the bible<sup>1003</sup>:

<sup>997</sup> A similar 'shift' also explains the translation of the expression 'the Shihor of Egypt / facing Egypt' in *Iosue*, 13, 3 (ἀπὸ τῆς ἀοικήτου τῆς κατὰ πρόσωπον Αἰγύπτου, 'from the desert facing Egypt') and *I Paralipomenon*, 13, 5 (ἀπὸ ὀρίων Αἰγύπτου, 'from the borders of Egypt').

<sup>998</sup> Eusebios, *Onomasticon*, s.v. Ῥινοκόρουρα (Klostermann, 1904, p. 148); cf. the translation of Freeman-Grenville, 2003, p. 82.

<sup>999</sup> Cf. Origenes, *Hexapla*, *Isaias*, 27, 12 (Field, 1875, p. 477).

<sup>1000</sup> Eusebios, *Commentarius in Esaiam*, 91, 27, 12-13 (Ziegler, 1975, p. 177).

<sup>1001</sup> Hieronymus, *Liber de situ et nominibus locorum Hebraicorum*, s.v. Rhinocorura (Klostermann, 1904, p. 149); cf. the (inaccurate) translation of Freeman-Grenville, 2003, p. 82.

<sup>1002</sup> In the other passages in the *Vulgata* the 'brook of Egypt' is translated as 'torrens (Aegypti)', 'rivus Aegypti' or 'fluvius Aegypti'. See s.v. Brook of Egypt.

<sup>1003</sup> Hieronymus, *Commentarii in Esaiam*, 8, 27, 12 (Adriaen, 1963a, p. 352, l. 23-29; cf. p. 351, l. 1-4).

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et hoc notandum, quod in Iudaeae terminis, fluvius appelletur; in Aegypti finibus, torrens, qui turbidas aquas habet, et non perpetuas. pro torrente Aegypti, LXX Rhinocoruram transtulerunt, quod est oppidum in Aegypti Palaestinaeque confinio, non tam verba scripturarum, quam sensum verborum exprimentes.

'And one has to remark that a watercourse that has turbulent water that is not always running, is called a river within the borders of Judaea and a brook within the borders of Egypt. Instead of the brook of Egypt, the 70 translated Rhinocorura, which is a city in the border area of Egypt and Palestine, using not the words of the scriptures, but the meaning of the words.'

Hieronymus mentions Rinokoloura and the 'brook of Egypt' also in other works, but sometimes seems to reflect different topographical views.

In his letter *Ad Dardanum de terra repromissionis* (59) he cites the boundaries of the promised land as described in *Numeri*, 34, 3-12, and states that the brook of Egypt, at the southern border, flowed into the sea next to Rinokoloura<sup>1004</sup>:

quod si obieceris terram repromissionis dici, quae in Numerorum volumine continetur, a meridie maris salinarum per Sina et Cades-Barne usque ad torrentem Aegypti, qui iuxta Rinocoruram Mari Magno influit.

'Tu objecteras peut-être que la terre promise a une acception plus large qui est mentionnée au livre des Numeri. Depuis le midi de la mer des salines, par le Sina et Cades-Barne, jusqu'au torrent d'Égypte, qui se jette dans la Grande Mer près de Rinocorura.'

This same point of view is reflected in his *Commentarii in Hiezechielem* (54-57) written between 410 and 414 AD, sometimes in a similar phrasing<sup>1005</sup>, but twice the expression 'torrens Rinocorurae', the 'brook of Rinokoloura' is used<sup>1006</sup> and once the city of Rinokoloura itself is considered the southern border of the promised land<sup>1007</sup>.

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<sup>1004</sup> Hieronymus, *Epistulae*, 129, 5 (Labourt, 1961, p. 162); quoted in Pseudo-Eucherius, *De situ Hierusolimae epistula ad Faustum presbyterum*, 19 (Fraipont, 1965, p. 240, l. 101-104) (130). Cf. Hieronymus, *Epistulae*, 129, 1 (Labourt, 1961, p. 155) (58) about the limits of David's victories: *sed multarum in circuitu nationum victor extiterat, quae a torrente Aegypti, qui est Rinocorurae, usque ad Euphraten fluvium tendebantur* ('mais il avait vaincu beaucoup de nations limitrophes, qui s'étendaient depuis le torrent d'Égypte - c'est à Rinocorura - jusqu'au fleuve de l'Euphrate').

<sup>1005</sup> Hieronymus, *Commentarii in Hiezechielem*, 14, 47, 19 (Glorie, 1964a, p. 726) (55) (*usque ad torrentem Aegypti qui iuxta urbem Rinocoruram mari influit*, 'till the brook of Egypt, which flows into the sea next to the city of Rinocorura') - paraphrased in Beda Venerabilis, *In Regum XXX quaestiones*, 15 (Hurst, 1962, p. 308) (129), in Rabanus Maurus, *Enarrationes in librum Numerorum*, 4, 10 (34) (Migne, PL 108, 1851, col. 829) (136), *Commentarii in libros IV Regum*, 3, 8 (Migne, PL 109, 1852, col. 187) (138), *Commentarii in Paralipomena*, 3, 7 (Migne, PL 109, 1852, col. 465) (139) and *Commentarii in Ezechielem*, 20, 47 (Migne, PL 110, 1852, col. 1068) (141), in Angelomus Luxoviensis, *Enarrationes in libros Regum*, 3, 8 (Migne, PL 115, 1852, col. 459) (146) - and Hieronymus, *Commentarii in Hiezechielem*, 14, 48, 23-29 (Glorie, 1964a, p.740) (57) (*torrens qui ingreditur mare Magnum Rinocorurae*, 'the brook that goes into the Great Sea at Rinocorura') - paraphrased in Rabanus Maurus, *Commentarii in Ezechielem*, 20, 48 (Migne, PL 110, 1852, col. 1080) (142).

<sup>1006</sup> Hieronymus, *Commentarii in Hiezechielem*, 14, 47, 20 (56) (Glorie, 1964a, p. 727) (*a torrente videlicet Rinocorur(a)e qui in mare influit*, 'from the brook of Rinocorura that flows into the sea') - paraphrased in Beda Venerabilis, *In Regum XXX quaestiones*, 15 (Hurst, 1962, p. 308) (129), in Rabanus Maurus, *Enarrationes in librum Numerorum*, 4, 10 (34) (Migne, PL 108, 1851, col. 829) (136), *Commentarii in libros IV Regum*, 3, 8 (Migne, PL 109, 1852, col. 187) (138), *Commentarii in Paralipomena*, 3, 7 (Migne, PL 109, 1852, col. 465) (139) and *Commentarii in Ezechielem*, 20, 47 (Migne, PL 110, 1852, col. 1069) (141), in Angelomus Luxoviensis, *Enarrationes in libros Regum*, 3, 8 (Migne, PL 115, 1852, col. 459) (146) - and Hieronymus, *Commentarii in Hiezechielem*, 14, 48, 23-29 (Glorie, 1964a, p.741) (57) (*omnisque terrae sanctae hereditas ab australi plaga iuxta terminos Aegypti, Rinocorurae torrente finitur*, 'and the inheritance of the whole holy land is



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In his *Commentarii in Amos* (51) - written in 406 AD - Hieronymus probably made a wrong identification. *Amos*, 6, 14 mentions the territory 'from the pass of Hamath to the brook of the Araba'. The 'brook of the Araba' only occurs in this text and is generally identified with the river flowing into the Jordan near the Dead Sea and forming the southern border of the Northern Kingdom<sup>1008</sup>. Hieronymus rightly translated 'usque ad torrentem deserti' ('till the brook of the desert'), but called it further on - misled by the Septuaginta<sup>1009</sup> - 'torrens occidentis' ('the brook of the west'), and apparently considered it identical with the 'brook of Egypt' because he linked the river with Rinokoloura<sup>1010</sup>:

a terminis terrae vestrae, qui solem respiciunt, usque ad torrentem deserti, sive Occidentis, ut LXX transtulerunt, id est ab Emath, usque ad Rhinocoruram, inter quam et Pelusium rivus Nili, sive torrens de eremo veniens, mare ingreditur.

'From the borders of your land towards the east till the brook of the desert, or the brook of the west as the 70 translated, i.e. from Emath till Rhinocorura; between the latter place and Pelusium a branch of the Nile, or a brook coming from the desert, flows into sea.'

It is obvious that Hieronymus in this text thought the 'brook of Egypt' to be the eastern arm of the Nile that flowed into the Mediterranean east of Pelousion. His indication 'between Rinokoloura and Pelousion' is rather vague for an area that covers more than 100 km and clearly reflects his problem to reconcile the Rinokoloura of the Septuaginta (4) with his own idea that the 'brook of Egypt' was the Nile. But furthermore, this identification does not agree with his definition of a brook as a river with turbulent water that does not run the whole year through (53). Hieronymus apparently changed his mind about the identification of the 'brook of Egypt' along the years and failed to mention this in his further work. This 'change of mind' was not due

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delimited at its southern end by the brook of Rinocorura next to the borders of Egypt') - paraphrased in Rabanus Maurus, *Commentarii in Ezechielem*, 20, 48 (Migne, PL 110, 1852, col. 1080) (142).

<sup>1007</sup> Hieronymus, *Commentarii in Hiezechielem*, 6, 20, 5-6 (Glorie, 1964a, p. 257) (54) (qui a Rinocorura usque ad Taurum montem et Eufraten fluvium cunctam consideraverit terram, 'who considers the whole land from Rinocorura till mount Taurus and the Euphrates river') - paraphrased in Rabanus Maurus, *Commentarii in Ezechielem*, 8, 20 (Migne, PL 110, 1852, col. 718) (140) and in Prudentius Trecensis, *De praedestinatione* (Migne, PL 115, 1852, col. 1184) (147); cf. also Hieronymus, *Commentarii in Abdiam*, 19 (Adriaen, 1969, p. 370) (48) (ad Rhinocoruram, 'till Rhinocorura').

<sup>1008</sup> Cf. Odelain, 1978, p. 36, s.v. Araba.

<sup>1009</sup> Septuaginta, *Amos*, 6, 14 (Ziegler, 1943, p. 197): ἕως τοῦ χειμάρρου τῶν δυσμῶν ('till the brook of the west').

<sup>1010</sup> Hieronymus, *Commentarii in Amos*, 3, 6, 12-15 (Adriaen, 1969, p. 310, l. 389-392; cf. p. 308-312, l. 342-343.350-351.482-485); paraphrased in Beda Venerabilis, *Nomina locorum ex beati Hieronimi presbyteri et Flavi Iosephi collecta opusculis* (Hurst, 1962, p. 286) (128) (torrens deserti Nilus est qui inter Rhinocoruram et Pelusium de heremo veniens mare ingreditur, 'the brook of the desert is the Nile, which between Rhinocorura and Pelusium comes from the desert and goes into the sea') and in Rupertus Tuitiensis, *Commentarii in duodecim prophetas minores. Amos*, 3, 6 (Migne, PL 168, 1854, col. 345) (159).

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to ample geographical considerations, but for the Christian and later authors<sup>1011</sup> the 'brook of Egypt' seemed to be just a vague and rather symbolic concept to indicate the southern border of Israel and stood for no concrete hydronym.

Also other *Isaias* commentaries from the 5th century AD on discuss the Rinokoloura of the Septuaginta. Hesychios of Jerusalem (75) places the city at the border between Egypt and Palestine<sup>1012</sup>:

Ῥινοκόρουρα πόλις διορίζουσα Αἴγυπτον καὶ Παλαιστίνην.

'Rinokoroura a city on the border of Egypt and Palestine.'

So did Kyrillos of Alexandria (79)<sup>1013</sup>:

καὶ τῆ καλουμένη Ῥινοκορούρων. πόλις τε αὕτη τὴν τε Αἰγυπτίων ὀρίζουσα, καὶ μέντοι τὴν Παλαιστινῶν.

'and by the so-called Rinokoroura. This city lies at the border of Egypt and also of Palestine.'

Theodoretos (92) quotes the Septuaginta and an another translation of the same verse ('ἕως τοῦ χειμάρρου Αἰγύπτου', 'till the torrent of Egypt'), but makes in his allegorical explanation no geographical remarks<sup>1014</sup>.

Prokopios of Gaza (98) closely follows the comment of Eusebios on *Isaias* already discussed (40) and explicitly mentions the 'brook of Rinokoloura' that formed the border between Egypt and Palestine<sup>1015</sup>:

... μέχρι τοῦ χειμάρρου Ῥεινοκορούρων, ἥπερ ἐστὶν Αἰγύπτου μεθόριον. ... τινὲς δὲ φασὶν, ὡς Ἰουδαίας ὄροι Εὐφράτης καὶ Ῥεινοκόρουρα.

'... till the torrent of Reinokoroura that is the border of Egypt. ... Some people say that the Euphrates and Reinokoroura are the borders of Judaea.'

Haymo Halberstatensis (144) stresses that the 'brook of Egypt' is not the Nile as one could expect, but - as it is implied according to this author by the Septuaginta - a small river next to which the city of Rinokoloura lies<sup>1016</sup>:

'usque ad torrentem Aegypti', id est usque ad Nilum. melius habetur in septuaginta interpretibus, qui dicunt ab Euphrate usque ad Rinocoruram. est enim rivus non adeo magnus, qui dividit terram repromissionis et Aegyptum super quem Rinocorura civitas sita est.

'till the brook of Egypt', i.e. till the Nile. It is better explained by the seventy translators, who say from the Euphrates till Rinocorura. For there is a not very large river that separates the promised land from Egypt, above which the city of Rinocorura is situated.'

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<sup>1011</sup> The 10th century Jewish-Arab author Saadia Gaon, who translated the bible into Arabic, rendered the 'Brook of Egypt' as 'Wadi el-Arish' (cf. Dalman, 1924, p. 54; Abel, 1933, I, p. 301; Na'aman, 1979, p. 74); it is not impossible that also this translation is based upon the same tradition. See s.v. el-Arish.

<sup>1012</sup> Hesychios of Jerusalem, *Interpretatio Isaiae prophetae*, 27, 12 (Faulhaber, 1900, p. 82).

<sup>1013</sup> Kyrillos of Alexandria, *Commentarius in Isaiam prophetam*, 27, 12 (Migne, PG 70, 1859, col. 608; cf. col. 609).

<sup>1014</sup> Theodoretos, *Commentaria in Isaiam*, 7, 27, 12 (Guinot, 1982, II, p. 228).

<sup>1015</sup> Prokopios of Gaza, *Commentarii in Isaiam*, 27, 11-13 (Migne, PG 87, 2, 1865, col. 2241-2244).

<sup>1016</sup> Haymo Halberstatensis, *Commentarii in Isaiam*, 2, 27 (Migne, PL 116, 1852, col. 846).

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Rinokoloura is also mentioned by some authors discussing one of the other passages where the 'brook of Egypt' occurs, in which case they often paraphrase Hieronymus<sup>1017</sup>. Commenting on *Genesis*, 15, 18 Augustinus (**62**) states in his *De civitate Dei* that with the expression 'flumen Aegypti' not the Nile is meant, but a small river that flows next to the city of Rinokoloura on the border between Egypt and Palestine<sup>1018</sup>:

... et nominat in ea undecim gentes a flumine Aegypti usque ad flumen magnum Euphratem. non ergo a flumine magno Aegypti, hoc est Nilo, sed a parvo quod dividit inter Aegyptum et Palaestinam, ubi est civitas Rhinocorura.

'... and (the covenant with Abraham) names eleven nations in that land, from the river of Egypt to the great river Euphrates. Now this does not mean from the great river of Egypt, that is, the Nile, but from the small river that forms the boundary between Egypt and Palestine, at the site of the city of Rhinocorura.'

In his *Quaestiones in Heptateuchum* (**61**) Augustinus dwells on the same topic<sup>1019</sup>:

flumen quippe Aegypti, qui fines est disterninans regnum Israhel ab Aegypto, non est Nilus, sed alius est non magnus fluvius, qui fluit per Rhinocoruram civitatem, unde iam ad orientem versus incipit terra promissionis.

'The stream of Egypt, now, which forms the border between the kingdom of Israel and Egypt, is not the Nile, but another river that is not so large and that flows along the city of Rhinocorura; east of there the promised land starts already.'

Especially in some later Latin authors (or the scribes that copied them) the exact geographical meaning has obviously been lost. In one passage in Rabanus (**135**)<sup>1020</sup> for instance the expression 'a parvo (flumine), quod dividit' of Augustinus has been transformed in 'ab arvo dividit', creating some field in the neighbourhood of the city. Remigius (**151**)<sup>1021</sup> speaks in the same context of the 'Rinocoluram fluviolum', a small river with the name Rinokoloura. Also for some medieval maps Rinokoloura is the name of the river<sup>1022</sup> and William Wey (**165**) in 1462 AD mentions a 'fluvius Rinoconoro'<sup>1023</sup>.

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<sup>1017</sup> See also the later authors mentioned in the notes at Hieronymus.

<sup>1018</sup> Augustinus, *De civitate Dei*, 16, 24; paraphrased in Beda Venerabilis, *Libri quatuor in principium Genesis*, 4, 15, 18 (Jones, 1967, p. 199) (**126**), in Alcuinus, *Interrogationes et responsiones in Genesis*, 170 (Migne, PL 100, 1851, col. 538) (**131**), in Rabanus Maurus, *Commentarii in Genesis*, 2, 15 (17) (Migne, PL 107, 1851, col. 543) (**135**), in Claudius Taurinensis (?), *Commentarii in Genesis*, 2, 15, 18-21 (Migne, PL 50, 1846, col. 955) (**143**), in Angelomus Luxoviensis, *Commentarius in Genesis*, 15, 18 (Migne, PL 115, 1852, col. 179) (**145**) and in Remigius Antissiodorensis, *Commentarius in Genesis*, 15, 18 (Migne, PL 131, 1853, col. 87) (**151**).

<sup>1019</sup> Augustinus, *Quaestiones in Heptateuchum*, 6, 21, 3 (Fraipont, 1958, p. 327); paraphrased in Rabanus Maurus, *Commentarii in librum Josue*, 3, 13 (Migne, PL 108, 1851, col. 1097) (**137**).

<sup>1020</sup> Rabanus Maurus, *Commentarii in Genesis*, 2, 17 (15) (Migne, PL 107, 1851, col. 543).

<sup>1021</sup> Remigius Antissiodorensis, *Commentarius in Genesis*, 15, 18 (Migne, PL 131, 1853, col. 87).

<sup>1022</sup> A small map in an Orosius codex in the St. Galler Stiftsbibliothek (Miller, 1896, VI, p. 62.63) (**152**): Rinocorura and Fluvius Egypti in two separate lines; the map of Heinrich von Mainz (Miller, 1895, III, p. 25 and pl. 2) (**156**): 'Rinocorua'; the Hieronymus map (Miller, 1895, III, p. 14.17) (**160**): Rinocorura civitas et fluvius, terminus Palestine et Egipti ('Rinocorura, a city and a river, the border of Palestine and Egypt'); the Hereford map (Miller, 1896, IV, p. 30-31 and map) (**161**):

#### 4. Rinokoloura

##### *Rinokoloura in the Roman period*

In the context of the Arab expedition of Aelius Gallus, praefectus Aegypti ca. 26-24 BC, the place Leuke Kome in Arabia is mentioned. Strabon (9) fits in a passage about perfumes, which are transported by the Nabataeans from Leuke Kome via Petra to Rinokoloura<sup>1024</sup> - situated in Phoenicia near Egypt - and so further on<sup>1025</sup>:

ἐκ μὲν οἴν τῆς Λευκῆς κόμης εἰς Πέτραν, ἐντεῦθεν δ' εἰς Ῥινοκόλουρα τῆς πρὸς Αἰγύπτῳ Φοινίκης τὰ φορτία κομίζεται κἀντεῦθεν εἰς τοὺς ἄλλους, ἡνὶ δὲ τὸ πλεον εἰς τὴν Ἀλεξάνδρειαν τῷ Νείλῳ.

'Now the loads of aromatics are conveyed from Leuke Kome to Petra, and thence to Rinokoloura, which is in Phoenicia near Egypt, and thence to the other peoples; but at the present time they are for the most part transported by the Nile to Alexandria.'

Strabon makes a difference between the route via Rinokoloura and the route via Mys, Koptos and over the Nile to Alexandria apparently more in use at the moment he wrote; it is difficult to determine when exactly the first route was in use<sup>1026</sup>. Strabon does not make it clear whether the perfumes continued from Rinokoloura by sea or by land. The first option implies that Rinokoloura must have had an important harbour, but it is just as well possible that the transport continued by land along the road to Pelousion or to Raphia. Figueras suggest that the Nabataean route went to Rinokoloura and not to Gaza, because the latter city at that time was under Jewish control<sup>1027</sup>.

In his description of Phoenicia Strabon (8) mentions - from east to west - Gaza, Raphia and Rinokoloura, before arriving at lake Serbonis and mount Kasion<sup>1028</sup>.

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Rinocerura civ(itas) et fluvius - Hec maris lingua dividit Egiptum et Palestinam" ('Rinocerura, a city and a river. This tongue of the sea separates Egypt and Palestine').

<sup>1023</sup> William Wey (Röhricht, 1901, p. 133).

<sup>1024</sup> For more details about the route from Petra to Rinokoloura, cf. Meshel, 1973b, p. 205-209 (Hebrew) and p. xxv-xxvi (English summary) and the maps in Al-Hamshary, 1995, p. 34-35.

<sup>1025</sup> Strabon, 16, 4, 24 (C 781). Clédat, 1923b, p. 143 (followed by Timm, 1984, I, p. 147) states that the Romans built a harbour in Rinokoloura referring to 'Strabon, 12, 19', but this reference does not match; it probably refers to the present passage.

<sup>1026</sup> Wenning, 1987, p. 182.184 places the text in the time of Herodes I (30-4 BC). He states that Rinokoloura was mentioned here because the harbour of Gaza was inaccessible for Nabataeans under that king, but this matter is not clear; Negev, 1983, p. 53 on the contrary thinks that the harbour of Gaza must have surely been used by the Nabataeans then.

<sup>1027</sup> Cf. Figueras, 2000, p. 101.243.

<sup>1028</sup> Strabon, 16, 2, 31 (C 759) (fully quoted § Analysis of the sources (The foundation of Rinokoloura)). For a similar geographical situation, cf. the further unknown anonymous Greek geographer in Hudson, 1712, IV, quoted in Reland, 1714, p. 509 (171), who gives the order mount Kasion, lake Serbonis, Rinokoloura, Gaza: ἐξῆς δὲ τὸ Κάσιον ὄρος· εἶτα τὰ Ῥινοκόρουρα. μέσον δὲ τοῦ Κασίου ὄρους καὶ τῶν Ῥινοκορούρων ἡ Σιρβωνίς λίμνη· μετὰ τὰ Ῥινοκόρουρα ἡ νέα Γάζα κεῖται πόλις οὖσα καὶ αὐτὴ ('next mount Kasion; then Rinokoroura; then the new Gaza is a city which is also called...')

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Plinius' description of Syria (12) followed the coast from west to east. The strip from the Pelousiac mouth till Ostrakine is called Arabia (sc. Petraea); the region east of Ostrakine is attributed to Syrian Idumaea and Palestine. After Ostrakine and lake Serbonis Plinius continues with the town of Rinokoloura, which is therefore situated at the Syrian coast<sup>1029</sup>:

Ostracine Arabia finitur, a Pelusio LXV p. mox Idumaea incipit et Palaestina ab emersu Sirbonis lacus, ... oppida Rhinocolura et intus Rhapsa, Gaza et intus Anthedon, mons Argaris.

'With Ostracine Arabia ends, 65 miles from Pelusium. Then begins Idumaea and Palestine, starting from the outlet of lake Sirbonis, ... (There are) the towns of Rhinocolura and more inland Rhapsa, Gaza and more inland Anthedon, mount Argaris.'

At the beginning of 70 AD Vespasianus sent his son Titus with an army from Alexandria to Jerusalem (14). Leaving Pelousion Titus camped the first night near the sanctuary of Zeus Kasios, the second near Ostrakine and the third day he took a rest at Rinokoloura before going to Raphia, the first city in Syria<sup>1030</sup>:

μετὰ ταῦτα πρὸς Ῥινοκορούρις ἀναπαύεται, κακεῖθεν εἰς Ῥάφειαν προελθὼν σταθμὸν τέταρτον, ἔστι δ' ἡ πόλις αὕτη Συρίας ἀρχή.

'He next rested near Rinokoroura, and from there he advanced to his fourth station Rapheia; this city is the beginning of Syria.'

The fact that Titus rested at Rinokoloura implies that the place had at least some accommodations as water and food available for the troops.

The papyrus from Oxyrynchos which is traditionally described as 'an invocation of Isis' or 'a Greek Isis litany' (17) is probably written down under Traianus or Hadrianus, but it is based upon a text that was possibly composed in the late 1st century AD. It lists a lot of places in the Egyptian Delta and abroad, each accompanied by an invocation of Isis. In Rinokoloura - mentioned among Syrian towns - Isis is called 'all-seeing'<sup>1031</sup>:

ἐν Ῥεινοκορούλοις παντόπ[τιν]  
'at Reinokoroula all-seeing'

The fact that a cult of Isis is connected with Rinokoloura in this document does not necessarily imply that Isis actually had a sanctuary there nor that the 'invocation' used

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lake Sirbonis between mount Kasion and Rinokoroura; after Rinokoroura lies the new Gaza, which is also a city').

<sup>1029</sup> Plinius, *Naturalis historia*, 5, 14, 68.

<sup>1030</sup> Iosephos, *Bellum Iudaicum*, 4, 11, 5 (662); cf. the Latin adaptation of Pseudo-Hegesippos, *Historia*, 4, 33, 3 (44) (Ussani, 1932, p. 292): *exceperunt etiam Rhinocori exercitum progredientem non sine grata refectione* ('also the Rhinocori took in the marching army, not without a welcome pause').

<sup>1031</sup> P.Oxy. XI, 1380, 93. According to Bricault, 1995 (draft), p. 41 originally Ῥεινοκορούλοις was written, but the 'ω' has been wiped out and replaced by an 'ο' supra lineam.

#### 4. Rinokoloura

should be her official name in that local cult. Bricault remarks that the epithet 'she who sees everything' is appropriate for a border place<sup>1032</sup>, but in fact the document does not consider Rinokoloura a border place, but one of the towns within Palestine.

The geographer Ptolemaios (18) places Ῥινοκόρουρα ('Rinokoroura') in the Kasiotis at 64° 40' - 31° 10', an acceptable location<sup>1033</sup>. The eastern border of Egypt for Ptolemaios is the (rather fictitious) line between the Judaeian city of Anthedon and the head of the Arabian Gulf (i.e. the most northern part of the Gulf of Suez); it passes immediately east of Rinokoloura, which becomes the most eastern place mentioned for Egypt in his work, Raphia being left to the Judaeian side of the border<sup>1034</sup>. Rinokoloura lies 25' east of Ostrakine, at a distance of about 167 stadia (ca. 31 km), and 20' west of Raphia<sup>1035</sup>, at a distance of about 133 stadia (ca. 25 km), while all three towns lie on the same latitude. The figures are too low in comparison with the other sources, which is partially due to Ptolemaios' assumption of too small a value for the length of a degree, but he apparently places Rinokoloura closer to Raphia than to Ostrakine.

A Latin military account (20) probably drawn up in 193-196 AD deals with the financial situation of Pathermouthis son of Ptolemaios from Heliou Polis, an auxiliary soldier of an unknown unit enlisted in 180 AD; a second hand added an abbreviation for Rinokoloura before his name, probably indicating the place where the man was stationed<sup>1036</sup>.

30 [61] PRESENTE II ET CONTIANO II COS(ULIBUS)  
Rinoc(oruris) PATHERMUTHIS PTOLEMEI · HELIOPOL(ITANUS)  
loricititis in dep(ositis) (denarios) C in viatico (denarios) LXXV  
accepit stipendi (denarios) LXXXIV ob(olos) XV (dodrantem)  
ex eo collatio (denarios) IIII ob(olos) XXII s(emis)  
reliquos tulit (denarios) LXXIX ob(olos) XXI (quadrantem)  
36 [67] h[a]bet in dep(ositis) (denarios) C in viatico (denarios) LXXV

<sup>1032</sup> Bricault, 1995 (draft), p. 42. For the epithet, cf. Bricault, 1996, p. 59.

<sup>1033</sup> Ptolemaios, 4, 5, 6 (Müller, 1901, I 2, p. 683). Ball, 1942, p. 105 transposes 64° 40' - 31° 10' into the 'Greenwich system' as 34° 05' - 31° 10'; cf. Ball, 1942, pl. 2.3.

<sup>1034</sup> Ptolemaios, 4, 5, 7 (Müller, 1901, I 2, p. 683); cf. Ball, 1942, p. 100 and pl. 2.

<sup>1035</sup> Ptolemaios, 5, 15, 5 (Müller, 1901, I 2, p. 989).

<sup>1036</sup> ChLA X, 410, 6866 A, II, 30-36 (61-67); the translation is based upon Fink, Rom.Mil.Rec., 1971, p. 265. Cf. Lesquier, 1918, p. 401, n. 8 and p. 542; Marichal, 1945, p. 68.82; De Kuyffer, 1989, p. 940, no. 221; Daris, 1994a, p. 191. The addition Rinoc(oruris) [n. pl.] in l. 31 is probably preferable to the Rinoc(orurae) [f. s.] of the editions; see § Orthographic variants; since, however, none of the marginal toponyms in the text is written in full, it is not sure at all how the names were declined. In the next entry a soldier stationed in Ostrakine is mentioned.

#### 4. Rinokoloura

Second consulate of Praesens and second of Condianus. At Rinocorura. Pathermuthis son of Ptolemeus: Heliopolitanus. In the strongbox: on deposit, 100 denarii; as viaticum, 75 denarii. Received of his pay 84 denarii, 15 3/4 oboli. From that, contribution, 4 denarii, 22 1/2 oboli. Took the rest, 79 denarii, 21 1/4 oboli. Has on deposit 100 denarii; as viaticum, 75 denarii.

In another, very fragmentary Latin military account (30), palaeographically dated in the 3rd century AD, Rinokoloura, Ostrakine and Gerra are probably mentioned as some of the places where soldiers of an unknown unit are staying<sup>1037</sup>:

- 20 [ ],te  
[ Rin]ocuroris  
[ Ostra]çine  
23 [ ] Cerro  
[ ] at Rinocurora. [ ] at Ostracine. [ ] at Cerrum.

Hippolytos (21-28) describes in 234/235 AD the regions where the descendants lived of the biblical Sem, Cham and Iapheth, the three sons of Noe<sup>1038</sup>. In his concept Rinokoloura appears to lie at the border between the land of Sem (Asia) and that of Cham (Africa), i.e. at the border between Syria and Egypt. The borders of the land of Sem are indicated as follows, but the phrasing is not always clear<sup>1039</sup>:

- (47) πλάτος δὲ ἀπὸ τῆς Ἰνδικῆς ἕως Ῥινοκορούρων  
'widthwise from India till Rinokoroura'  
(188) ἀπὸ Βάκτρων ἕως Ῥινοκορούρων τῆς ὀριζούσης Συρίαν καὶ Αἴγυπτον καὶ τὴν Ἐρυθρὰν θάλασσαν ἀπὸ στόματος τοῦ κατὰ τὸν Ἀρσινοίτην τῆς Ἰνδικῆς  
'from Bactria till Rinokoroura that lies on the border of Syria and Egypt and the Red Sea from the mouth near the Arsinoites of India' (?)<sup>1040</sup>  
(191) ἀπὸ Ἡλιοπόλεως τῆς ἔσω ἕως Ῥινοκορούρων καὶ τῆς Κιλικίας  
'from Heliou Polis in the interior till Rinokoroura and Cilicia'  
(195) μῆκος μὲν ἀπὸ τῆς Ἰνδικῆς ἕως Ῥινοκορούρων  
'lengthwise from India till Rinokoroura'

The borders of the land of Cham are indicated as follows<sup>1041</sup>:

- (48) ἀπὸ Ῥινοκορούρων ἕως Γαδείρων τὰ πρὸς νότον  
'from Rinokoroura till Gadeira (sc. Gades) in the south'  
(130) ἀπὸ Ῥινοκορούρων ἕως Γαδείρων τὰ πρὸς νότον ἐπὶ μῆκος  
'from Rinokoroura till Gadeira in the south lengthwise'  
(136) ἀπὸ Ῥινοκορούρων τῆς ὀριζούσης Συρίαν καὶ Αἴγυπτον καὶ Αἰθιοπίαν ἕως Γαδείρων ἐπὶ μῆκος

<sup>1037</sup> ChLA XI, 479, 20-23; for the supplements, cf. Daris, 1994a, p. 189-191.

<sup>1038</sup> Cf. *Genesis*, 8-10, especially 9, 18-19. This original list was apparently organised with the Syrian mount Saphon - later mount Kasion - as its geographical centre; cf. Lipinski, Édouard, s.v. šāpōn, in TWAT, VI, 1989, col. 1096.

<sup>1039</sup> Hippolytos, *Chronicon*, 47 (Helm, 1955, p. 10); 188 (Helm, 1955, p. 28); 191 (Helm, 1955, p. 29); 195 (Helm, 1955, p. 29).

<sup>1040</sup> Even with an emendation for the second clause as suggested by the editor (ἀπὸ στόματος τῆς (sc. θαλάσσης) κατὰ ...) this passage remains obscure; probably the first clause meant something as 'Rinokoloura (the city) that lies on the border of Syria and Egypt, opposite the Red Sea' as written in Epiphanius, *Ancoratus*, 112, 3 (Holl, 1915, p. 137) (41), or '(the region) which extends till Syria, Egypt and the Red Sea' as written in the Chronographus Alexandrinus, 157 (118).

<sup>1041</sup> Hippolytos, *Chronicon*, 48 (Helm, 1955, p. 10); 130 (Helm, 1955, p. 20); 136 (Helm, 1955, p. 21); 196 (Helm, 1955, p. 30).

#### 4. Rinokoloura

'from Rinokoroura that lies on the border of Syria and Egypt and Ethiopia till Gadeira lengthwise'<sup>1042</sup>

(196) ἀπὸ Ρῖνοκορούρων τῆς ὀριζούσης Συρίαν καὶ Αἴγυπτον καὶ Αἰθιοπίαν ἕως Γαδείρων

'from Rinokoroura that lies on the border of Syria and Egypt and Ethiopia till Gadeira'

In later authors the same division became institutionalized<sup>1043</sup>. In the 4th century AD Epiphanius mentions the division twice, but elaborates the story while trying to make it more plausible<sup>1044</sup>:

##### (*Ancoratus* (41))

καὶ τῷ μὲν Σῆμ τῷ πρωτοτόκῳ ὑπέπεσεν ὁ κλῆρος ἀπὸ Περσίδος καὶ Βάκτρων ἕως Ἰνδικῆς <τὸ μῆκος, πλάτος δὲ ἀπὸ Ἰνδικῆς> ἕως τῆς χώρας Ῥινοκορούρων· κείται δὲ αὕτη ἢ Ῥινοκορούρων ἀνὰ μέσον Αἰγύπτου καὶ Παλαιστίνης, ἀντικρὺ τῆς Ἐρυθρᾶς θαλάσσης. (4) Χάμ δὲ τῷ δευτέρῳ ἀπὸ τῆς αὐτῆς Ῥινοκορούρων ἕως Γαδείρων τὰ πρὸς νότον. Ἰάφεθ δὲ τῷ τρίτῳ ἀπὸ Μηδίας ἕως Γαδείρων καὶ Ῥινοκορούρων τὰ πρὸς βορρᾶν.

'And to the first-born son Sem fell the region from Persis and Bactria till India lengthwise, from India till the area of Rinokoroura widthwise; this area of Rinokoroura lies between Egypt and Palestine, opposite to the Red Sea. To the second son Cham fell the region from the same area of Rinokoroura till Gadeira in the south. To the third son Iapheth fell the region from Media till Gadeira and Rinokoroura in the north.'

##### (*Panarion adversus haereses* (42))

Νῶε γάρ, σωθεὶς ἀπὸ τοῦ κατακλυσμοῦ καὶ ἡ αὐτοῦ σύμβιος σὺν τοῖς τρισὶν υἱοῖς αὐτοῦ καὶ τρισὶ νύμφαις, μόνος διαιρῶν τὸν πάντα κόσμον, τοῖς τρισὶν υἱοῖς αὐτοῦ, τῷ Σῆμ καὶ Χάμ καὶ Ἰάφεθ, διείλε βαλὼν τοὺς κλήρους ἐν Ῥινοκορούροις, ὡς καὶ ἡ ἀκολουθία ἔχει, καὶ οὐδὲν κενόφωνον οὐδὲ παραπτεποιημένον. (5) Ῥινοκόρουρα γὰρ ἐρμηνεύεται Νέελ, καὶ οὕτω φύσει οἱ ἐπιχώριοι αὐτὴν καλοῦσιν· ἀπὸ δὲ τῆς Ἑβραϊδος ἐρμηνεύεται κλήροι, ἐπειδὴ περ ὁ Νῶε ἐκεῖ ἔβαλε τοὺς κλήρους τοῖς τρισὶν υἱοῖς αὐτοῦ. (6) καὶ <τῷ μὲν Χάμ> ὑπέπεσεν ὁ κλῆρος ἀπὸ Ῥινοκορούρων ἄχρι Γαδείρων, ... (7) ταῦτα τὰ πρὸς νότον, ἀπὸ δὲ Ῥινοκορούρων τὰ πρὸς ἀνατολήν, ...

'For Noe, when he had been saved from the flood together with his wife and three sons and their three brides, alone divided up the whole world among his three sons Sem, Cham and Iapheth, making the division by casting lots in Rinokoroura, as was fitting; there is nothing idle or fictitious about the account. For Rinokoroura may be translated "Neel", and that in fact is what the local folk call it. In Hebrew this means "lots", since that is where Noe cast the lots for his three sons. To

<sup>1042</sup> The phrasing in 136 (and in 196 which is probably based upon 136) is not clear. In the corresponding passages in *Liber genealogus*, 163 (Mommsen, 1892, p. 168) (65) and in *Liber generationis I*, 137 (Mommsen, 1892, p. 101) (88) 'Ethiopia' has dropped out.

<sup>1043</sup> Cf. the 'stemma' of the several versions of Hippolytos' text in Helm, 1955, p. XIV, including *Liber generationis II*, 48. 91 (Mommsen, 1892, I, p. 95) (37-38), *Liber genealogus*, 111. 157. 163 (Mommsen, 1892, I, p. 166-168), (63-65) *Liber generationis I*, 49. 50. 130. 137. 188. 191. 193 (Mommsen, 1892, I, p. 95.100-101.106) (85-91), *Chronicon paschale*, 29 C-D, 31 B, 31 C-D (Dindorf, 1832, I, p. 52.55.56) (108, 110-111), Chronographus Alexandrinus (*Excerpta Latina Barbari*), 26. 27. 103. 109. 157. 160. 162 (Mommsen, 1892, I, p. 95.100-101.106) (114-120) and Synkellos, 82. 86. 89 (Mosshammer, 1984, p. 46-47.48.52) (132-134). Some texts quote Hippolytos only partially: Arnobius Iunior, *Commentarii in Psalmos*, 104 (Migne, PL 53, 1847, col. 481) (80), quoted again in Beda Venerabilis, *De temporum ratione*, 66, 26-27 (Jones, 1977, p. 469) (127) and in Ado Viennensis, *Chronicon*, Aetas secunda, 1785 (Migne, PL 123, 1852, col. 27-28) (149); Malalas, *Chronographia*, 1, 6 (Jeffreys, 1986, p. 5) (103); Georgios Monachos, *Chronicon*, 2, 16 (De Boor, 1978, p. 55) (148); Georgios Kedrenos, *Historiarum compendium* (Bekker, 1838, I, p. 23-24) (155).

<sup>1044</sup> Epiphanius, *Ancoratus*, 112, 3-4 (Holl, 1915, p. 137) - following Hippolytos - and *Panarion adversus haereses*, 66, 83, 4-7 (Holl, 1985, p. 125) (cf. the translation by Amidon, 1990, p. 241). The passage from the *Ancoratus* is quoted with slight changes by the *Chronicon paschale*, 26 C, 28 A, 30 B (Dindorf, 1832, I, p. 46.49.53) (106-107, 109), by Anastasios Sinaita, *Quaestio* 28 (Migne, PG 89, 1865, col. 557) (113) and by the Ravennas geographus, 2, 21; 3, 12; 5, 16 (Pinder, 1860, p. 116-117.166.388; Schnetz, 1940, p. 32-33.43.97) (122-123, 125); Ravennas geographus, 3, 12 (123) is quoted with slight changes by Guido, 122 (Pinder, 1860, p. 549; Schnetz, 1940, p. 140) (158).



#### 4. Rinokoloura

Cham fell the region from Rinokoroura till Gadeira ... That was his region to the south. From Rinokoloura to the east ...'  
Epiphanius seems to be the first to introduce a new element in the tradition about Noe: Rinokoloura forms not only the border for the regions of Noe's sons, but was also the place where Noe himself cast the lots for his sons. He defends his point of view almost emotionally - 'there is nothing idle or fictitious about the account' - with an etymological argument: Noe cast the lots for his sons at a place which is called Neel, because κληροί, 'lots, heritage', in Hebrew means Neel<sup>1045</sup>; Neel (Nahal - but now with the significance of 'brook!') is identical with Rinokoloura - which is probably a reference to the Septuaginta translation of *Isaias*, 27, 12 (4) -, so this is the place where Noe cast the lots. Epiphanius adds that the locals in fact call Rinokoloura Neel; this is probably not a real tradition, but just an assumption on the basis of the Septuaginta, where the name of the brook has already been mixed up with the name of the city, supposed to lie in the neighbourhood of that brook.

#### *Rinokoloura in the 4th century AD*

In the *Itinerarium provinciarum Antonini Augusti* (32), composed ca. 300 AD, Rinokoloura is situated at 22 miles (ca. 33 km) from Raphia and at 24 miles (ca. 36 km) from Ostrakine<sup>1046</sup>.

|            |             |
|------------|-------------|
| Rafia      |             |
| Rinocorura | m.p. XXII   |
| Ostracena  | m.p. XXVIII |

'Rafia to Rinocorura, 22 miles. (Rinocorura) to Ostracena, 24 miles.'

The official Theophanes travelled from Upper Egypt to Antiocheia in Syria, possibly in 322 or 323 AD. Some memoranda and accounts of this journey - both drafts and fair copies - are preserved (33-34). On 21 Pharmouthi (16 April) Theophanes came from Ostrakine, travelled 24 miles (ca. 36 km) - his tenth stage - and arrived in Rinokoloura, where he spent the night. The next day he first travelled to Boutaphios and further on to Raphia, but the exact distances are not preserved. This itinerary is mentioned twice, both as a draft and as a fair copy<sup>1047</sup>:

<sup>1045</sup> Cf. Gressmann, 1924, p. 244; Tonneau, 1926, p. 595; Abel, 1933, I, p. 301; Amidon, 1990, p. 241, n. 45: the Hebrew 'nahal' means 'take possession of', 'inherit', but also 'brook'. See also the Septuaginta translation of 'nahal', 'brook', in *Ezechiel*, 48, 28 with κληρονομία ('inheritance').

<sup>1046</sup> *Itinerarium provinciarum Antonini Augusti*, 151, 3 - 152, 1 (Cuntz, 1929, p. 21). See § Topographical situation for the proposed emendations of the figure between Rinokoloura and Raphia.

<sup>1047</sup> P.Ryl. IV, 627, 234-236 is a draft for P.Ryl. IV, 628, 9-11.

#### 4. Rinokoloura

(627, draft)

|     |      |                                  |                               |
|-----|------|----------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 234 | [ι   | ἀπὸ Ὀστρακίνης εἰς Ῥινοκόρωνα    | μίλ(ια) κδ                    |
|     | [ια  | ἀπὸ Ῥινοκόρωνα <εἰς> Βουτάφιον   | [μίλ(ια) ιθ?] <sup>1048</sup> |
| 236 | [    | ἀπὸ Βουτάφιου εἰς Ῥαφείαν        | μίλ(ια) ι?γ                   |
| 234 | '[10 | From Os]trakine to Rin[okorona   | milia] 24                     |
|     | [11  | From Rino]korona <to> Boutaphios | [milia 19?]                   |
| 236 | [    | From Bou]taphios to Rapheia      | [milia 1]3?'                  |

(628, fair copy)

|    |      |                                  |
|----|------|----------------------------------|
| 9  | [ι   | ἀπὸ Ὀστρακίνης εἰς Ῥινοκόρουρα]  |
|    | [ια  | ἀπὸ Ῥινοκόρουρα [εἰς] Βουτάφισ]  |
| 11 | [    | ἀπὸ Βουτάφισ εἰς Ῥαφ[ίαν]        |
| 9  | '[10 | From O]strakine to Rinok[oroura] |
|    | [11  | From Ri]nokoroura to B[outaphis] |
| 11 | [    | From] Boutaphis to Raph[ia]'     |

One notices how Theophanes corrected the irregular 'Rinokorona' into the more common form 'Rinokoroura'.

On his way back from Antiocheia to Egypt Theophanes (35-36) travelled again from Raphia via Boutaphios to Rinokoloura, where he bought - in the morning of 10 Mesore (3 August) - four breads<sup>1049</sup>, food for the slaves, peaches, pumpkins, cucumbers, eggs for dinner, wine for lunch, a supply of bread for the next stage, household olive oil<sup>1050</sup>, four metretai wine for the road and some eggs, also for the road<sup>1051</sup>.

(638, itinerary)

|    |  |           |
|----|--|-----------|
| 22 | [ἀπ]ὸ Ῥαφίας εἰς Βουτάφιον                           | μίλ(ια) ] |
| 23 | [ἀπ]ὸ Βουτάφιου εἰς [Ῥινοκόρουρα(?)] <sup>1052</sup> | μίλ(ια) ] |
| 22 | [Fro]m Raphia to B[outaphios                         | milia ]   |
| 23 | [Fro]m B[ou]taphios to [R]ino[koroura?]              | milia ]   |

(630\*, account)

|     |                                 |                   |
|-----|---------------------------------|-------------------|
| 454 | ι ἐν Ῥινοκόρουρα]               |                   |
| 455 | ψωμίων δ                        | (δρ.) υ           |
|     | κιβαρ(ίων) τοῖς παιδ(ίοις)      | (δρ.) υ           |
|     | [δω]ράκια                       | (δρ.) σ           |
|     | κολοκύνθ(ων)                    | (δρ.) ρ           |
|     | σικυδίων                        | (δρ.) ρ           |
| 460 | ῥῶν εἰς διπν(ον)                | (δρ.) υ           |
|     | οἴνου ἡμῖν εἰς ἄριστ(ον)        | (δρ.) Ἄυ          |
|     | ἄλλων ψωμίων εἰς τῆ]ν ὁδὸν      |                   |
|     | τῆς β μονᾶς                     | (δρ.) Ἄσ          |
|     | ἐλαίου κιβαρ(ίου)               | (δρ.) υ           |
| 465 | οἴνου εἰς τὴν ὁδὸν μετ(ρητῶν) δ | (δρ.) Ἄω          |
|     | ῥῶν εἰς τὴν ὁδὸν                | (δρ.) υ           |
| 467 | γ(ίν.) τῆς ἡμέρ(ας)             | (τάλ.) α (δρ.) Ἄω |

'On the 10th (sc. Mesore), in Rinokoroura: 4 (loafs) of bread, 400 dr.; food for the slaves, 400 dr.; peaches, 200 dr.; pumpkins, 100 dr.; cucumbers, 100 dr.; eggs for dinner, 400 dr.; wine for you (sc. Theophanes) for lunch, 1400 dr.; other loafs of bread for the road for the second stopping-place,

<sup>1048</sup> For the restoration of the figures, see s.v. Boutaphios.

<sup>1049</sup> For this bread, cf. Drexhage, 1998, p. 3-4.

<sup>1050</sup> For this kind of oil, cf. Drexhage, 1998, p. 4-5.7.

<sup>1051</sup> P.Ryl. IV, 638, 22-23 for the itinerary, P.Ryl. IV, 630\* [immo 633: fair copy; 637: draft], 454-467 for the account.

<sup>1052</sup> The editor restores [Ῥινοκόρουρα], but it is not impossible that [Ῥινοκόρωνα] was written, as in the draft P.Ryl. IV, 627, 235 (33), just as the name Boutaphios occurs both in 627 and 638, despite the corrected form Boutaphis in 628, which has been written before 638.

#### 4. Rinokoloura

1200 dr.; household olive oil, 400 dr.; 4 metretai of wine for the road 2800 dr.; eggs for the road 400 dr.; makes for this day 1 talent, 2800 (sic) dr.<sup>1053</sup>,

Roberts considers it significant that Theophanes bought large quantities of supplies in Rinokoloura before entering the desert<sup>1054</sup>, but the fact that he is able to buy food the next day in Ostrakine and in Kasion and the day afterwards in Pentaschoinon and in Pelousion, proves that the region is not really inhospitable. Anyway, Theophanes also bought food for the road in Antiocheia (l. 220-221) and in Pelousion (l. 492-493.499), which is an indication that these acquisitions have nothing to do with the presence of concrete commodities along the road, but with the general organisation of his journey.

The *Constitutum Silvestri* (94-95), one of the *Apocrypha Symmachiana* fabricated in the early 6th century AD, mentions a council held by pope Silvester in May 324 AD in Rome in the *Thermae Domitianae*, with among the participants '57 *episcopi partis Rinocoruris, quorum cirographus in eorum concilio declaratur*<sup>1055</sup>. While already the whole text has a doubtful historical value, it is not known what these '57 bishops from the group in Rinokoloura, whose handwritten document (*χειρόγραφος*) is presented in their council' could be<sup>1056</sup>.

The first reliable Christian attestation for Rinokoloura<sup>1057</sup> is found in the *Epistula ad Serapionem* of Athanasios (39), in which Athanasios appointed Salomon (Solomon) bishop of Rinokoloura, possibly in 339 AD<sup>1058</sup>:

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<sup>1053</sup> Instead of a total of 1 talent and 2800 drachmas, one expects a total of 1 talent and 1800 drachmas [(τάλλ.) α (δρ.) 'Αω].

<sup>1054</sup> Roberts, P.Ryl. IV, 1952, p. 148.

<sup>1055</sup> *Constitutum Silvestri*, actio prima, caput 1, editio secunda (Migne, PL 8, 1844, col. 832; cf. editio prima, col. 831: '57 *episcopi patris (sic) Rinocororis, quorum cyrographus in eorum concilio declaratur*') (94); cf. Maassen, 1870, p. 411-414; CPL, 1995, p. 547, no. 1681.

<sup>1056</sup> Cf. the comment in Migne, PL 8, 1844, col. 843-844.

<sup>1057</sup> Baedeker, 1912, p. 122, Beer, Georg, s.v. Rinocolura, Rinocorura, in RE, I A 1, 1914, col. 841 and Buhl, F., s.v. al-'Arish, in EncIslam(2), I, 1960, p. 651 state - quite misleadingly - that Rinokoloura was a bishopric in the first Christian centuries under the name of Laris, and Beer even speaks of a bishopric Laris in Rinokoloura; Laris, in fact, is the Latin name for el-Arish from the 12th century AD on, but this town as such is not known as a bishopric.

<sup>1058</sup> Athanasios, *Epistula ad Serapionem* (Syriac version) (translated in Larsow, 1852, p. 128 (non vidi); cf. Munier, 1943, p. 9 and Timm, 1984, I, p. 147); cf. Migne, PG 26, 1887, col. 1414. As this letter to Serapion of Thmouis was inserted in the Easter letters between *Epistula* 11 and *Epistula* 13, it sometimes is called *Epistula* 12; actually, *Epistula* 12 is not preserved and the letter to Serapion probably only accompanied such an Easter letter. As it is not obvious to which letter it belonged, the proposed date often differs: 336 (Van Gucht, 1982, p. 127-128.130), 337 (Lorenz, 1986, p. 30: accompanying letter 9), 338 (Fedalto, 1988, p. 607.609.610), 339 (Munier, 1943, p. 9; Timm, 1984, I, p. 147; Worp, 1994, p. 306.307; Martin, 1996, p. 62), 340 or 341 (Migne, PG 26, 1887, col. 1412), 346 (?) (Timm, 1991, V, p. 2265 - Timm seems to mingle the information about the *Epistula ad Serapionem* and *Epistula* 19 and has for this aspect to be used with care).

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'In Rinokoroura, Salomon.'

Because no name of a predecessor is mentioned in the letter, Martin thinks that the see was then created by Athanasios, but the argumentation is not really conclusive<sup>1059</sup>.

About 439-443 AD Sozomenos (77) mentions Rinokoloura as a centre of scholarship. He especially named three local men: bishop Melas, whose arrest and voluntary banishment as an anti-Arian is described in detail; Dionysios, who lived in a φροντιστήριον - a 'meditation school' - in the desert north of the city; thirdly, Solomon or Solon<sup>1060</sup>, who was a former merchant and succeeded his brother Melas as bishop<sup>1061</sup>:

(6) καὶ Ῥινοκόρουρα δὲ οὐκ ἐπεισάκτοις ἀλλ' οἴκοθεν ἀνδράσιν ἀγαθοῖς ἐξ ἐκείνου διέπρεπεν· ὧν δὲ ἐνθάδε φιλοσοφεῖν ἐπιτροπεύοντα, καὶ Διονύσιον ὃς πρὸς βορέαν τῆς πόλεως ἐν ἐρημίᾳ τὸ φροντιστήριον εἶχε, καὶ Σολομῶνα τὸν Μέλανος ἀδελφὸν καὶ τῆς ἐπισκοπῆς διάδοχον. (7) λέγεται δέ, ἡνίκα προστέτακτο τοὺς κατὰ πόλιν ἱερέας ἐναντίως Ἀρείῳ φρονούντας ἀπελαύνεσθαι, καταλαβεῖν Μέλαντα τοὺς ἐπ' αὐτὸν ἐλθόντας τοὺς λύχνους τῆς ἐκκλησίας παρασκευαζόμενον, οἷά γε ὑπὲρ τὴν ἔσχατον, ἐπὶ ῥυπῶντι ἱμάτιῳ ὑπὸ τοῦ ἐλαίου τὴν ζώνην ἔχοντα καὶ τὰς θρυαλλίδας ἐπιφερόμενον. (8) ἐρωτηθέντα δὲ περὶ τοῦ ἐπισκόπου εἰπεῖν ὡς ἐνθάδε ἐστί, καὶ μηνύσω τοῦτον· αὐτίκα δὲ τοὺς ἀνδρας οἷά γε ἐξ ὁδοῦ κεκμηκότας εἰς τὸ ἐπισκοπικὸν καταγῶγιον ὁδηγήσαι, καὶ τράπεζαν παραθεῖναι, καὶ ἐκ τῶν ὄντων ἐστιᾶσαι. (9) μετὰ δὲ τὴν ἐστιᾶσιν νιψάμενον τὰς χεῖρας (διηκουεῖτο γὰρ τοῖς ἐστιωμένοις) ἑαυτὸν προσαγγεῖλαι· τοὺς δὲ τὸν ἄνδρα θαυμάσαντας ὁμολογήσαι μὲν ἐφ' ᾧ ἐληλύθεισαν, αἰδοῖ δὲ τῆ πρὸς αὐτὸν ἐξουσίαν δοῦναι φυγῆς· τὸν δὲ φάναι ὡς 'οὐκ ἂν προσίμην ταῦτά τοις ὁμοδόξοις ἱερεῦσιν μὴ ὑπομείναι', ἀλλ' ἐκοντὶ ἐλέσθαι εἰς τὴν ὑπερορίαν ἐλθεῖν. πᾶσαν δέ, οἷά γε ἐκ νέου φιλοσοφῆσας, μοναχικὴν ἀρετὴν ἐξησκείτο. (10) ὁ δὲ Σολομῶν ἀπὸ ἐμπόρου εἰς μοναχὸν μεταβαλὼν, οὐδὲ αὐτὸς ὀλίγον ἀπώνατο τῆς ἔνθεν ὠφελείας· ὑπὸ διδασκάλῳ γὰρ τῷ ἀδελφῷ καὶ τοῖς τῆδε φιλοσοφοῦσιν ἐπιμελῶς παιδευθεὶς καὶ περὶ τὸ θεῖον ὅτι μάλιστα προθύμως ἐσπούδαζε καὶ πρὸς τοὺς πέλαι ἀγαθὸς ἐτύγχανεν. (11) ἡ μὲν Ῥινοκοροῦρων ἐκκλησία τοιούτων ἐξ ἀρχῆς ἡγεμόνων ἐπιτυχοῦσα οὐ διέλιπεν ἐξ ἐκείνου μέχρι καὶ εἰς ἡμᾶς καὶ εἰσέτι νῦν τοῖς ἐκείνων χρωμένῃ θεσμοῖς καὶ ἀγαθοῖς ἀνδρας φέρουσα· κοινὴ δὲ ἐστί τοῖς αὐτόθι κληρικαῖς οἰκησίς τε καὶ τράπεζα καὶ τᾶλλα πάντα.

'Also Rinokoroura was celebrated at this period, on account of the holy men, not from abroad, but who were natives of the place. I have heard that the most eminent philosophers among them were Melas, who then administered the church of the country; Dionysios, who presided over a monastery situated to the north of the city in the desert; and Solomon, the brother of Melas and the successor to the bishopric. It is said that when the decree for the ejection of all priests opposed to Areios was issued, the officers appointed to apprehend Melas found him engaged as the lowest servant, in trimming the lights of the church, with a girdle soiled with oil on his cloak, and carrying the wicks. When they asked him for the bishop, he replied that he was within, and that he would conduct them to him. As they were fatigued with their journey, he led them to the episcopal dwelling, made them

<sup>1059</sup> Martin, 1996, p. 64-68, 74, 96, 101. As bishop Salomon does not occur in the synod of Serdika in 346 AD, Martin thinks that we should have heard of his death, and she tentatively suggests that he was converted to Arianism somewhere after 339 AD; it has to be stressed that no evidence whatsoever supports this point of view.

<sup>1060</sup> The manuscript tradition differs between the two names; cf. the apparatus criticus in Bidez, 1960, p. 287. Cassiodorus (104), Bidez and Van Gucht, 1982, p. 128 read Solomon; Nikephoros Kallistos (162), Le Quien, 1740, II, col. 541, Gams, 1873, p. 461, Hartranft, 1979, p. 369, Timm, 1984, I, p. 147, Fedalto, 1988, p. 607 and Worp, 1994, p. 306 read Solon. The name Solon may be a short Greek form of the Jewish name Solomon; cf. Clarysse, 1994, p. 199.

<sup>1061</sup> Sozomenos, *Historia ecclesiastica*, 6, 31, 6-11 (Bidez, 1960, p. 286-287); cf. the translation of Hartranft, 1891, p. 369; quoted with slight changes by Nikephoros Kallistos, *Historia ecclesiastica*, 11, 38 (Migne, PG 146, 1865, col. 707-710) (162).

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sit down at table, and gave them to eat of such things as he had. After the repast, he supplied them with water to wash their hands; for he served the guests, and then told him who he was. Amazed at his conduct, they confessed the mission on which they had arrived; but from respect to him, gave him full liberty to go where ever he would. He, however, replied that he would not shrink from the sufferings to which the other bishops who maintained the same sentiments as himself were exposed, and that he was willing to go into exile. Having philosophized from his youth, he had exercised himself in all the monastic virtues. Solomon quitted the pursuits of commerce to embrace a monastic life, a measure which tended greatly to his welfare; for under the instruction of his brother and other ascetics, he progressed rapidly in piety towards god, and in goodness towards his neighbour. The church of Rinokoroura having been thus, from the beginning, under the guidance of such exemplary bishops, never afterwards swerved from their precepts, and produced good men. The clergy of this church dwell in one house, sit at the same table, and have everything in common.' There is no further information about the φροντιστήριον of Dionysios in Rinokoloura, so one cannot even know for sure whether it was a monastery or a secular community. The church of Rinokoloura was lighted by oil lamps, and probably in the neighbourhood of the church was the episcopal dwelling (τὸ ἐπισκοπικὸν καταγώγιον), where the whole clergy of the city lived and ate together.

Sozomenos' story has been translated and abridged in the 6th century AD by Cassiodorus (104)<sup>1062</sup>, and this text is the basis of a passage in Petrus Callo, who wrote in the 14th century BC (163). Callo, however, made some alterations. The city of Rinokoloura is not mentioned, and Melas is called a disciple of Euagrios, which is probably incorrectly inferred from the mention of Euagrios earlier in the work of Sozomenos and Cassiodorus. The exact date of Melas' death was not known, but Petrus Callo inserted this lemma on 22 October after the one dedicated to Mellonus of Rotomagus (Rouen), apparently because of an alleged homonymy<sup>1063</sup>:

De sancto Mela. Melas, ut dicit Socrates in Historia tripartita, discipulus fuit Euagrii et episcopus. ...

'The holy Melas. Melas, as Socrates says in his *Historia tripartita*, was a disciple of Euagrios and a bishop. ...'

In the second half of the 14th century AD Petrus de Natalibus (164) apparently followed the text of Petrus Callo, but he inserted the lemma on 16 January after the one dedicated to Mellantius of Rotomagus. He also dated the events in the reign of king Hunneric (477-484), which is clearly anachronistic<sup>1064</sup>.

post multos agones in Christo dormivit XVII Calendas Februarii sub Hunnerico rege.

'After many events he died in Christ on the 17th before the Kalendae of February under king Hunnericus.'

The life of Melas was also copied in several other martyrologia of the 16th century AD<sup>1065</sup> and was finally recorded in 1584 in the *Martyrologium Romanum*

<sup>1062</sup> Cassiodorus, *Historia ecclesiastica tripartita*, 8, 1, 96-101 (Hanslik, 1952, p. 471).

<sup>1063</sup> Petrus Callo, *Legendae* (De Gaiffier, 1946, p. 67); cf. Poncelet, 1910, p. 100, no. 758.

<sup>1064</sup> Petrus de Natalibus, *Catalogus sanctorum*, 2, 90 (mentioned in De Gaiffier, 1946, p. 68).

<sup>1065</sup> Cf. De Gaiffier, 1946, p. 69; Sauget, Joseph-Marie, s.v. Melas, in BS, IX, 1967, col. 290.

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(166). Baronius added that the bishop of Rinokoloura was exiled in the time of Valens (364-378), probably because this emperor was known for his Arian sympathies<sup>1066</sup>:

Rhinocolurae, in Aegypto, sancti Melae episcopi, qui sub Valente exsilium et alia gravia pro fide catholica passus, in pace quievit.

'In Rhinocolura in Egypt, (the day) of the holy bishop Melas, who under Valens suffered exile and other serious punishments for his catholic fate and rests in peace.'

The date of the events is controversial. It is possible to identify Solomon with the homonymous bishop of 339 AD and to place the banishment of Melas a few years earlier (ca. 335-337 AD, under Athanasios' first exile?). The phrasing of Sozomenos, 6, 31, 11, 'The church of Rinokoloura having been thus, from the beginning (ἐξ ἀρχῆς), under the guidance of such exemplary bishops', might indeed support the view that Melas and Solomon were among the first bishops of Rinokoloura<sup>1067</sup>. The circumstances, however, described in Sozomenos, 6, 31, 7 - 'when the decree for the ejection of all priests opposed to Areios was issued' - better match the government of Valens, as suggested by Baronius, and this date is followed by many scholars<sup>1068</sup>, who so date Melas ca. 370 and Solomon or Solon ca. 380 AD<sup>1069</sup>.

Hilarion, who died in 371 AD, lived in the neighbourhood of Gaza. Hieronymus (46) tells that he cured a blind woman who came from the small village of Phakidia near Rinokoloura and who had spent all her money in vain on physicians<sup>1070</sup>:

Facidia viculus est Rhinocorurae, urbis Aegypti. de hoc ergo vico decem iam annis caeca mulier adducta est ad beatum Hilarionem, oblataque ei a fratribus - iam enim multi cum eo monachi erant - omnem se substantiam expendisse ait in medicos.

'Facidia is a hamlet of Rhinocorura, a city in Egypt. From this village a woman, who was already blind for ten year, was brought to the blessed Hilarion; brothers presented her to him - for there

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<sup>1066</sup> *Martyrologium Romanum*, 16 Ianuarius (Martyrologium, 1922, p. 14); cf. Delehay, 1940, p. 23-24.

<sup>1067</sup> Cf. Tonneau, 1926, p. 596, n. 1; Van Gucht, 1982, p. 127-128; Figueras, 1999, p. 213; Van Nuffelen, 2004, p. 69 and n. 383.

<sup>1068</sup> Cf. Le Quien, 1740, II, col. 541; Gams, 1873, p. 461; Sauget, Joseph-Marie, s.v. Melas, in BS, IX, 1967, col. 289-290; Oren, 1982a, p. 37; Timm, 1984, I, p. 147-148; Fedalto, 1988, p. 607; Worp, 1994, p. 306; Martin, 1996, p. 65, n. 151.

<sup>1069</sup> Cf. Worp, 1994, p. 306. Oren, 1982a, p. 37 places Melas about 375 AD (cf. Gams, 1873, p. 461), but incorrectly calls him the first bishop of Rinokoloura. Lukaszewicz, 1978, p. 355-362 suggests an identification between Melas and the 'just anchorite apa Mela(s)' ([Α]ΓΙΑ ΜΕΛΛΑ: Ι ΑΝΑΧΩΡΙΤΗΣ Ι ΝΑΙΚΑΙΟΣ:) mentioned in an 11th century fresco from the cathedral of Faras in Nubia; except for the name, however, there are few elements that support this identification.

<sup>1070</sup> Hieronymus, *Vita Hilarionis*, 9, 1 (Bastiaensen, 1975, p. 90). This anecdote is translated into Greek by Sophronios, *Vita Hilarionis*, 15 (Papadopoulos, 1898, p. 92) (60), who omits the detail of Phakidia: γυνή δέ τις ἀπὸ Ῥινοκουρούρων τυφλωθεῖσα ἀπὸ δεκαετοῦς χρόνου, καὶ πάντα τὰ ὑπάρχοντα αὐτῆς ἰατροῖς προσαναλώσασα καὶ μηδὲν παρ' αὐτῶν ὠφελῆθεῖσα, ... ('A woman from Rinokouroura, who was already blind for ten year and had spent all her possessions on physicians, but had not been helped by them in any way').

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were already a lot of monks together with him - and she said that she had spent all her possessions on physicians.'

About 391/392 AD (?) Ammianus Marcellinus (47) mentions Rinokoloura as one of the places in the Egyptian province Augustamnica<sup>1071</sup>.

in Augustamnica Pelusium est oppidum nobile ... et Cassium ... et Ostracine et Rhinocorura.

'In Augustamnica is the famous town of Pelusium ... and Cassium ... and Ostracine and Rhinocorura.'

In the 4th century AD, possibly ca. 341-397 AD, a fragmentarily preserved list of payments or deliveries of grain (?) mentions four persons from Rinokoloura dealing with the Oxyrynchites nome in Middle Egypt. Their names (or patronymics) are only fragmentarily preserved: [ ], [ ]son, [ ] alias Boethos, [ ]otheos. Further in the papyrus (l. 6-20) at least eight persons from Ostrakine are listed dealing with either the Oxyrynchites or the Herakleopolites (49)<sup>1072</sup>.

|   |   |                     |
|---|---|---------------------|
| 1 | [ ] Ρινοκορουρίτου ὑπὲρ Ὀξυρυγχίτου   | μοδ(ίους) ,Α..[ ]   |
|   | [ ]σωνος Ρινοκορουρίτου ὑπὲρ Ὀξυρυγχίτου  | μοδ(ίους) ,Ασκβ [ ] |
|   | [ ] τῶ κ(αὶ) Βοίθου Ρινοκορουρίτου ὑπὲρ Ὀξυρυγχίτου                               | μοδ(ίους) χξα [ ]   |
|   | [ ]οθέου ..λοιαγων Ρινοκορουρίτου ὑπὲρ Ὀξυρυγχίτου                                | [μοδ(ίους) ]        |
| 5 | [ ]   |                     |
| 1 | [of ] from Rinokoroura on behalf of the Oxyrynchites                              | 1[...] modii        |
|   | [of ]son from Rinokoroura on behalf of the Oxyrynchites                           | 1222 modii [ ]      |
|   | [of ] alias Boethos from Rinokoroura on behalf of the Oxyrynchites                | 661 modii [ ]       |
|   | [of ]otheos ...(?) <sup>1073</sup> from Rinokoroura on behalf of the Oxyrynchites | [ modii]            |
| 5 | [ ]   |                     |

On the *Tabula Peutingeriana* (50), which possibly shows the situation of the 4th century AD, 'Rinocorura' is mentioned at a distance of 23 miles (ca. 34 km) east from Ostrakine<sup>1074</sup>. Raphia and Gaza are omitted. The distance of 15 miles (ca. 22 km) between Rinokoloura and Askalon is unacceptable; probably it only indicates the distance between Askalon and Gaza<sup>1075</sup>.

#### *Rinokoloura and the language of Canaan*

<sup>1071</sup> Ammianus Marcellinus, 22, 16, 3.

<sup>1072</sup> P.NYU Inv. # 461 Ro, 1-4 (Nielsen, 2002, p. 143); cf. Kramer, 2003, p. 327. See also s.v. Ostrakine.

<sup>1073</sup> For the first name there are several possible restorations, such as [Dor]otheos, [Tim]otheos or [Phil]otheos. The editors have no valid suggestions for the second word on the line.

<sup>1074</sup> *Tabula Peutingeriana* (Miller, 1916, col. 812-813), with a drawing of this section of the *Tabula* col. 857-858 - for Rinokoloura, see section IX 5 - and the data transposed to a modern map col. 813-814.

<sup>1075</sup> Cf. Miller, 1916, col. 812.

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*Isaias*, 19, 18 prophesies how one day Egypt will be terrified for Judah and how there will be five towns in Egypt speaking the language of Canaan and pledging themselves to Yahweh. These five towns have been located by some Christian authors of the 4th-5th centuries AD in the northern Sinai. In the *Epitaphium sanctae Paulae*, written in 404 AD, Hieronymus mentions - from east to west - the places Paula visited on her way from Palestine to Egypt<sup>1076</sup>:

et per harenas mollissimas pergentium vestigia subtrahentes, latamque heremi vastitatem, veniam ad Aegypti fluvium Sior, qui interpretatur 'turbidus', et quinque Aegypti transeam civitates, quae loquuntur lingua Chananitidi; et terram Gesen et campos Taneos, in quibus fecit Deus mirabilia.

'Par des plages de sables mouvants qui se dérobent sous les pas des voyageurs, puis par un grand désert désolé, j'arriverai à la rivière d'Égypte Sior, dont le sens est "trouble", je traverserai les cinq villes d'Égypte qui parlent le chananéen, la terre de Gessen, et les plaines de Tanis où Dieu fit des miracles.'

Hieronymus apparently quotes toponyms from the bible instead of contemporary names. Before one enters Egypt, 'Shihor, the river of Egypt' is situated at the other side of a large desert. This position probably reflects the tradition that placed the 'brook of Egypt' in the neighbourhood of Rinokoloura, although the mention of the desert is misleading<sup>1077</sup>. With the five cities of Egypt that spoke the language of Canaan Hieronymus alludes to some towns between Palestine and Egypt, probably in the Northern Sinai. Hieronymus in his comment on *Isaias* (52) specifies that Ostrakine was one of these places, together with other cities in the neighbourhood of Rinokoloura and Kasion. This last phrase is puzzling, and most likely the cities of Rinokoloura and Kasion themselves are referred to. Till his own time, Hieronymus continues, people in that part of Egypt speak Syrian. He notes the conviction that Syrians and Arabs from the neighbourhood were settled in that region by the Babylonian king Nebuchadnezzar (604-562 BC), but he does apparently not share that opinion himself<sup>1078</sup>:

alii ares, id est ὄστρακον, hoc est testam, urbem Ostracinem intellegi volunt, et ceteras iuxta Rhinocoruram et Casium civitates, quas usque hodie in Aegypto lingua Chananitide, hoc est, Syra loqui manifestum est; et putant e vicino Syros atque Arabas a Nabuchodonosor in illam terram fuisse translatos.

'Others understand 'ares', sc. 'ostrakon', i.e. 'sherd', as the city of Ostracine and the other cities near Rhinocorura and Casium, of which it is clear that they still today speak in the language of Canaan, i.e. in Syrian; and they believe that Syrians and Arabs from the neighbourhood were transferred by Nabuchodonosor to that country.'

<sup>1076</sup> Hieronymus, *Epistulae*, 108, 14 (Labourt, 1955, p. 175).

<sup>1077</sup> Stummer, 1935, p. 47-49 thinks that the Pelousiac branch is meant with the 'river of Egypt', but in that case he has to suppose a 'hysteron proteron' in the sentence.

<sup>1078</sup> Hieronymus, *Commentarii in Esaiam*, 5, 19, 18 (Adriaen, 1963a, p. 197-198); cf. 7, 19, 18 (Adriaen, 1963a, p. 283-285) discussing the allegorical implications of the speaking of the language of Canaan. See also s.v. Ostrakine for the broader context of the passage.



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Also Kyrillos (78) places those five cities in the Northern Sinai while identifying the first of them with Rinokoloura<sup>1079</sup>:

ὁμορος τοίνυν τῇ Χανααίων ἢ Αἰγυπτίων. ταύτη τοι καὶ αἱ πρὸς τοῖς πέρασι τῆς Αἰγύπτου πόλεις πρῶτον παραδέχονται τὸ σωτήριον κήρυγμα· πέντε δὲ αὐται, ὧν δὴ καὶ πρώτην εἶναι φαμεν τὴν ἰνυὶ Ῥινοκορουρητῶν. λαλοῦσι μὲν καὶ τῇ γλώσσει Χαναανίτιδι. ἐσπούδασται γὰρ τοῖς ἐν ταύταις ταῖς πόλεσιν, οὐχὶ τῆς Αἰγυπτίων φωνῆς μεταποιεῖσθαι τοσοῦτον, ὅσον τῆς Σύρων.

'Egypt, now, borders on Canaan. Therefore also the cities at the borders of Egypt were the first to receive the saving message; there are five of them, of which the present Rinokoroura is said to be the first. They also speak the language of Canaan. In those cities the people take care not to speak so much Egyptian as well Syrian.'

Kyrillos argues that those five cities were the first of Egypt to have come into contact with Christianity - which is not very likely - and states - as Hieronymus - that they spoke the language of Canaan, i.e. Syrian.

Some scholars<sup>1080</sup> think that the information of Hieronymus and Kyrillos - both familiar with Egypt - is to be trusted and does not represent a purely allegorical explanation of the bible; they state that the inhabitants of the towns on the coast between Rinokoloura and Kasion did indeed speak Syrian in the early 5th century AD. This is not surprising: Rinokoloura did probably not belong to Egypt in the 1st century BC and the 1st century AD, and the presence of two former inhabitants of the Palestinian city of Nessana in 511 AD, living already for a long time in (the neighbourhood of) Rinokoloura (96), is an indication that the city was still oriented towards its eastern neighbours. Decisive evidence for the statement, however, is lacking.

#### *Rinokoloura in the 5th-7th centuries AD*

Polybios (67), a disciple of Epiphanius of Salamis, wrote a *Vita Epiphani*<sup>1081</sup>, in which he described how he went to the Thebais immediately after the death of his teacher in 403 AD and stayed there for a year. The praefectus Aegypti (?) 'the great' Heraklion ('Herakleion') was an inhabitant of Rinokoloura<sup>1082</sup> and when he visited the

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<sup>1079</sup> Kyrillos of Alexandria, *Commentarius in Isaiam prophetam*, 19, 18 (Migne, PG 70, 1859, col. 468).

<sup>1080</sup> Cf. Miller, 1916, col. 813; Abel, 1922, p. 413-414; Ovadiah, 1978, p. 140 and 1979, p. 430; Oren, 1982a, p. 38-39.45. Timm, 1984, I, p. 148-149 remains sceptical.

<sup>1081</sup> Polybios of Rinokoloura, *Vita Epiphani* (Migne, PG 41, 1585, col. 73-114).

<sup>1082</sup> About this Heraklion I could not find any further information. According to Évieux, 1995, p. 41-42, n. 48 the title ὁ ἀρχων τῆς Αἰγύπτου probably refers to the Augustalis or praefectus Aegypti, and Évieux considers him a large landowner with possessions in Rinokoloura. Pentadius and Euthalios were praefecti Augustales in the periods 403-404 and 404-405 AD (Bataille, 1955, p. 72) or 403-404 AD (PLRE, 1980, II, p. 1282 for both men), so Heraklion might be a successor of Euthalios. According

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city ca. 404-405 AD (?) and heard that the bishop was deceased, he made Polybios - against his will - come to Rinokoloura and had him elected as bishop of the city<sup>1083</sup>:

τῆ οὖν ὀγδόῃ ἡμέρᾳ κατὰ τὴν τοῦ ὁσίου Πατρὸς εὕρον πλοῖον διαπερῶν εἰς Αἴγυπτον, καὶ ἀνελθὼν ἀπέπλευσα, καὶ ἀνῆλθον εἰς τὴν ἄνω Θηβαίδα, καὶ ἐποίησα ἐνιαυτόν. καὶ κατερχόμενος ὁ μέγας Ἡρακλείων ὁ ἄρχων τῆς Αἰγύπτου ἐπὶ Ῥινοκουρούρων τὴν πόλιν (ἦν γὰρ καὶ οἰκίτηρ αὐτῆς), ἀκούσας ὅτι μαθητὴς ἐγενόμην τοῦ μεγάλου Ἐπιφανίου, μὴ θέλοντός μου, διὰ στρατιωτῶν ἤρπασέν με, καὶ ἐπὶ δρομοκαμήλῳ ἐπικαθίσας, κατήνεγκέν με εἰς Ῥινοκουρούρα. συνέβη δὲ τὸν ἐπίσκοπον τὸν ἐκεῖ τελευτῆσαι, καὶ ἐποίησεν με χειροτονηθῆναι ἐπίσκοπον τῆς ἐκκλησίας Ῥινοκουρούρων.

'On the eight day, therefore, I found a ship according to the wish of the Holy Father and I crossed to Egypt. I sailed to the south and went to the Upper Thebais, where I stayed for a year. The great Herakleion, who was in charge of Egypt, arrived in the city of Rinokouroura (for he was also an inhabitant of that city) and heard that I was a student of the great Epiphanius; against my will he had me taken by his soldiers, put on a race camel and brought to Rinokouroura. The bishop there had died, and he took care of it that I was elected as bishop of the church of Rinokouroura.'

Polybios accepted the assignment, and in a letter to Sabinos, the bishop of Konstantia (Salamis), he is considered bishop of the city of Rinokoloura<sup>1084</sup>:

ἐπιστολὴ Πολυβίου ἐπισκόπου πόλεως Ῥινοκουρούρων πρὸς Σαβῖνον ἐπίσκοπον Κωνσταντίας.

'Letter of Polybios bishop of the city of Rinokouroura to Sabinos bishop of Konstantia.'

Hesychios of Jerusalem (76), who wrote in the first half of the 5th century AD, comments on the Septuaginta translation of *Psalms*, 125 (126), 4, where one asks the lord to 'bring back the people from captivity, like (the water returns in?) a brook in the south'. He states that this brook lies in Rinokoloura, where Egypt starts, and that he had seen it himself. He adds a remarkable story about a raid of 'Saracens' (i.e. Arabs) in the area, about which he had heard from several people. The Saracens had come to Rinokoloura, plundered the region and returned to their land, possibly in the central Sinai, following the bed of the brook. Heavy rains turned this wadi into a whirling torrent, which killed the Saracens and drag their loot back to Rinokoloura<sup>1085</sup>:

ὁ χειμάρρουσ οὗτος, περὶ οὗ λέγει ὁ Προφήτης, ἐν τῷ νότῳ ἐστὶν ἐν τῇ Ῥινοκουρούρα, ἣτις ἐστὶν ἀρχὴ τῆς Αἰγύπτου· διὸ καὶ ὁ Προφήτης εἶρηκεν, ὡς ὁ χειμάρρουσ ἐν τῷ νότῳ. τοῦτο οὖν μεμαθήκαμεν παρὰ πλειόνων, ὅτι περὶ οἱ Σαρακηνοὶ κατήρχοντο εἰς τὴν Ῥινοκουρούραν, ὡς καὶ κατέρχονται μέχρι τοῦ νῦν, καὶ πορθοῦσιν ὅπερ εὐρίσκουσι, καὶ ἀνέρχονται εἰς τοὺς τόπους αὐτῶν. ὁ δὲ χειμάρρουσ οὗτος, περὶ οὗ εἶπεν ὁ Προφήτης, ἐκ τῶν Σαρακηνῶν κατέρχεται· κατὰ βούλησιν οὖν Θεοῦ, ἡνίκα γένηται ὑετὸς λάβρος, πληθύνει ὁ χειμάρρουσ, ὥστε κατέρχεσθαι αὐτὸν σφοδρῶς, λαμβάνοντα τὰς σκηνας τῶν Σαρακηνῶν, καὶ αὐτοὺς δὲ ἀπόλλυσιν, ἅπερ δὲ διήρπασαν λαβὼν φέρει εἰς τὴν Ῥινοκουρούραν, ὅθεν καὶ ἐλήφθησαν ἀπὸ τῶν Σαρακηνῶν τὸ πρότερον· καὶ ἡμεῖς δὲ, γενόμενοι ἐν αὐτῇ τῇ πόλει, ἐθεασάμεθα τὸν χειμάρρουσ.

'That brook in the south about which the Prophet speaks, lies in Rinokouroura, which is the beginning of Egypt; therefore the Prophet said 'like a brook in the south'. From several people we heard that the Saracens came down to Rinokouroura, as they still do nowadays, destroyed what they

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to Delmaire, 1988, p. 234, however, the romanticized *Vita* was only composed in the late 6th century AD, so one can wonder whether the story is to be trusted.

<sup>1083</sup> Polybios of Rinokoloura, *Vita Epiphani*, 67 (Migne, PG 41, 1858, col. 112).

<sup>1084</sup> Polybios of Rinokoloura, *Vita Epiphani*, 68 (Migne, PG 41, 1858, col. 112).

<sup>1085</sup> Hesychios of Jerusalem, *De titulis Psalmorum*, 125, 9-10 (Migne, PG 27, 1857, col. 1233).

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found, and went back to their own place. This brook, about which the Prophet spoke, descended from the region of the Saracens; according to God's will, when it rained heavily, the brook got filled and descended vehemently; it swept away the tents of the Saracens and killed them, dragging along what they had stolen, to Rinokouroura, from where the Saracens had taken it in the first place; when we were in that city, we saw the brook.'

One can wonder whether the story is made up to fit the contents of the verse in the bible, but in itself it is not incredible, and because Hesychios adds that those Saracen raids still continued in his own time, he most likely refers to an event in the near past.

The *Notitia dignitatum* (66) - composed ca. 395-430 AD - mentions seven cavalry units in the province Augustamnica<sup>1086</sup>, including the ala veterana Gallica<sup>1087</sup> stationed at Rinokoloura<sup>1088</sup>:

Ala veterana Gallorum, Rinocoruna

'The veteran cavalry unit of the Galli, at Rinocoruna'

The presence of this army unit at Rinokoloura becomes perfectly understandable in the light of the Arab raids mentioned by Hesychios (76).

At the Council of Ephesos (68-74) held in 431 AD Hermogenes was bishop of Rinokoloura<sup>1089</sup>:

(68, 73) Ἑρμογένους Ῥινοκουρούρων (33, 109; 73, 109) - Hermogene Rinocorum (11, 1, 110; 24, 1, 108) - Hermogene Rinocoron (38, 1, 108) - (68a) Hermogene Rinocorurensi (911, 111) 'of Hermogena of Rinokouroura'

(69-72, 74) Ἑρμογένης ἐπίσκοπος Ῥινοκουρούρων (38, 1; 45, 117; 47, 17; 62, 103; 79, 129) - Hermogenis episcopus Rinocorum (12, 8) - Hermogenis episcopus Linocorus (19, 11, 128) - Hermogenis episcopus Rinocoron (24, 9) - Hermogenis episcopus Rinocoron (46, 43, 131) - Ermogenes episcopus Rinocorus (38, 84, 127)

'Hermogenes bishop of Rinokouroura'

In the Coptic lists of the Council the Greek name of the city is transliterated<sup>1090</sup>:

ΕΡΜΟΓΕΝΗΣ ῬΙΝΟΚΟΡΟΥΡΑ ('Ermogenes of Rhinokouroura')- ΖΕΡΜΟΝΟΓΕΝΗΣ ῬΙΝΟΡΟΥΡΑ ('Hermogenes of Rhinoroura')- ΖΕΡΜΟΝΟΓΕΝΗΣ ῬΙΝΟΚΟΥΡΑ ('Hermogenes of Rhinokoura') (68)

<sup>1086</sup> If one accepts the insertion of l. 37-39 before l. 26, as suggested by Price, 1976, p. 145.152 and adjusted by Worp, 1991, p. 291.

<sup>1087</sup> For this ala, cf. Griffith, 1888, p. 98, n. 1; Meyer, P.Hamb. I 2, 1913, p. 174; Lesquier, 1918, p. 76-78.389.391-392; Speidel, 1984 [= 1982], p. 333-335; Alston, 1995, p. 167-169.

<sup>1088</sup> *Notitia dignitatum*, 28, 28 (Seeck, 1876, p. 59); cf. Price, 1976, p. 147.

<sup>1089</sup> *Concilium universale Ephesenum*, 33, 109; 38, 1; 45, 117; 47, 17; 62, 103 (Schwartz, 1927, 1, 1, 2, p. 6.9.29.33.59); 73, 109; 79, 129 (Schwartz, 1929, 1, 1, 7, p. 87.115); see also 95, 76 (Schwartz, 1927, 1, 1, 3, p. 35); Latin version: 11, 1, 110; 12, 8; 19, 11, 128 (Schwartz, 1925-1926, 1, 2, p. 30.33.73); 24, 1, 108; 24, 9; 46, 43, 131 (Schwartz, 1929, 1, 3, p. 55.57.138); 38, 1, 108; 38, 84, 127 (Schwartz, 1924-1925, 1, 5, 1, p. 88.114); *Concilium universale Chalcedonense*, 911, 111 (Schwartz, 1935, 2, 3, 1, p. 200). Fedalto, 1988, p. 608 specifies that Hermogenes appeared in Ephesos between 22 June and 22 July 431 AD. Amélineau, 1893, p. 404 (followed by Clédat, 1923b, p. 142) by mistake situates Hermogenes at the Council of Nikaia (cf. Muysier, 1946, p. 144-145).

<sup>1090</sup> Cf. Bouriant, 1892, p. 68.79.136; Amélineau, 1893, p. 404, n. 3; Kraatz, 1904, p. 64 with n. 2 and p. 75.126; Maspero, 1919, p. 125; Gerland, 1936, p. 91, no. 243; Munier, 1943, p. 14; Muysier, 1946, p. 145; Timm, 1984, I, p. 147.148.

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- ῬΜΟΓΕΝΗΣ ΕΠΙΣΚΟΠΟΣ ῬΗΝΟΚΟΡΟΥΡΑ ('Ermogenes the bishop of Rhenokoroura') (69) -  
ΠΕΡΙΚΕΝΗΣ ΕΠΙΣΚΟΠΟΣ ΡΗΝΟΚΟΡΟΥΡΑ ('Perikenes the bishop of Rhinokoroura') (70)

This bishop of Rinokoloura is probably identical with the bishop Hermogenes who is an addressee in the correspondence of Isidoros of Pelousion<sup>1091</sup> and with the Hermogenes mentioned together with Lampetios of Kasion in the second letter of pope Sixtus III to Kyrillos of Alexandria<sup>1092</sup>. If Évieux is right that Hermogenes died about 433 AD, he cannot be identified with bishop Hermogenes mentioned in a Coptic letter written after 444 AD by archbishop Dioskoros of Alexandria to Sinouthios of the White Monastery<sup>1093</sup>.

Included in the *Acta* of the Council of Chalcedon (451 AD) is the list of bishops who attended the 'synodus praedatoria' or 'robbers council' at Ephesos in 449 AD (81-84). Among them is mentioned bishop Zenon of Rinokoloura<sup>1094</sup>:

(81) καὶ Ζήνωνος Ῥινοκορούρων (78, 125) - et Zenone Rinocoruron (78, 125) - 'Zēnōn von Rhinokūrūra' (Syriac, 2, 107)

'and of Zenon of Rinokoroura'

(82-83) Ζήνων ἐπίσκοπος Ῥινοκορούρων (884, 106; 1060) - Zenon (episcopus) Rinocorurensis (884, 107) - Zenon (episcopus) Rinocorurensis civitatis (1063)

'Zenon bishop of Rinokoroura'

(84) Zenon episcopus civitatis Rinocorurensium (1070, cxxiiii).

'Zenon bishop of the city of Rinocorura'

He is probably identical with Zenon, the nephew of the bishop Hermogenes mentioned in Isidoros of Pelousion, and so succeeded his uncle in his function<sup>1095</sup>.

Under the first term of office of archbishop Timotheos Salophakiolos (460-475 AD) deacon Themision of Rinokoloura was in charge of the sacred vessels in the

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<sup>1091</sup> Isidoros of Pelousion, *Epistulae*, with some 27 letters addressed to Hermogenes (cf. Évieux, 1995, p. 24-25.396); the bishop is praised by Isidoros in e.g. *Epistulae*, 3, 132 and 5, 30.358.378.448.466 (Migne, PG 78, 1860, col. 832.1345.1541.1553.1585.1597); cf. Le Quien, 1740, II, col. 543; Thompson, 1922, p. 369; Oren, 1982a, p. 38; Évieux, 1995, p. 234-236 and passim; Évieux, 1997, I, p. 251.265.

<sup>1092</sup> *Concilium universale Ephesenum*, 101 (Schwartz, 1929, 1, 1, 7, p. 144-145); cf. Le Quien, 1740, II, col. 542-543; Thompson, 1922, p. 369; Gerland, 1936, p. 91, no. 243; Évieux, 1995, p. 233, n. 194 and p. 235; the letter is written ca. 432 AD.

<sup>1093</sup> Cf. the edition of Thompson, 1922, p. 371, l. 30 and p. 372, l. 49, with a translation p. 374 and a tentative identification p. 369; the letter is written between 444 and probably 449 AD, but the copy preserved probably dates from ca. 700 AD.

<sup>1094</sup> *Concilium universale Chalcedonense. Gesta actionis primae*, 78, 125; 884, 106; 1060 (Gesta Ephesi) (Schwartz, 1933, 2, 1, 1, p. 81.185.194); Latin version: 78, 125; 884, 107; 1063; 1070, cxxiiii (Gesta Ephesi) (Schwartz, 1935, 2, 3, 1, p. 57.190-191.251.257); Syriac version: 2, 107 (Gesta Ephesi) (Flemming, 1917, p. 8-9); cf. Honigmann, 1943, p. 37, no. 140. Fedalto, 1988, p. 608 specifies that Zenon appeared in Ephesos on 8 August 449 AD, while the second session took place on 22 August. It is not clear why Timm, 1984, I, p. 148 and Évieux, 1995, p. 234 state that Zenon also attended the Council of Chalcedon itself, for he is not mentioned in those lists (cf. Honigmann, 1943, p. 41).

<sup>1095</sup> Cf. Évieux, 1995, p. 233-234.236 and passim; Évieux, 1997, I, p. 265, n. 2.

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διακονικόν, the sacristy (97). The 'heretic' bishop of the city - whose name is not mentioned<sup>1096</sup> - was expelled by his citizens, but could return with the help of Salophakiolos. Themision and the other 'orthodox' clergy decided to leave town before the bishop arrived, and Themision became later in Alexandria a follower of the monophysite archbishop Timotheos Ailouros (475-477 AD)<sup>1097</sup>:

'(74) Un prêtre d'Alexandria, ami de Dieu, nommé Themision, homme remarquable par sa pureté et ses moeurs graves, nous raconta: Au temps où Salophakiolos dirigea l'église d'Alexandria, j'étais alors diacre de l'église de Rinokoroura, j'avais la garde de la sacristie et j'étais chargé des vases du service; (aussi) étais-je forcé de demeurer et de coucher dans la sacristie. Or l'évêque de cette ville fut persécuté par les habitants comme hérétique et, après être allé auprès de Salophakiolos, il se remit en route pour revenir diriger de nouveau son église. Comme j'étais chargé de la sacristie, ainsi que je l'ai dit, je songeai à rester jusqu'à son arrivée pour lui remettre d'abord les vases (sacrés) en secret, et ensuite à fuir le démon et la calomnie. Je vis, tandis que je dormais à la sacristie pendant la nuit, de nombreuses foules de saints revêtus d'habitats blancs: la sainte mère de Dieu se tenait au milieu d'eux et elle se hâtait de quitter ce lieu, après qu'on eut amené, semblait-il, une ânesse magnifiquement et modestement parée et qu'elle se fut assise dessus, aidée par les saints; comme elle était sur le point de partir, précédée par les saints, elle me vit, assise sur son ânesse, elle me fit un signe de la main et, m'ayant appelé, elle me dit: "Va-t'en d'ici, ne demeure pas (plus longtemps) et suis-moi". C'est pourquoi, celui-ci, après avoir reçu l'ordination de la prêtrise, vint à Alexandria; comme il fut très aimé par les Pères orthodoxes, après le retour du saint évêque Timotheos, il fut en grande faveur auprès de lui, car c'était un homme remarquablement orthodoxe et orné de (toutes) les autres vertus; il fut retenu dans cette ville par l'évêque et il brilla jusqu'à la fin dans la foi, pendant la vie du vénérable Timotheos et après sa mort, rassemblant le peuple, l'affermissant et l'édifiant jusqu'à son dernier soupir. (75) Il dit aussi ce qui suit: Comme l'évêque hérétique dont j'ai parlé, était sur le point de venir à Rinokoroura, nous qui étions tous des clercs orthodoxes, nous songeâmes à partir avant son arrivée. Un habitant de la ville qui avait un petit enfant non baptisé, demandait qu'il fût baptisé par des orthodoxes, avant que l'(évêque) hérétique n'arrivât et ne l'obligeât à le faire baptiser. Quand la cérémonie du baptême fut terminée, l'enfant qui était baptisé s'écria: 'Arrêtez, arrêtez cette colombe qui s'envole et s'enfuit.' - C'était évidemment la Saint-Esprit qui apparut alors sous la forme d'une colombe et montra qu'après le triomphe des hérétiques la grâce de l'Esprit-Saint partirait et abandonnerait les églises.'

Discussing the heresy of Adelphios (ca. 383 AD) and the priest Lampetios (ca. 450 AD?) Photios (150) mentions bishop Alpheios of Rinokoloura, who was condemned for writing a book in defence of Lampetios. Another Alpheios, a pupil of the first Alpheios, was appointed priest by Timotheos Ailouros of Alexandria and was condemned for the same heresy, as reported by Ptolemaios bishop of Rinokoloura<sup>1098</sup>:

Ἀλφειὸς μέντοι τις ἐπίσκοπος Ῥινοκορούρων ὑπεραπολογεῖται Λαμπετίου ὡς μηδὲν ὦν ἐνεκλήθη ἢ εἰπόντος ἢ ποιήσαντος· ἐκθέμενος δὲ καὶ λόγον τινὰ οὐδὲν ἐν αὐτῷ, ὅσον ἐστὶ συνιδεῖν, βλασφημεῖ· καθηρέθη μὲντοι γὰρ ὡς τὰ Λαμπετίου φρονῶν. καὶ Ἀλφειὸς δὲ τις ἄλλος, ὁμώνυμος τῷ καθηγῆτῇ, χειροτονηθεὶς πρεσβύτερος ὑπὸ Τιμοθέου τοῦ Ἀλεξανδρέως, διὰ τὴν αὐτὴν καθηρέθη αἵρεσιν, ὡς ἡ Πτολεμαίου τοῦ Ῥινοκορούρων ἐπισκόπου πρὸς Τιμόθεον τὸν προειρημένον ἐκιδάσκει ἀναφορά.

<sup>1096</sup> Figueras tentatively identifies this bishop with Hermogenes who was in function in 431 AD, but the chronology rather points to one of his successors.

<sup>1097</sup> Ioannes Rufus, *Plerophoriae*, 74-75 (Syriac) (translated in Nau, 1912, p. 128-130); cf. Oren, 1982a, p. 39-40.

<sup>1098</sup> Photios, *Bibliotheca*, 52 [13b] (Henry, 1959, p. 40). The name Alpheios, which is also attested in an epitaph from el-Khuinat, is probably Arabic; cf. Preisigke, 1922, col. 506 and Wuthnow, 1930, p. 18.

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'Cependant, un certain Alpheios, évêque de Rinokoroura, prit la défense de Lampetios, alléguant qu'il n'avait rien fait ni rien dit de ce qu'on lui avait reproché. Il publia même un écrit qui, pour autant qu'on peut s'en rendre compte, n'avait rien de blasphématoire, mais il fut néanmoins condamné comme partisan de Lampetios. Un autre Alpheios, du même nom que son maître, ordonné prêtre par Timotheos d'Alexandreia, fut condamné pour la même hérésie, ainsi que nous l'apprend le rapport de Ptolemaios, évêque de Rinokoroura, au dit Timotheos.'

Bishop Alpheios, who must have been appointed at some point after 449 AD, probably preceded bishop Ptolemaios, the latter being in office under Timotheos Ailouros (475-477 AD)<sup>1099</sup>.

The papyrus SB XXVI, 16607 (**93**), probably written in the 5th century AD, contains an itinerary of places in Egypt, Palestine and Asia Minor. On the road from Pelousion to Gaza Ἀσσοδρακινα (Ostrakine), Νινοκο[ρ]ε[υ]ε (Rinokoloura), Ταπιδουλα (probably Bitylion) and Ραφία (Raphia) are mentioned<sup>1100</sup>. The beginning of the name (Νινοκορ-) is also found in variant spellings for the toponym in the Septuaginta (**4**) and in Hierokles (**99**); the ending -ε[υ]ε is unparalleled.

On 30 May 511 AD Flavius Stephanos son of Abraham issued - in the city of the 'Rinokorouritai'<sup>1101</sup> - a release to his brother Flavius Ausos about a stone object, possibly a mill or a winepress (**96**). They are both natives of Nessana in Palestine<sup>1102</sup> and soldiers in the regiment of the Very Loyal Theodosians and were already for a long time residing in Rinokoloura<sup>1103</sup>:

- 1 [+ ὑπατίας Φλαουίων] Σεκουντίνου καὶ Φήλικος τῶν μεγαλοπρε(πεστάτων) μηρὶ Παῦλι ε τῆς πέμπτης ἰνδικτίου
- 2 [...] ἐν τῇ Ῥινοκορουριτῶν πόλει. τότε τὸ ἔνγραφον ἀσφαλὲς πεπόηται ἐκλουσεῖα προθέσει ἀνάγκης
- 3 [ἐκ]τός. Φλάουιος [Στέφανος Ἀβρααμίου στρατιώτης] ἀριθμοῦ τῶν καθοσιωμ(ένων) Θεοδοσιακῶν Φλαουίω Αὐσῶ Ἀβρααμίου

<sup>1099</sup> Worp, 1994, p. 306 dated Ptolemaios ca. 450-475, but Alpheios - placed behind Ptolemaios in his list - only roughly in the 5th century AD; as Alpheios was the teacher of Alpheios 'II', who lived under Ptolemaios, there is no reason to think that the bishops differed much in time. Figueras, 2000, p. 178.242 suggests that Lampetios is identical with the homonymous bishop of Kasion, who was in function in 431 AD (see s.v. Kasion), but the 'heretic' Lampetios is by Photios described as a priest and not as a bishop.

<sup>1100</sup> SB XXVI, 16607 (P.von Scherling G110), 11-14; cf. Noordegraaf, 1938, p. 274.

<sup>1101</sup> A similar expression is also used by Kyrillos (**78**) in the early 5th century AD, but since this papyrus is the only known document written in Rinokoloura itself, it is difficult to judge the value or 'life span' of this official name of the city; cf. Hagedorn, 1973, p. 277-292 for a similar difference between Ὀξυρυγῶν πόλις and ἡ Ὀξυρυχειτῶν πόλις.

<sup>1102</sup> See also s.v. Phakidia for another link between Nessana and the region of Rinokoloura.

<sup>1103</sup> P.Ness. III, 15, l. 1-5 (Kraemer, 1958, p. 41-44); for the date, cf. Bagnall, 1987, p. 557.691. The papyrus is found in the geniza of the monastery church of Saint Sergios and Saint Bakchos and is considered part the so-called soldiers' archive. In l. 4 Willy Clarysse restores αὐτοῦ instead of the αὐτοῦ of the editor. The name Ausos (cf. Wuthnow, 1930, p. 30) is the Greek transcription of the Nabataean - Arabic name Aws. There is no reason to consider this document a letter from Stephanos in Rinokoloura to his brother Ausos in Nessana, as Figueras, 2000, p. 30.241 does.

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4 ὁμογενῶσι αὐτοῦ ἀδελφῶ καὶ αὐτῶ] στρατιώτῃ τοῦ εἰρημένου ἀριθμοῦ ὀρμώμενοι ἀπ[δ] κώμης Νεσσάνων  
5 ἐκ πολλοῦ χρόνου ἀμφοτέρου] ταυῶν ἐνταῦθα ἐπὶ τῆς Ῥινοκορουριτῶν ἔχ[ο]ιτες χ[αί]ριςιν.

'Under the consulship of the most magnificent Flavii Secundinus and Felix, Pauni 5 of the fifth indiction [ ] in the city of the Rinokouritai. This written guarantee has been executed voluntarily and without compulsion. Flavius Stephanos son of Abraamios, soldier in the regiment of the Very Loyal Theodosians, to his blood brother Flavius Ausos son of Abraamios, also a soldier in the said regiment, both natives of the village Nessana, since a long time now residing here near the city of the Rinokouritai. Greeting!'

In l. 5-15 follows the release and the oath of Stephanos, in l. 15-18 the hand written signature of Stephanos and in l. 19 two 'countersignatures' in a third and a fourth hand, probably mentioning the same two men.

According to Kraemer the regiment of the Very Loyal Theodosians is created before 450 AD and stationed in the camp of Nessana, the present-day (Hafir) el-Audja, about 70 km southeast of el-Arish<sup>1104</sup>, where a lot of papyri have been found. By 500 AD the soldiers' interests there were more civil than warlike, but they did have military functions. The editor thinks that the two soldiers were registered in official tax lists as natives of Nessana, but had long since established de facto residence in Rinokoloura; they were detached from the unit and apparently did not live in a camp; the papyrus went afterwards to the archive in the headquarters in Nessana; Rinokoloura apparently garrisoned a detachment from Nessana, although the two places did not belong to the same province.

I would like to make some remarks on Kraemer's point of view. As it is not clear where the release was about, the only thing known about the men is that they were soldiers in the 'numerus devotorum Theodosiacorum'; they stayed in the neighbourhood of Rinokoloura (ἐπὶ - l. 5), while the contract itself was written in the city of Rinokoloura (ἐν τῇ ... πόλ[ι] - l. 2), which might imply - against Kraemer's vision - the existence of a military camp near the city. The existence of a military unit in Egypt, depending from a headquarters in Palestine, however, would be puzzling. One could argue that Rinokoloura did actually not belong to Egypt at this time, but as it did ca. 425 AD (**66**), ca. 528 AD (**99**) and in the middle of the 6th century AD (**102**), this hypothesis is not very likely. As Rinokoloura is often considered a border town, one could suppose that the unit mentioned was stationed at the eastern side of the border and thus actually served in the same dioikesis as Nessana; looking for a scribe the men went to the nearest place, which was Rinokoloura. On the other hand, it is not necessary at all to look for a military link between Nessana and Rinokoloura.

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<sup>1104</sup> Cf. the map TAVO BV 21, 1989.

#### 4. Rinokoloura

Stephanos and Ausos originally came from the village Nessana, so it is not surprising that this release eventually showed up there, and there are no stringent reasons to consider the camp of Nessana as the headquarters of the unit in Rinokoloura. Therefore, I would like to consider this text an indication that the military unit of the 'devoti Theodosiaci' was stationed ca. 511 AD near the city of Rinokoloura. Two of its soldiers originally came from Nessana in Palestine, but the unit itself may well have belonged to the Egyptian dioikesis.

Ca. 527/528 AD Hierokles (99) mentions Rinokoloura (Ῥινοκόρουρα) as the first - i.e. most eastern - of the thirteen towns lying in the province Augustamnica I (ἐπαρχία Αὐγούστα α΄)<sup>1105</sup>.

Stephanos of Byzantion (100) quoted the passage of Strabon already mentioned (8) and refers to the ethnics 'Rinokourouraios' and 'Rinokourourites', the former being unknown from other sources<sup>1106</sup>:

Ῥινοκούρουρα, πόλις Αἰγύπτου "ἀπὸ τῶν εἰσωκισμένων ἐκεῖ τὸ παλαιὸν ἀνθρώπων τὰς ῥίνας ἠκρωτηριασμένων οὕτω καλουμένη". τὸ ἔθνικόν Ῥινοκούρουραῖος καὶ Ῥινοκούρουρίτης.

'Rinokouroura, a city in Egypt, "so called from the people with mutilated noses that had been settled there in early times". The ethnic is Rinokourouraios and Rinokourourites.'

Severos of Antiocheia (101) mentions about 520-534 AD a bishop Epimachos of Rinokoloura, who was apparently a man of distinction<sup>1107</sup>.

'If possible therefore, the God-loving Isidoros bishop of the city of the Chalkidians will release this man (sc. Silvanos). But, if it is thought that this will stir up the affliction to his bonds, as the Apostle says, it is easy for him to go with a letter from you to the God-loving Epimachos bishop of Rinokoroura, and receive forgiveness.'

There is no information about the losses in Rinokoloura during the bubonic plague of about 544 AD. Michael Syrius in the 12th century AD tells about a city at

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<sup>1105</sup> Hierokles, 726, 4 (Honigmann, 1939a, p. 46).

<sup>1106</sup> Stephanos of Byzantion, *Ethnica*, s.v. Ῥινοκούρουρα (Meineke, 1849, p. 545), possibly via Herodianos, *De prosodia catholica*, 11 (Lentz, 1867, I, p. 264, 6-8) (19) [Ῥινοκόρουρα πόλις Αἰγύπτου "ἀπὸ τῶν εἰσωκισμένων ἐκεῖ τὸ παλαιὸν ἀνθρώπων τὰς ῥίνας ἠκρωτηριασμένων οὕτω καλουμένη"].

<sup>1107</sup> Severos of Antiocheia, *Select letters*, 5, 11 (Syriac) (translated in Brooks, 1904, II 2, p. 326). According to Figueras, 2000, p. 138.221.242.296 (cf. p. 216) the martyr Epimachos of Pelousion, who possibly died ca. 302-303 AD, used to be bishop of Rinokoloura, but what he quotes as a Coptic source for this statement, is actually a line of comment by the editor Van Esbroeck, 1982, p. 136 (cf. p. 138), who just drew an onomastic parallel with the bishop of Rinokoloura mentioned by Severos.



#### 4. Rinokoloura

the Egyptian border that is completely depopulated by this plague<sup>1108</sup>, but it is not sure which city he meant.

'Une certaine ville de la frontière d'Égypte périt entièrement. Il n'y resta que sept hommes avec un enfant de vingt (?) ans. Ils circulèrent pendant cinq jours par la ville et virent que tout le peuple avait péri. Ils résolurent d'entrer dans les maisons des grands, et recueillirent de l'or et de l'argent dont ils remplirent une maison. Aussitôt, ils succombèrent tous les sept, et l'enfant resta seul, pleurant. Il voulut sortir et vint à la porte de la ville: un homme lui apparut, l'enveloppa et le replaça à la porte de la maison où l'or avait été accumulé; et cela à plusieurs reprises.'

In the Medaba mosaic (**102**), made in the middle of the 6th century AD, Rinokoloura (Ῥινοκόρουρα) is drawn on the map as a small city between ὄροι Αἰγύπτου καὶ Παλαιστίνης ('Borders of Egypt and Palestine') and Ostrakine<sup>1109</sup>. The sketch of the city is somewhat larger than that of Ostrakine and Kasion and shows two churches with red roofs<sup>1110</sup>.

Ca. 591-603 AD Georgios of Cyprus (**105**) mentions Rinokoloura (Ῥινοκούρουρα) in the ἐπαρχία Αὐγουσταμνικῆς (province Augustamnica, sc. I), which belongs to the dioikesis of Egypt<sup>1111</sup>.

When in 615 AD the Persians conquered Jerusalem, archbishop Ioannes Eleemosynarios send - among others - Gregorios bishop of Rinokoloura to buy the freedom of the Christian captives (**112**)<sup>1112</sup>:

πρὸς τούτῳ καὶ Θεόδωρον Ἀμαθοῦντος ἐπίσκοπον καὶ Ἀναστάσιον τὸν τοῦ ὄρους τοῦ μεγάλου καθηγούμενον Ἀντωνίου καὶ Γρηγόριον Ῥινοκουρούρων ἐπίσκοπον ἐπὶ ἀναλήψει τῶν αἰχμαλώτων ἐκπέμπει, χρυσίον οὐκ εὐαρίθμητον παρασχόμενος.

'Moreover, he also sent Theodoros the bishop of Amathous and Anastasios who runs the mountain of the great Antonios, and Gregorios the bishop of Rinokouroura to free the prisoners, and he provided them with a not insignificant amount of gold.'

In the 7th century AD the Ravennas geographer (**124**) places 'Rinocururon' between Ostrakine and Raphia in a list of places ranging from Libya to Syria<sup>1113</sup>.

<sup>1108</sup> Michael Syrius, *Chronicon*, 9, 28 (Syriac) (translated in Chabot, 1901, II, p. 238); cf. Oren, 1982a, p. 40.

<sup>1109</sup> Medaba mosaic (IGLS XXI 2, 153), 127.

<sup>1110</sup> Cf. Timm, 1984, I, p. 149. Donner, 1992, p. 77-78 suggests that one of these churches might be dedicated to 'St. Noah', but this is a mere guess, apparently based upon the stories of Hippolytos (**21-28**) and Epiphanius (**41-42**).

<sup>1111</sup> Georgios of Cyprus, 691 (Honigmann, 1939a, p. 58). Jacoby, 1905, p. 47 and Fedalto, 1988, p. 607 erroneously consider the work of Georgios and its previous edition in *Notitia episcopatum*, I (Parthey, 1866) as two different works. The list of Georgios has been copied as a list of bishops [ὁ Ῥινοκουρούρας] in *Notitia episcopatum*, B, 1, 4 (Benešević, 1927, p. 69) (**170**).

<sup>1112</sup> Sophronios - Ioannes Moschos, *Vita Ioannis Eleemosynarii* (Gelzer, 1893a, p. 112), quoted with slight changes by *Vita Ioannis Eleemosynarii*, 9 (Delehaye, 1927, p. 23) (**153**) and by Symeon Logotheta, *Vita Ioannis Eleemosynarii*, 1, 6 (Migne, PG 114, 1864, col. 901) (**154**). Cf. Butler, 1978 [= 1902], p. 67-68.

#### 4. Rinokoloura

The Greek *Notitia Alexandrina* (167-169), found on a map of 1722 AD, is based upon an alphabetically arranged Latin bishops' list of 1661 AD, which goes back on a not alphabetical list of 1641 AD. The bishopric Ῥινοκούρουρα (Rhinocorura ... Episcopus Rhinocorurae ... [1641] - Rhinocorurae [1661]) is situated in the province Augustamnica I<sup>1114</sup>.

Fedalto also mentions the bishops of Rinokoloura Moyses (somewhere between 615 and 743 AD), Epimachos (743-767 AD), Ioannes (1032-1046 AD) and Michael (1047-1077 AD)<sup>1115</sup>, but he incorrectly copied Le Quien who has unfortunately mixed up the list of bishops of Pelousion ('Farma') and that of Rinokoloura<sup>1116</sup>. These bishops, therefore, have nothing to do with Rinokoloura.

## PHAKIDIA

### Topographical situation

Phakidia probably lies in the immediate neighbourhood of Rinokoloura (1). Ortelius locates the place quite arbitrarily near the coast between Ostrakine and Rinokoloura<sup>1117</sup>, but actually nothing is known about its precise location.

P.Ness. III, 15 and III, 79 (2-5) make it clear that both Rinokoloura and Phakidia have a special link with the Palestinian town of Nessana, some 70 km southeast of el-Arish. Therefore it is rather surprising that the hamlet Phakidia, but not the city of Rinokoloura is mentioned in the list of donations to the church of Nessana.

### Administrative situation

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<sup>1113</sup> Ravennas geographus, 5, 7 (Pinder, 1860, p. 356, 8; Schnetz, 1940, p. 90), quoted with slight changes by Guido, 93 (Pinder, 1860, p. 524, 10; Schnetz, 1940, p. 133) (157). The passages in the Ravennas geographus (122-123, 125) about the division of the earth by Noe - where also Rinokoloura is involved - have already been discussed.

<sup>1114</sup> *Notitia Alexandrina*, 37 (Honigmann, 1961, p. 156-157); cf. Gelzer, 1893b, p. 25.

<sup>1115</sup> Fedalto, 1988, p. 608.

<sup>1116</sup> Le Quien, 1740, II, col. 544; followed by Gams, 1873, p. 461. See § Identifications.

<sup>1117</sup> Ortelius, 1595 in Baines, 1981 [= 1980], p. 23.

#### 4. Rinokoloura

Phakidia is called a viculus of Rinokoloura (1). In the early 7th century AD a Sir Ioannes of Phakidia has the military rank of 'optio' (3), but this does not necessarily imply that Phakidia was a military station.

#### Etymology

Perhaps the name Φακίδια can be linked to the (not attested) diminutive of φακός, 'lentil', and should be translated as 'small lentils', but this is a mere hypothesis.

#### Analysis of the sources

Hilarion, who died in 371 AD, lived in the neighbourhood of Gaza. He cured a blind woman who came from the small village Phakidia near Rinokoloura and who had spent in vain all her money on physicians (1)<sup>1118</sup>:

Facidia viculus est Rhinocorurae, urbis Aegypti. de hoc ergo vico decem iam annis caeca mulier adducta est ad beatum Hilarionem, oblataque ei a fratribus - iam enim multi cum eo monachi erant - omnem se substantiam expendisse ait in medicos.

'Facidia is a hamlet of Rhinocorura, a city in Egypt. From this village a woman, who was already blind for ten year, was brought to the blessed Hilarion; brothers presented her to him - for there were already a lot of monks together with him - and she said that she had spent all her possessions on physicians.'

A papyrus from Nessana, written between 596 and 620 AD, gives an account of offerings to the monastery of Saint Sergios in Nessana. Four donors come from Phakidia<sup>1119</sup>.

In the section containing a general register of receipts for a purpose not clear (l. 1-24) apparently the inhabitants of Phakidia as a whole made an offering (2):

1 + γν(ώσις) εἰσωδιασμοῦ κρα( ) προ( ) [ ]  
17 / παρ(ὰ) τῶν Φακειδινῶν .[ ]  
'Register of receipts ... [ ]  
'from the inhabitants of Phakeidia'

In another section (l. 58-67), headed '14 / 4' (?) ('4th indiction?'), three inhabitants of Phakidia separately made a gift (3-5):

58 + / ἴδ / δ παρ(ὰ) Θεωδῶρω Στεφάνου εἰς τὴν ἀλλή[ν ]

<sup>1118</sup> Hieronymus, *Vita Hilarionis*, 9, 1 (Bastiaensen, 1975, p. 90). Sophronios, *Vita Hilarionis*, 15 (Papadopoulos, 1898, p. 92), who translates this passage, omits Phakidia.

<sup>1119</sup> P.Ness. III, 79, 17.59.60.64. The papyrus is found in the geniza of the monastery church of Saint Sergios and Saint Bakchos. Kraemer, P.Ness. III, 1958, p. 228-233 (followed by Calderini, 1983, IV 1, p. 23), who apparently did not know the 'Facidia' of Hieronymus, inconsequently called the place Phakida (?), Pacida, Phakidia, Phacidino, Pacidino or Picidino and considered it a rather small settlement not very far from Nessana.

#### 4. *Rinokoloura*

59 / πα(ρὰ) κυρ(ί)ω Ἰωάννη ὀπτίονι Πακιδιν[ω ]

60 / πα(ρὰ) κυρ(ί)ω Μάριον Πικιδινω [ ]

...

64 / πα(ρὰ) τινος Φακιδινω εἰς τὸν οἶκον Ζονα[ινου ]

'+ 14 / 4 from Theodoros son of Stephanos for the court [ ]

from Sir Ioannes, optio, of Pakidia [ ]

from Sir Marius, of Pikidia [ ]

...

from a certain inhabitant of Phakidia for the house of Zonainos [ ]'

Ioannes and Marius from Phakidia are called κύριος, 'Sir', and Ioannes also has the military title of ὀπτίων, 'adjutant' or 'quartermaster'<sup>1120</sup>. A contribution from an anonymous inhabitant of Phakidia goes to the house of Zonainos (Zunayn).

The four forms (τὸν Φακειδινον, Πακιδιν[ω], Πικιδινω, Φακιδινω) apparently refer to same ethnic Φακιδίνος. While the ending -ινω in l. 59-60 could be explained as a dative, this is not possible for l. 64, where it apparently stands for a genitive; maybe the scribe made a mistake<sup>1121</sup>.

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<sup>1120</sup> Kraemer, P.Ness. III, 1958, p. 233 thinks that the term has no military, but civil connotations, but I see no reason not to follow the normal meaning. Also the suggestion of Figueras, 2000, p. 181 that the title 'quartermaster' implies that 'the village was big enough to be divided into quarters' is not to be accepted.

<sup>1121</sup> The scribe's syntax is not perfect: the preposition παρὰ is usually followed by a genitive, but in l. 58-60 by a dative; also the accusative (?) Μάριον in l. 60 is apparently a mistake.

## LAURA

### Topographical situation

For the toponym Laura ('Quarter') every topographical information is lacking. The papyrus Rom.Mil.Rec. 76 (1-5) mentions places in the western and eastern Delta and in Middle Egypt, and Laura therefore has probably to be situated somewhere in that same region. The possibility cannot be ruled out that not a place, but only a part of a city is referred to<sup>1122</sup>.

The fact that six cavalymen of the ala veterana Gallica are sent to Laura between 4 February and 17 March 179 AD (2-5), suggests that it was a military 'statio' or at least a place that had a garrison.

### Identifications

Meyer suggests that Laura might be identified with a quarter of Alexandria<sup>1123</sup>.

Alston situates Laura on the coast near el-Arish and he considers Rinokoloura the major settlement near Laura<sup>1124</sup>. There are, however, no arguments whatsoever for this location. Perhaps Alston refers to the fact that the ala veterana Gallica according to the *Notitia dignitatum* is stationed in Rinokoloura in the early 5th century AD<sup>1125</sup>, but on this basis no conclusions should be drawn for the position of Laura.

### Etymology

The term *λάρα* in general refers to a quarter of a city and is known for instance for Alexandria, Dios Polis Magna and Oxyrynchos<sup>1126</sup>.

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<sup>1122</sup> Cf. Meyer, P.Hamb. I 2, 1913, p. 179 (a quarter or a place); Lesquier, 1918, p. 392, n. 7 (a quarter); Calderini, 1980, III 2, p. 183 (a place or a quarter); De Kuyffer, 1989, p. 122.123 (a place); Alston, 1995, p. 35.169 (a place).

<sup>1123</sup> Meyer, P.Hamb. I 2, 1913, p. 179.

<sup>1124</sup> Alston, 1995, p. 169

<sup>1125</sup> *Notitia dignitatum*, 28, 28 (Seeck, 1876, p. 59). See s.v. Rinokoloura.

<sup>1126</sup> Cf. Wilcken, O.Wilck., 1899, p. 712; Meyer, P.Hamb. I 2, 1913, p. 179; LSJ, 1940, p. 1032, s.v. *λάρα*. See also Gascou, 1990, p. 114 and Bagnall, 1993, p. 297 for the specific meaning of 'laura' as a monastery or the whole of small hermitages of monks spread out over a considerable area.

## Homonyms

A village Laura is known in the Kynopolites in Middle Egypt in the 3rd century AD<sup>1127</sup>.

## Analysis of the sources

The papyrus Rom.Mil.Rec. 76 is a book of receipts made by cavalymen of the ala veterana Gallica for their hay allowance of the year 179 AD. The 66 documents were all written between 9 January and 10 May. The unit was probably stationed in Nikopolis near Alexandria. In four instances cavalymen received an advance of 25 denarii since they were leaving for a place called Laura (ἐξερχόμενοι εἰς Λαύραν)<sup>1128</sup>. Antonius Romanus left on 4 February (2), Dionysios P[ ]o[ ]es and Onnophris son of Kollouthes on 12 March (3), Nephros alias Nephos on 16 March (4), and Antoni(u)s Chairemonianos and Arri(u)s Arrianos on 17 March (5). In one instance cavalryman Valerius Sarapammon, leaving on 18 January (1), apparently started to write the name of Laura for his destiny (without a preposition), but rubbed it out and continued with Aphrodito as destination: ἐξερχόμενος [[λαυ]] εἰς Ἀφροδιτώ<sup>1129</sup>. Other cavalymen are also sent to Boukolia, Mareotis and Taposiris in the western Delta, to Skenai Megalai, Skenai Mandrai, Aphrodito and Arsinoites south of the Delta, to Skenai Mikrai, possibly in the eastern Delta, and to Klyisma near the Red Sea<sup>1130</sup>.

## ARIZA

## Topographical situation

Ariza is mentioned only once in the 6th century AD as a polis or city in southern Palaestina Prima (1). Further details are lacking and every identification remains hazardous.

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<sup>1127</sup> Cf. Calderini, 1980, III 2, p. 183 and 1996, Suppl. II, p. 107.

<sup>1128</sup> Rom.Mil.Rec. 76, col. 15, 21 (receipt 44); col. 19, 6 (receipt 54); col. 19, 22 (receipt 56); col. 20, 12 (receipt 58).

<sup>1129</sup> Rom.Mil.Rec. 76, col. 12, 5 (receipt 34).

<sup>1130</sup> Cf. Meyer, P.Hamb. I 2, 1913, p. 178-179; Lesquier, 1918, p. 391-392; De Kuyffer, 1989, p. 122 with a map p. 123; Alston, 1995, p. 169.

## Identifications

Except for the vague phonetic similarity, there are no reasons to identify Ariza and Arza, which is mentioned in Assyrian sources of the 7th century BC near the 'brook of Egypt' and which perhaps was situated at Tell Djamma<sup>1131</sup>.

Musil identifies Ariza with el-Arish<sup>1132</sup>, probably because of the phonetic similarity and the geographical proximity. It is generally accepted, however, that el-Arish corresponds with the Graeco-Roman city of Rinokoloura, which is also mentioned further in Hierokles in the province Augustamnica I. If one accepts the identification of Ariza and el-Arish, there are two hypothetical ways to explain the presence of both toponyms Rinokoloura and Ariza in the same list. First, they could be two different towns in each other's neighbourhood at both sides of the Egyptian border, which from the 7th century AD grew together under the name of el-Arish. Secondly, the name el-Arish was translated into Greek as Ariza and later got interpolated in the text of Hierokles, although incorrectly situated in Palestine rather than in Egypt. Neither suggestion seems really convincing, which also makes the identification of Ariza with el-Arish quite hazardous.

Hartmann tentatively identifies Ariza with the place Maqrunat Umm el-Arais southwest of Rafah, which is known since the 19th century AD, probably just because of the vague phonetic similarity<sup>1133</sup>. There are no further arguments to support this unlikely identification.

The textcritical emendations suggested for the name Ariza, which tried to link the place with the city of Gazara or with mount Argaris, will be discussed further on.

## Analysis of the sources

Hierokles (1), who probably wrote ca. 527/528 AD, mentioned in the province Palaestina I one after another Gaza, Raphia, Askalon, Ariza (Ἀριζα) and Bitylion<sup>1134</sup>.

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<sup>1131</sup> Cf. Aharoni, 1974, p. 90 (Hebrew); Eph'al, 1982, p. 105; Schmitt, 1989, p. 65 and 1995, p. 65-66; TAVO Register, 1994, p. 130. See s.v. Arza.

<sup>1132</sup> Musil, 1907, II 1, p. 304; cf. Hartmann, 1913, p. 196; Figueras, 2000, p. 51. See s.v. el-Arish

<sup>1133</sup> Hartmann, 1913, p. 196. See s.v. Maqrunat Umm el-Arais.

<sup>1134</sup> Hierokles, 719, 7-11 (Honigmann, 1939a, p. 42).

#### 4. *Rinokoloura*

From the sequence Gaza - Raphia - Askalon it is clear that no strict geographical order can be intended, but surely the south of Palestine is referred to.

Ariza is the only one of the 21 places in Hierokles' *Palaestina I* that does not occur as such in the list of Georgios of Cyprus (591-603 AD)<sup>1135</sup>. This might be an argument that Ariza is actually out of place as a later interpolation in the text of Hierokles. Georgios' list, on the other hand, contains ten names that do not occur in Hierokles. One of them is *Ῥεγεὼν Γάδαρα* ('Region Gadara'), which has sometimes been identified with the city of Gazara, modern Tell Gezer, west of Jerusalem. It has therefore been suggested that Ariza is actually a deformation of the name *Γάζαρα*, *Γάδαρα* or *Γαζαρίς*<sup>1136</sup>. The Gadara of Georgios, however, has more recently been identified with Gadara in the Peraia (modern el-Salt in Jordan)<sup>1137</sup>, which makes a link with Ariza in southern Palestine less likely. Honigmann, who accepts the identification with el-Salt, however, still suggests that Ariza might refer to Gazara / Tell Gezer, but without the link with Georgios' Gadara, there are little arguments to support this hypothesis. He also suggests an alternative emendation for the name Ariza into Argariza (*Ἄργαριζα*), which is then linked with mount Argaris mentioned by Plinius in the neighbourhood of Gaza and Anthedon<sup>1138</sup>, but also this suggestion is little convincing.

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<sup>1135</sup> Georgios, 997-1027 (Honigmann, 1939a, p. 66-67), with Regeon Gadara at 1019.

<sup>1136</sup> Cf. Wesseling in Gelzer, 1890, p. 191; Thomsen, 1907, p. 25.47; Honigmann, 1939a, p. 42; Tsafirir, 1994, p. 131. For this Gazara / Gadara (and its area called Gazaris / Gadaris), cf. also Benzinger, Immanuel, s.v. Gazara, in RE, VII 1, 1910, col. 887-889 (and especially col. 889) and s.v. Gadara 3 and s.v. Gadaris 2, in RE, VII 1, 1910, col. 438.

<sup>1137</sup> Cf. Honigmann, 1939a, p. 67. For this Gadara, cf. Benzinger, Immanuel, s.v. Gadara 2, in RE, VII 1, 1910, col. 437-438.

<sup>1138</sup> Cf. Honigmann, 1939a, p. 42. For mount Argaris, cf. Benzinger, Immanuel, s.v. Argaris, in RE, II 1, 1895, col. 687.



## *Arab and modern periods*

### **EL-ARISH**

Ancient name: Rinokoloura

#### **Topographical situation**

The modern city of el-Arish is situated at 33° 48' eastern longitude and 31° 08' north latitude<sup>1139</sup>, at about 190 km east of Ismailia - along the road - and about 40 km west of the Egyptian - Israeli frontier near Rafah<sup>1140</sup>. The city is known in the sources from the 9th century AD on. The Arab authors Ibn Khurdadbeh (**3**) and Qudama (**19**) and the *Via ad terram sanctam* (**85**) locate el-Arish at some 48 km east of Rafah, which matches quite well the actual distance of about 46 km<sup>1141</sup>; the figure of 14 'lives' (some 56 km) in the *Devises des chemins de Babiloine* (**84**) is too high. In most sources from the 9th till the 12th century AD the only place mentioned between el-Arish and Rafah is el-Shadjaratain at the border between Egypt and Syria (**4**, **12**, **27**). The first road station along to road to Rafah in the 10th century AD was Abi Ishaq, at some 12 km east of el-Arish (**41**). In the 13th-15th centuries AD this was el-Kharruba, at some 16 km east of the city (**84** and *passim*). el-Arish lies at 18 miles or about 36 km east of el-Warrada along the inland road - with the figure of 10 'lives' (ca. 40 km) in the *Devises* (**84**) again a bit too high - and 21 miles or some 42 km east of el-Makhlasa along the coastal road. In the 13th-15th centuries AD the station Bir el-Qadi lies between el-Arish and el-Warrada, at 3 'lives' (ca. 12 km) west of the former. Although el-Arish was situated in the middle of the desert, travellers from the 10th

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<sup>1139</sup> Cf. Baines, 1981 [= 1980], p. 233. Paoletti, 1903, p. 109 gives the more specific longitude of 33° 48' 30"; the latitude of 31° 10' 20" he gives on p. 109 is in contradiction with his own map where he places el-Arish between 31° and 31° 10'. The latitude of 31° 07' in Ball, 1942, p. 105 approaches the figure of Baines. The coordinates in TAVO Register, 1994, p. 129-130.987.1174 (31° 30' / 33° 30' - 31° 05' / 33° 40' - 31° 00' / 33° 30' - 31° 00' / 33° 40' - 31° 05' / 33° 45') are only approximate.

<sup>1140</sup> Cf. Baumgarten, 1990, p. 124.

<sup>1141</sup> The distances differ: ca. 44,5 km (Ball, 1942, p. 140: 30 miles of 1482,4 m); 46 km (Abel, 1940, p. 228; Carrez-Maratray, 1998, p. 88); ca. 46,5 km (Gardiner, 1920, p. 114: 29 (English) miles); 47 km (Figueras, 2000, p. 238); ca. 60 km (Mouton, 2000, p. 32-33; de Jong, 2000, p. 655, but in contradiction with his map on p. 654, which only has some 45 km). See also s.v. Rinokoloura.

#### 4. Rinokoloura

century AD on were impressed by the fertility of the region and especially drew attention to the numerous groves of date palms, cultivated by the Arishi Beduin<sup>1142</sup>.

North of the city<sup>1143</sup> lies the sandy beach of the Mediterranean, where some fishing boats are anchored offshore<sup>1144</sup>, but nowadays there are no real harbour facilities. In the 10th century AD, however, Qudama considered el-Arish an Egyptian seaport (21). The Gulf of el-Arish is known from the early 14th century AD on (88 and passim) and is indicated on some maps till the 18th century AD<sup>1145</sup>. The expression Sea of el-Arish ('pelagus Rixe') in Sanudo (89) probably refers to the same Gulf.

About 2 km east of the city the Wadi el-Arish lies - most of the time dry - going from south to north and 'flowing' into sea near el-Arish in a very broad bed<sup>1146</sup>. The deposition of fertile soil along the Wadi is apparently responsible for the fertility of the el-Arish region<sup>1147</sup>. Geological probes and air photographs indicate that the Wadi in the Roman period lay about 1 km more to the west, nearer to the city that was built on its western bank<sup>1148</sup>. There are no indications whatsoever that the Wadi el-Arish formed the border between Egypt and Palestine in the Graeco-Roman or the Arab period<sup>1149</sup>.

Some toponyms are known in the immediate neighbourhood of el-Arish. At the eastern side of the mouth of the Wadi el-Arish lay in 1910 the settlement Bakarwa<sup>1150</sup>. At the other side of the Wadi, near the sea, a wely or burial chapel

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<sup>1142</sup> For modern impressions, cf. Forbin, 1819, p. 153-154; Guérin, 1869, I 2, p. 238; Wiegand, 1920a, col. 87; Clédat, 1923b, p. 141; Baumgarten, 1990, p. 124. For the Arishi Beduin, cf. Clédat, 1923a, p. 152.

<sup>1143</sup> The distances between the village and the shore differ: ca. 800 m (Williams, George, s.v. Rhinocorura, in Smith, 1857, II, p. 710: half a mile; Schlumberger, 1906, p. 76: 800 m); 1,7 km (Hedin, 1918, p. 145); 2 km (Chester, 1880, p. 158: 1 1/4 mile; Clédat, 1910a, p. 225; Abel, 1940, p. 228); 3 km (Clédat, 1923b, p. 141); ca. 4,5 km (Paoletti, 1903, p. 107: 3 miles). Nowadays the city has extended till the seacoast.

<sup>1144</sup> See the photo of Arden, 1982, p. 442-443.

<sup>1145</sup> Breydenbach, 1486 in Röhricht, 1901, pl. 3 (118); Robert, 1757, pl. 96 in Clédat, 1910a, p. 233 (cf. Fontaine, 1955, p. 74); cf. Rey, 1884, p. 347.

<sup>1146</sup> Cf. Guérin, 1869, I 2, p. 238 ('extrêmement large'); Paoletti, 1903, p. 108-109 (500 m broad); Butler, 1978 [= 1902], p. 197; Clédat, 1923a, p. 59-60 (2 km broad); Clédat, 1923b, p. 141.143 (1,5 km broad); Abel, 1933, I, p. 79 (1 km broad). Abel, 1933, I, map 2, Oren, 1982a, p. 2 and Baumgarten, 1990, map for unknown reasons place the Wadi west of el-Arish.

<sup>1147</sup> Cf. Clédat, 1923a, p. 60.

<sup>1148</sup> Cf. Oren, 1982a, p. 26 and 1993, p. 1395.

<sup>1149</sup> Contrary to the allusions of e.g. Abbeloos, 1874, II, col. 657, n. 2 (not specified in time), Butler, 1978 [= 1902], p. 197 (a tentative reference to the borderline in 639 AD), Clédat, 1923a, p. 60 ('à diverses époques'). See s.v. Brook of Egypt.

<sup>1150</sup> Cf. Fischer, 1910, p. 213 and pl. 7.

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dedicated to Nebi (or 'prophet') Yasir is known at least from the 19th century on<sup>1151</sup>. Between el-Arish and the sea lies Bir Sheikh Hussein, a well with excellent water used for the irrigation of the palm groves and the gardens of the inhabitants of el-Arish<sup>1152</sup>. In 1849 van Senden knows five wells near the city in the Wadi el-Arish, which he names Kas, Shaduf, Zadul, Bigal and Abusagli<sup>1153</sup>. Near a crossroad immediately southeast of el-Arish lies the agricultural-military settlement Nahal Sinai<sup>1154</sup>.

The name of the city also appears in Debbet el-Arish, the name of the high dunes between el-Arish and lake Bardawil, through which the road to Israel leads<sup>1155</sup>.

Ya'qubi (12) calls el-Arish in 891 AD the first fortified place and the first district in Egypt<sup>1156</sup> situated between el-Shadjaratain, the border of Syria and Egypt, and el-Farama (Pelousion), the first city of Egypt. Probably this district was part of the Djifar region, which Muqaddasi (37) mentions about 986 AD with el-Farama as its capital and el-Arish as one of the three other chief towns in that region. In the 13th (?) century AD el-Arish was the place of residence of the governor of the Djifar region (41 / 69).

At least from the 15th till the 19th century AD el-Arish belonged to the province Sharqiya<sup>1157</sup>. In 1869 it was an unimportant village of about 400 people divided over two (hostile) quarters - the Syrian 'Fôkerieh' and the Egyptian 'La'richîeh' -, but at least in 1903 it was again the capital of a special department. This administrative area of el-Arish had 3923 inhabitants in 1885, but in 1912 the city

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<sup>1151</sup> The name and location of this chapel often vary; the possibility cannot be excluded that different chapels on each side of the Wadi have been mixed up. Cf. Guérin, 1869, I 2, p. 238 ('un oualy, consacré au Cheikh Liezek', on the eastern side?); Chester, 1880, p. 158 ('to the west of the entrance of the Wady' - 'a Wely called Nebbi Jasar'); Fischer, 1910, p. 217 and pl. 7 ('Grab des Nebi Jasir' - on the western side); Clédat, 1910a, p. 226 and map ('à l'embouchure de l'ouady, du côté gauche' - 'un ouély au nom du cheikh Iesak' - 'ouély Iesak'), 1923a, p. 95 and 1923b, p. 143 ('à droite (sic) de l'entrée / embouchure du ouâdi' - 'le tombeau du cheikh Îezak / Iézak') [followed by Timm, 1984, I, p. 150]; Dalman, 1924, p. 55 ('auf der rechten Talseite' - 'ein moslemisches Grabheiligtum, wohl nebi abu sagal'); Margovsky, 1969, p. 46 (northeast of el-Arish); Oren, 1982a, p. 26 ('l'actuelle mosquée An-Nabi Yasser' - no location); Oren, 1993, p. 1395 ('at the outlet to the sea ... the en-Nebi Yasser Mosque').

<sup>1152</sup> Paoletti, 1903, p. 107 ('Bir Cheikh Hussein') and map ('Bir Hussein').

<sup>1153</sup> van Senden, 1851, I, p. 77.

<sup>1154</sup> Cf. the map Kümmerly, 1995(?) ('Nahal Sinai'). The Hebrew name ('The settlement of the Sinai') is apparently created during the Israeli occupation.

<sup>1155</sup> Cf. Paoletti, 1903, p. 103 and map.

<sup>1156</sup> According to Björkman, W., s.v. Maks, in *EncIslam*(2), VI, 1991, p. 179 tax was levied in the border place el-Arish, but he does not specify his source, nor the period involved.

<sup>1157</sup> Also spelled Ash-Sharqīyah, Charkieh, El-Sarqīyah, El-Šarqīyah, Lassarquye, Sharqiya, Sharqieh, Sharqiyeh.

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itself counted already 7500 inhabitants, a figure that has increased to about 10.000 in 1961 and about 30.000 in 1990<sup>1158</sup>.

#### **Archaeological finds**

West of the modern el-Arish<sup>1159</sup>, near the modern cemetery and the former Turkish fortress of the 16th century AD, which has been destroyed in 1915<sup>1160</sup>, and partially covered by dunes and an Islamic cemetery, the remains of a city cover a surface of some 180 x 250 m<sup>1161</sup>. In the Israeli survey the site was labelled A1<sup>1162</sup>. The town was protected by a mud-brick wall of about 3,5 m thick<sup>1163</sup> with corner towers and buttresses. The streets and alleyways divided it into quarters, each with a specific function. The houses in the residential section were uniformly built round a common central court. In a later phase the plan of the city has somewhat been changed. The lowest level offers Hellenistic pottery from the 2nd or 1st century BC, while the level above contained Nabataean pottery from the 1st and 2nd centuries AD. A decorated bowl, found by an Israeli team, was made in Korinthos in the second half of the 2nd century or the first half of the 3rd century AD<sup>1164</sup>. The city was inhabited till the end of the Byzantine period or the Early Arab period, i.e. the 7th or 8th century AD. The Islamic pottery, found in only one part of the ancient city, was mainly dated

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<sup>1158</sup> Cf. Guérin, 1869, I 2, p. 241; Evetts, 1895, p. 70, n. 4; Paoletti, 1903, p. 108-109 (a district with about 3000 inhabitants, possibly referring to a period before 1885); Baedeker, 1912, p. 122; Gardiner, 1920, p. 115 (a town with some 4000 inhabitants, possibly referring to a period before 1912); Maspero, 1919, p. 126; Clédat, 1923b, p. 152; Rothenberg, 1961, p. 32; Baumgarten, 1990, p. 124. For a history of the city from 1799 till 1982, see also Guérin, 1869, I 2, p. 242.248-249, Wiet, 1945 (non vidi) and Buhl, F., s.v. al-'Arish, in *EncIslam*(2), I, 1960, p. 651.

<sup>1159</sup> Griffith, 1890, p. 74 situates the ruins on the south side of el-Arish, but since the city has substantially grown the last hundred years, they now lay south-west or west of el-Arish, as described by Kloner, 1971, p. 237 and Oren (1982a, p. 26; 1993, p. 1395; cf. Cytryn-Silverman, 2001, p. 20). The location of the ruins in Guérin, 1869, I 2, p. 244 is not very clear.

<sup>1160</sup> Cf. Forbin, 1819, p. 153-154; Guérin, 1869, I 2, p. 241; Paoletti, 1903, p. 108; Abel, 1940, p. 228-229; Tonneau, 1926, p. 596-597. Clédat, 1923b, p. 141 (followed by Tonneau, 1926, p. 596; Wagner, 1993a, p. 11; Figueras, 2000, p. 116.241) thinks that the fortress was built on the place of an earlier fort, but every argument for this thesis is lacking.

<sup>1161</sup> Cf. Margovsky, 1969, p. 46 and Schmitt, 1989, p. 65, n. 20: 180 x 250 m; Oren, 1993, p. 1395: 'approximately 12.5 a(cre)'; the indication '50 hectares environ' in Oren, 1982a, p. 26 is probably a mistake for '5 hectares'.

<sup>1162</sup> Cf. Johnson, 1979, p. 171.173.

<sup>1163</sup> Cf. Williams, George, s.v. Rhinocorura, in Smith, 1857, II, p. 710. See also the photos of Oren, 1980b, p. 129 (= 1982a, p. 27) and 1993, p. 1395, disclaiming the statement of Clédat, 1923b, p. 142 that the wall has left no traces.

<sup>1164</sup> Johnson, 1979, p. 171-174 and pl. 19.

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to the 9th-11th centuries AD, but also some later sherds were identified<sup>1165</sup>. Abu Salih (78) mentions in the region of el-Arish two large churches in ruins and a city wall still standing up in the first half of the 13th century, and probably refers to these archaeological findings<sup>1166</sup>. The same goes for the remains of ancient monuments in marble and other materials mentioned by Abu'l-Feda in the early 14th century AD (98). In the 19th century and at the beginning of the 20th century some reused columns and marble plates were still visible in the fort and in Arab buildings, among them a marble column decorated with a cross that probably comes from a Byzantine church, and seven Byzantine capitals that were brought to the Ismailia Museum about 1910<sup>1167</sup>. Na'aman stresses that in none of the surveys conducted by Clédat, Margovsky and Aharoni in the el-Arish area pre-Hellenistic ruins or even pre-Hellenistic pottery have been found<sup>1168</sup>.

About 100 m south of the fortress - within the former city walls? - Griffith and Paoletti noticed a limestone building, which had partially been cleared by the order of the governor, apparently not long before 1888. The plan of Griffith shows seven rooms, with seventeen niches in the walls spread over six rooms. The most elaborated niche has crosses on the pilasters<sup>1169</sup> and therefore the building can be dated in the Christian period. One room gives entrance to a crypt, which Griffith considered a treasury or strong-room rather than a prison-cell<sup>1170</sup>.

On a vast Muslim cemetery north of the city most of the constructions were made with ancient materials. Among those remains Clédat discovered a reused marble stele with a Coptic funerary inscription, discussed further on (11). Between the pieces of pottery, limestone, marble and granite Clédat also found a Roman coin.

Traces of important, well-constructed buildings of the Roman period are found near the Mediterranean coast on the place of the present-day mosque dedicated to Nebi Yasir - at the western bank of the Wadi, near its mouth and some 4 km north of

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<sup>1165</sup> For the archaeological information, cf. Margovsky, 1969, p. 46 (cf. Schmitt, 1989, p. 65, n. 20); Oren, 1982a, p. 26 and 1993a, p. 1395.1396; Figueras, 2000, p. 243; Cytryn-Silverman, 2001, p. 20; cf. Wenning, 1987, p. 185. There is some confusion about the location of the Arab settlement within the ancient walls: Oren, 1982a, p. 26 locates it 'dans sa partie sud-est', while Cytryn-Silverman, 2001, p. 20 refers to 'the south-western corner', and Oren, 1993a, p. 1396 confines it 'to the northern section of the extensive Roman-Byzantine site'.

<sup>1166</sup> Cf. Maspero, 1912, p. 37.39-40.135; Kraemer, P.Ness. III, 1958, p. 41.

<sup>1167</sup> Guérin, 1869, I 2, p. 241-242.244; Paoletti, 1903, p. 108; Clédat, 1910a, p. 225 and n. 1; Clédat, 1923b, p. 142; Tonneau, 1926, p. 595.

<sup>1168</sup> Na'aman, 1979, p. 78.

<sup>1169</sup> Cf. also the drawing of Griffith, 1890, pl. 26, 3.

<sup>1170</sup> Griffith, 1890, p. 74 and pl. 26; Paoletti, 1903, p. 108.

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the ancient ruins<sup>1171</sup>. They are probably identical with the remains of ancient houses noticed by Chester in 1880, one of which showing a ground plan of no less than seventeen rooms<sup>1172</sup>. They are possibly connected with harbour activities, although none of the reports gives definite proof that harbour constructions are involved, and it could just be another settlement. The corresponding anchorage was possibly the laguna there, which was still visible in the early 19th century AD<sup>1173</sup>. Near the mosque Clédat saw an Arab cemetery with pottery of the Late Imperial and Byzantine period scattered around. The rectangular constructions going down a hill, which he mentions, are probably identical with the structures already described. Among the pottery there he found a lot of polished red ware. South of these constructions was a nearly intact Byzantine cemetery<sup>1174</sup>.

Between the mosque and the city, but also elsewhere in the neighbourhood Clédat saw ancient and Arab debris on the surface; he also found an ancient well made of stone and another cemetery<sup>1175</sup>. In January 1957 Israeli archaeologists collected some Arab pottery in el-Arish, but they did not specify the exact spot<sup>1176</sup>.

The fortified castra or fortresses which - according to Maspero - indicate the border in the neighbourhood of el-Arish, as far as I know do not represent an archaeological reality, but are a mere hypothesis<sup>1177</sup>.

(1) A naos or shrine<sup>1178</sup> of black granite in the fortress of el-Arish found immediately next to the well of the fort was used as a water reservoir and as a trough for animals. It is mentioned for the first time in 1869<sup>1179</sup>. This so-called naos of el-

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<sup>1171</sup> Clédat, 1923b, p. 143; Oren, 1982a, p. 26; Timm, 1984, I, p. 150; Oren, 1993, p. 1395. For Aharoni, 1974, p. 88-94 (Hebrew) in Timm, 1984, I, p. 150 this is the place of the city of Rinokoloura, but because the site found by Oren more to the south appears to be much larger, it is more likely that there the town was situated.

<sup>1172</sup> Chester, 1880, p. 158.

<sup>1173</sup> Rey, 1884, p. 347. According to Clédat, 1923a, p. 159 there are ship's quays at the coast, but it is not impossible that he in fact refers to the naturally aligned sand stone blocks, discussed by him 1923a, p. 72, n. 4.

<sup>1174</sup> Clédat, 1910a, p. 226.

<sup>1175</sup> Clédat, 1910a, p. 226-227 and n. 1. Since Clédat has not made a plan of the city, it is not always easy to locate his findings.

<sup>1176</sup> Aharoni, 1974, p. 88 (Hebrew).

<sup>1177</sup> Maspero, 1912, p. 21 and 1919, p. 73.

<sup>1178</sup> Ascherson, 1887, p. 178, Paoletti, 1903, p. 108 and Baedeker, 1912, p. 122 erroneously call it a sarcophagus. The description 'a little Egyptian temple' in Boettger, 1879, p. 212 is rather misleading.

<sup>1179</sup> Guérin, 1869, I 2, p. 241-242. It has been noticed in situ again in 1887 (Ascherson, 1887, p. 178), in 1888 (Griffith, 1890, p. 74), in 1898 (Musil, 1907, II 1, p. 229-230) and in 1909 (Clédat, 1910a, p. 225); about 1910 Clédat had it transported to the Ismailia Museum (inv. no. 2248); cf. also Paoletti, 1903, p. 108 and Baedeker, 1912, p. 122.

#### 4. Rinokoloura

Arish dates from the 30th dynasty<sup>1180</sup> and - as it can be judged from its inscriptions - was originally placed in the temple of Pr-Spdw, the modern Saft el-Henna<sup>1181</sup>. It is not known when it has been brought to el-Arish<sup>1182</sup>. A discussion of the text on the naos lies beyond the scope of this work<sup>1183</sup>.

(2) In March 1914 Clédat bought a white limestone plate with a Greek inscription (SEG XLVII, 2133). The previous owner did not know its provenance, but said that he had always seen it in his house in el-Arish. Of the inscription only the beginning with the titles of the Roman emperor Alexander Severus is preserved<sup>1184</sup>:

- 1 [Αὐτοκράτορι]  
Καίσαρι Μάρκῳ Αὐρηλίῳ  
Σεουήρῳ  
[[Ἀλεξάνδρῳ]]  
5 Εὐσεβεῖ Εὐτυχεῖ  
Σεβ(άστῳ), δημ(αρχικῆς) ἐξου(σίας)  
τὸ ιβ', ὕπατος  
τὸ γ', ἀ[νθύπατ(ος), πατήρ] πατρίδος]]  
9 [ - - - ]

'[For Emperor] Caesar Marcus Aurelius Severus Alexander Pius Felix Augustus, invested with the tribunicia potestas for the 12th time, consul for the 3rd time, p[ro]consul, father of the fatherland ...]'

As the emperor is invested for the twelfth time with the tribunicia potestas, the text can be dated between 10 December 232 and 9 December 233 AD<sup>1185</sup>.

<sup>1180</sup> Verhoeven, 1991, p. 319. Griffith, 1890, p. 71, followed by PM, IV, 1934, p. 1, incorrectly considers it a Ptolemaic naos.

<sup>1181</sup> Roeder, 1915, p. 150; Hommel, 1926, p. 964-965, n. 5; Goyon, 1936, p. 1-2; Montet, 1957, I, p. 206; Verhoeven, 1991, p. 319, n. 3. Since Pr-Spdw has sometimes erroneously been identified with el-Qels near lake Bardawil (see s.v. el-Qels), Naville in Paoletti, 1903, p. 108 mentions el-Qels as place of origin of the naos.

<sup>1182</sup> Cf. Goyon, 1936, p. 2; against Hommel, 1926, p. 964-965, n. 5 (followed by Abel, 1940, p. 229), who thinks that the naos has been transported to el-Arish in the early Roman period.

<sup>1183</sup> The text has been edited and translated for the first time by Griffith, 1890, p. 70-74 and pl. 23-26. The standard edition is Goyon, 1936, p. 1-42 with pl. 1-5. Cf. Verhoeven, 1991, p. 319-330 for a recent interpretation and for further literature.

<sup>1184</sup> Ismailia Museum, inv. no. 2558. Clédat, 1915b, p. 37-38; Petrie, 1915, p. 184; Preisigke, SB III 2, 1926, p. 186, no. 7018; Bureth, 1964, p. 109; AE, 1973 [= 1976], p. 182, no. 559 bis; Sijpesteijn, 1982, p. 107, n. 39; Timm, 1984, I, p. 152, n. 15; Grenier, 1988, p. 63, n. 3; Rupprecht, SB XVI 3, 1988, p. 481-482, no. 12997; Verreth, 1997, p. 114-116; Figueras, 2000, p. 235; SEG, XLVII, 1997 [= 2000], p. 638-639, no. 2133. Drawing: Clédat, 1915b, p. 37, fig. 13. Clédat (followed by Preisigke) states that the fourth line has been chiselled out, and indeed (against my view expressed 1997, p. 115) there had been a 'damnatio memoriae' against Alexander Severus between 235 and 238 AD, as pointed out to me by Peter van Minnen (cf. Grenier, 1988, p. 63 and n. 3, with references to four parallels in Egypt; Kienast, 1990, p. 177-178). For ὕπατος, read ὑπάτω. The corrections for l. 8-10 of Sijpesteijn, taken over in SB XVI, 12997, are not to be followed since they ignored AE, 1973, 559 bis and the parallel text discussed further on (3); for l. 8 it might be better (against AE) to follow the disposition of this parallel.

<sup>1185</sup> From Traianus on the starting point of the tribunician reckoning was 10 December; Alexander Severus had been consul for the third time in 229 AD and this element was retained 'honoris causa' as a part of his titles; cf. Meimaris, 1992, p. 336.338. For the titles, cf. Bureth and Sijpesteijn.

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(3) A parallel text (SEG XLVII, 2132), now in Jerusalem<sup>1186</sup>, enlightens the nature of this inscription. This slab made in kurkar stone - a kind of sea sand stone rich with shells<sup>1187</sup> - is said to be found in the vicinity of Rafah, but a location more to the southwest (between the former Egyptian border and el-Arish?) seems more likely<sup>1188</sup>:

- 1 [Αὐτοκράτορι]  
[Καίσαρι Μ(άρκῳ) Αὐρ(ηλίῳ)]  
Σεουήρῳ  
Ἄλεξάνδρῳ  
5 Εὐσεβ(εῖ) Εὐτυχ(εῖ)  
Σεβ(άστῳ), δημ(αρχικῆς) ἔξουσ(ίας)  
τὸ ιβ', ὑπατος  
τὸ γ', ἀνθύπατ(ος), π(ατήρ) π(ατρίδος)  
ἀπὸ ὄρων  
10 Συρίας Παλαι[στ(ινης)]  
11 [μίλια - ]

'[For Emperor Caesar Marcus Aurelius] Severus Alexander Pius Felix Augustus, invested with the tribunicia potestas for the 12th time, consul for the 3rd time, proconsul, father of the fatherland. From the borders of Syria Palaestina ... miles].'

The titles and the date are identical, but it now becomes clear that the inscriptions served as a kind of milestones and were probably incorporated in the wall of official buildings. Since the distance to the border of Syria Palaestina is missing, it is impossible to determine exactly where the milestone was placed. It might not be a wild guess to link these inscriptions, which were probably set up by a local authority, with the projected visit of Alexander Severus to Egypt somewhere before the autumn of 233 AD<sup>1189</sup>; it is probably due to the fact that it are milestones, that Iulia Mamaea, the mother of the emperor and recorded in the other documents related to this visit, is not mentioned.

In July 1925 Tonneau saw five Greek inscriptions in the possession of the governor of el-Arish and kept in the serai there. At least one of them comes from Nessana or el-Audja, a place in the neighbourhood of the Egyptian - Israeli frontier some 70 km southeast of el-Arish<sup>1190</sup>. It is far from sure therefore that the four others

<sup>1186</sup> Jerusalem, Department of Antiquities and Museum, inv. no. R.4516.

<sup>1187</sup> For this sandstone, cf. Clédat, 1923, p. 72.

<sup>1188</sup> Barag, 1973, p. 50-52; AE, 1973 [= 1976], p. 182, no. 559; Barag, 1974, p. 43-44 (Hebrew); Finkelstein, 1980, p. 191 and n. 67; Meimaris, 1992, p. 336-338, no. 8; Verreth, 1997, p. 115-116; Figueras, 2000, p. 235; SEG, XLVII, 1997 [= 2000], p. 638-639, no. 2132. Photos: Barag, 1973, pl. 12b; Barag, 1974, p. 43; Finkelstein, 1980, p. 191. For l. 1-2 it might be better (against AE) to follow the disposition of SB XVI, 12997; it is not clear why Bingen in SEG reads Αὐτοκράτορι | Καίσαρι Μ(άρκῳ) Αὐρ(ηλίῳ) in these lines, since the published photos clearly show that l. 1-2 are missing.

<sup>1189</sup> Cf. Thomas, 1977, p. 195-207; Halfmann, 1986, p. 232; Martin, 1986, p. 318-323; van Minnen, 1996, p. 171-181. For other Roman emperors possibly using the overland road across the northern Sinai, cf. Weingärtner, 1969, p. 70.

<sup>1190</sup> Tonneau, 1926, p. 597 and 1927, p. 93-95 with pl. 2, 1-4.



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came from the immediate region of el-Arish. These funerary inscriptions all contain similar elements, but because of the differences in material and in date it is not evident that they came from the same spot.

(4) SEG XLVII, 2134 (SEG VIII, 302) is a limestone funerary stele for a man called Stephanos<sup>1191</sup>. It is rounded and broken at the bottom; it was probably the upper part of a stele such as no. 305 (5):

1 + ἀναπ(άη)  
Στέφανος υ(ί)οῦ  
Γωλωτ Διω-  
κλιτιανοῦ τπδ'  
5 μ(η)λ Π(α)χ(ών) ε' ἰν(δικτιῶνος) ιγ'  
'Stephanos son of Golot has died, (in the year) 384 of the Diocletian era, in the month Pachon 6, indiction 13'

The full name of the deceased is not easy to read because of the use of ligatures and again there is some discussion about the calendar used.

For Tonneau the name of the deceased at first was Στέφανος υ(ί)οῦ (immo υ(ί)δς) Γωλωτ Διωκλιτιανοῦ - 'Stephanos, son of Golot Dioklitianos (Diocletianus)' - , considering Golot as a form of the Arab name Galat or Goliath and stating that the father could have been freed by emperor Diocletianus, apparently forgetting that he dated the text about 200 years after this emperor. Later on Tonneau considered the option Στέφανος υ(ί)οῦ Γωλω τ(οῦ) Διωκλιτιανοῦ, making Dioklitianos Stephanos' grandfather. Alt preferred another reading for the name Golot and proposed Γαούλον (sic) (Gaulos) or Παύλου (Paulos) for the name of the father or - creating a new word - even thought that υουπωλω had to be read, making Stephanos a ὑπόλος or pig farmer. Mouterde in SEG offered still some other, even more doubtful readings. The so-called grandfather's name Diocletianus, however, is no doubt part of the date, which brings us to the second problem.

The text is dated year 384, 6th day of month P( ), 13th indiction. Tonneau thought that the Arab era had been used, and so year 384 should give 489/490 AD, which indeed corresponds with a 13th indiction<sup>1192</sup>. With this era the name of the

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<sup>1191</sup> Tonneau, 1927, p. 93-94, no. 1; Alt, 1928a, p. 199-202; Tonneau, 1929, p. 314-315; Schlauck, 1933, p. 91; Kirk, 1937, p. 210-211; SEG, VIII 1, 1937, p. 46, no. 302; Kirk, 1938, p. 162-163; MacCoull, 1990, p. 380.388.399 (with the year '374' a misprint); Meimaris, 1992, p. 315-318, no. 4; Verreth, 1997, p. 117; SEG, XLVII, 1997 [= 2000], p. 639, no. 2134; Bagnall, 2004a, p. 72.87. Drawing: Tonneau, 1927, p. 94-95, pl. 2, 1. The Greek text given is based upon the edition of Meimaris. It is not clear why Schlauck, 1933, p. 91, n. 4 attributes the inscription to the region south of Bir el-Seba'.

<sup>1192</sup> Tonneau probably made a miscalculation (just as he did for SEG VIII, 305) equating 384 and 490 AD, for starting from 105/106 AD, as he explicitly states, the date should be 488/489 AD.

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month could be restored as P(eritios) 6 (21 January 490)<sup>1193</sup>. The mention of ΔΙΩΚΛΙΤΙΑΝΟΥ, however, supposes that the text is dated according the era of Diocletianus and therefore could be placed in 667/668 AD<sup>1194</sup>. Since on top of the Π possibly a small χ is written, the name of the month could be restored as P(a)ch(on) 6 (1 May). A major problem for this option is the fact that this year corresponds with an 11th and not with a 13th indiction, but maybe a mistake should be taken into account<sup>1195</sup>. If one considers the date according to the indiction correct, Stephanos died on 1 May 670 AD.

(5) SEG VIII, 305 is a funerary stele in very fragile sandstone for a woman called Maria<sup>1196</sup>. It consists of two parts: a round and inscribed upper part connected with a rectangular and not inscribed lower part. For Alt this form is typical for Palaestina Tertia, but Tonneau stresses that the stone is a concretion of sea sand and must originate from the coast<sup>1197</sup>:

1 + ἀνεπά(η)  
ἡ μακ(αρία) Μα-  
ρία. ρ κη'  
4 ἰνδ(ικτιῶνος) ιγ'

'The blessed Maria has died. ... (?) 28, indiction 13'

The interpretation of the letters ρκη in line 3 is not clear. For Tonneau (and SEG) it is year 128, 13th indiction. Tonneau at first thought that the era of the province of Arabia was used and dated 234/235 AD, which should correspond with a 13th indiction, but Alt rightly criticised this interpretation as much too early. A conversion according to the era of Diocletianus gives 411/412 AD, but this year corresponds with a 10th indiction or 414/415 AD, which would make it one of the earliest gravestones dated by the era of Diocletianus<sup>1198</sup>. Bagnall and Worp, however, stress that neither ἔτους ('in the year') nor the name of an era is mentioned, and they do not think that the era of Diocletianus is referred to. On the other hand, because one expects the day

<sup>1193</sup> A restoration P(anemos) 6 (25 June) in this respect would not be an option, since 25 June 489 does not belong to the 13th indiction and 25 June 490 not to the year 384; cf. Alt, 1928a, p. 199, n. 3.

<sup>1194</sup> It is not necessary, although not impossible, to restore in line 3 the rather far fetched expression ἔτους Διωκλιτιανού. The abbreviation μ( ) has been solved as (έν) μ(νη) by Tonneau, as μ(η) by SEG and Kirk and as μ(η) by Meimaris.

<sup>1195</sup> For this kind of discrepancy, cf. Schlauck, 1933, p. 91; Bagnall, 1978, p. 45 and 2004a, p. 64-67.

<sup>1196</sup> Tonneau, 1927, p. 94-95, no. 4; Alt, 1928a, p. 195-199; Tonneau, 1929, p. 313; Alt, 1932, p. 84; SEG, VIII 1, 1937, p. 46, no. 305; Verreth, 1997, p. 116; SEG, XLVII, 1997 [= 2000], p. 639, no. 2134; Bagnall, 2004a, p. 87. Drawing: Tonneau, 1927, p. 94-95, pl. 2, 4. The text is not discussed in Meimaris, 1992, so he apparently accepted the reading of Alt.

<sup>1197</sup> This material is most likely identical with the so-called kurkar stone used for the previous inscription (3) and for the el-Khuinat steles.

<sup>1198</sup> Cf. Bagnall, 1979a, p. 284, with the earliest certain gravestone dated to the year 208 (491/492 AD).

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of death to be mentioned, Alt did not read ρκη', but [ʼA]ρ(τεμμισίου) κη', dating the text on Artemisios 28 (18 May) in an unknown year corresponding with a 13th indiction and placing it in the 6th or even 7th century AD. According to Tonneau, however, it is impossible to read [ʼA]ρ and he considers the small sign before the ρ as a mark of punctuation. Also Bagnall and Worp suppose that the name of a month was written, and tentatively read (with haplography) <ʼA>(θὺ)ρ κή, 'Hathyr 28' (24 November), restoring the name of an Egyptian month. Whatever the exact reading of line 3, it appears impossible to provide a precise date for this stele, which therefore can only be dated approximately to the 5th-7th centuries AD.

(6) The last two inscriptions do not mention a year and can possibly be placed in the 5th century AD. SEG VIII, 303 is a sandstone funerary stele for a woman Kosmias, who died on Phaophi 22 (19 October)<sup>1199</sup>:

1 + ἀνεπάη  
ἡ μακαρ(ία) Κ-  
οσμίας ἐν  
4 μη(ιὺ) Φαῶφ κβ'

'The blessed Kosmias has died in the month Phaophi 22'

The use of sandstone of a marine origin and the mention of an Egyptian month might point to a place of origin somewhere in the northern Sinai, but a location in el-Arish as suggested by Tonneau and Alt is a mere hypothesis.

(7) SEG VIII, 304 is a broken, white marble funerary plate for a person whose name starts with an M[ ] and who died between Epeiph 2[0] and 2[9] (14-23 July)<sup>1200</sup>:

1 + ἀνεπάη M[ - ]  
διακόνου [ - ]  
3 ἐ(ν) μ(ηιὺ) Ἐπιφ κ[ - ]

'The deacon M[ ] has died in the month Epeiph 2[.]'

For Tonneau the deceased was a deacon, and again a genitive seems to be used instead of a nominative. The use of an Egyptian month again might point to an origin somewhere in the northern Sinai.

(8) A fragment of a white marble vase with an inscribed metric epitaph in the private collection of M. Dayan is said to be found in the neighbourhood of el-

<sup>1199</sup> Tonneau, 1927, p. 94, no. 2; Alt, 1928a, p. 199; Tonneau, 1929, p. 315; SEG, VIII 1, 1937, p. 46, no. 303; Timm, 1984, I, p. 150; Meimaris, 1992, p. 318; Verreth, 1997, p. 117. Drawing: Tonneau, 1927, p. 94-95, pl. 2, 2. Tonneau reads φαῶψ, but the facsimile definitely gives φαῶφ.

<sup>1200</sup> Tonneau, 1927, p. 94, no. 3; Alt, 1928a, p. 199; SEG, VIII 1, 1937, p. 46, no. 304; Timm, 1984, I, p. 150; Meimaris, 1992, p. 318; Verreth, 1997, p. 117-118. Drawing: Tonneau, 1927, p. 94-95, pl. 2, 3. Tonneau reads κ', but since the stele is broken at the k, the disposition of the text easily allows a following letter.

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Arish<sup>1201</sup>. The editor Lifshitz does not date this very fragmentary text; parallels are found in Greece, but not in Palestine or Egypt:

μή με π[ι] - ]ον κλίμ[α - αὐ]τὸς ἐγὼ Ζοί[λος - ]πριν τὸ γλυκὺ φῶς μ[ε? - ] -  
παλαιστροφύλαξ - ] - ἄλλω σὰς οἴσεις? - ] - τιμῶν ἀρετῆν [ - ] - ]παρ παπα[ι - ] - ]δι'  
ῶλου τ[ε? - ]?ἔσθλὸς ἐ]ὼν ἔθα[νον - ]

'Don't [ ] I myself Zoilos [ ] [before?] the sweet light [ ] wrestling-school superintendent [ ] your [ ]  
excellence [ ] whole [ ] being [brave?] I died [ ]'

The deceased Zoilos speaks in the first person singular (l. 3) and was possibly a παλαιστροφύλαξ or superintendent of a wrestling-school (l. 5).

(9) From the same collection Lifshitz also published two limestone funerary steles, of which the first is said to be found between el-Arish and Rafah, the second in el-Arish itself. At the first stele three crosses, of which the left one has eroded, are engraved above the inscription. 'Di...s', the name of the deceased, is preceded by the encouragement formulas εὐμοίρει ('be blest with good share!') and εὐψύχει ('be of good courage!') and is followed by the consolation formula οὐδεὶς ἀθάνατος ('nobody is immortal')<sup>1202</sup>:

1 εὐμίρι, εὐψι-  
χη, Δι...  
ς. οὐδεις  
4 ἀθάνατο[ς]

'Be blest with good share! Be of good courage! Di...s. Nobody is immortal'

The same three formulas are common on the funerary steles of el-Khuinat and perhaps also this tombstone can be dated about the 5th century AD. Because the published photo does not clearly show whether this stele also had a head carved out on top, one could even wonder if it does belong to this group. The fact, though, that this stele is made in limestone and the el-Khuinat steles in kurkar stone, makes it not necessary to doubt the alleged provenance, but it is clear that they belong to the same region.

(10) On the second inscription, found in el-Arish, Lifshitz could not read the first lines, and as he did not publish a photo of it, it is difficult to improve his readings<sup>1203</sup>:

1 XIO  
EIAOX  
ΦΟΥ. σ-  
ὐδεις ἀ-  
5 θάνα-

<sup>1201</sup> Lifshitz, 1971a, p. 155-156, no. 9; Robert, BE, 1971, p. 528, no. 698; Verreth, 1997, p. 118; SEG, XLVII, 1997 [= 2000], p. 639, no. 2135. Photo: Lifshitz, 1971a, pl. 8d. Restorations (l. 2-3) Willy Clarysse: [αὐ]τὸς ἐγὼ; (l. 4) Clarysse: μ[ε? - ]; (l. 10) Lifshitz: [?ἔσθλὸς] ῶν, but metrically maybe better [?ἔσθλὸς ἐ]ὼν ἔθα[νον].

<sup>1202</sup> Lifshitz, 1971a, p. 154.157.159, no. 15; Robert, BE, 1971, p. 528, no. 698; Timm, 1984, I, p. 150; Verreth, 1997, p. 118; SEG, XLVII, 1997 [= 2000], p. 639, no. 2135. Photo: Lifshitz, 1971a, pl. 6c.

<sup>1203</sup> Lifshitz, 1971a, p. 154.157.159, no. 16; Robert, BE, 1971, p. 528, no. 698; Timm, 1984, I, p. 150; Verreth, 1997, p. 118-119.

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6 ΤΟΣ

'... Nobody is immortal'

The formula οὐδείς ἀθάνατος is typical of the el-Khuinat group, but also occurs in the preceding text and in two inscriptions from Tell el-Kana'is near Pelousion<sup>1204</sup>. The formula is too common, though, to consider it a distinctive regional feature.

(11) On the Muslim cemetery north of the city Clédat found a reused marble stele with a Coptic funerary inscription. The stone - 0,56 m high and 0,31 m wide - used to be rectangular, but has been remodelled in a more round shape. The inscription itself is very damaged and possibly counted seven lines. Clédat could read the date of Choiak 13 (9 December) (l. 6), but the figure of the indiction (l. 7) was destroyed<sup>1205</sup>.

#### Identifications<sup>1206</sup>

Willelmus Tyrensis (55) in the 12th century AD calls el-Arish an 'urbs antiquissima' and a lot of other Arab authors refer to its (mythical) remote past. Since d'Anville the place is almost generally identified with Rinokoloura<sup>1207</sup> and indeed the vast ruins immediately west of modern el-Arish most likely bore that name till shortly after the Arab invasion. The distances of 24 or 23 miles given in the sources between Ostrakine and Rinokoloura match quite well the actual distance of some 36 km between el-Felusiyat and el-Arish. The distances from Rinokoloura to Raphia as given in the sources, on the other hand, do not match the actual distance of some 46 km towards Rafah, but this is usually considered a flaw in the sources that does not really affect the identification of el-Arish. Most of the other topographical elements about Rinokoloura match the situation of el-Arish. Although medieval and modern day el-Arish itself is quite fertile, most of the region is still just as inhospitable as described by Diodoros. The habit of catching quails in the northern

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<sup>1204</sup> SB III, 7015-7016 (I.Kana'is 3 and 1); cf. Carrez-Maratray, 1996c, p. 195-198.

<sup>1205</sup> Clédat, 1910a, p. 225 with a facsimile of the stone in fig. 6; cf. Timm, 1984, I, p. 150; Verreth, 1997, p. 114.

<sup>1206</sup> The identification of el-Arish and Raphia on the map of Aufrère, 1994, p. 242 is no doubt a mere mistake.

<sup>1207</sup> d'Anville, 1766, p. 103. In 1650, however, 'Larissa' is still explicitly distinguished from Rinokoloura on the map of Fuller, 1650 in Schur, 1987, p. 784; for a deviant identification of Rinokoloura with el-Za'aqa on Sicard's map of 1722, see s.v. Rinokoloura. Amélineau, 1893, p. 404 (followed by Lukaszewicz, 1978, p. 361-362) was in doubt about the identification between Rinokoloura and el-Arish (without any specific argumentation), but had no better proposal.

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Sinai is still known in the 10th century AD<sup>1208</sup> and apparently continued till the 20th century AD. In the 5th century AD Hesychios of Jerusalem personally noticed a brook in Rinokoloura and he reports how it once suddenly became a whirling torrent; this brook might correspond with the present-day Wadi el-Arish, which flows into the Mediterranean next to el-Arish. The lack of archaeological evidence in el-Arish dating from before the 2nd century BC might be an argument favouring a rather late foundation for the city of Rinokoloura.

The Hyksos city of Auaris, now identified with Tell el-Dab'a in the eastern Delta, has incorrectly been located by Sepp in el-Arish 'because of its position and its name'<sup>1209</sup>.

The fortress Š3r3ḥ3n3 (Sharahana)<sup>1210</sup> controlled the access to southern Palestine and was conquered in the 18th dynasty by Amosis I and by Thoutmosis III. Clédat with all reservation locates it at el-Arish<sup>1211</sup>. This suggestion, which has nothing to recommend it, stands next to other possible identifications<sup>1212</sup>.

Also any identification of el-Arish with one of the wells on the Karnak relief of Sethos I, in P.Anastasi or in P.Harris is not based on any real evidence<sup>1213</sup>.

Arashiya, known from cuneiform and Egyptian texts, has traditionally been identified with Cyprus<sup>1214</sup>, but Vandersleyen points out the hypothetical character of this identification<sup>1215</sup>. I do not go into detail in this extensive dossier, but Nibbi supposes that the same root with the meaning 'tenting-place' can be found in the names Arashiya and el-Arish; her argumentation, however, that Arashiya has to be looked for in the northern Sinai<sup>1216</sup>, is not convincing. Even more, it would be highly unlikely that the name Arashiya, which is used for the last time in the early 21st dynasty, would pop up, without any traces in the meantime, in the 9th century AD.

In the late 15th century AD the Jewish rabbi Meshullam (**148**) identifies Sukkot, the first station of the exodus after leaving Ramses, with el-Arish, because the

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<sup>1208</sup> Cf. Muqaddasi (translated in Collins, 1994, p. 179.191) (the el-Farama region); el-Muhallabi in Yaqut, *Mu'qam al-buldan* (Wüstenfeld, 1867, II, p. 90; mentioned in Wüstenfeld, 1864, p. 466), followed by Qazwini (see s.v. Djifar); Bakuwi (**106**).

<sup>1209</sup> Sepp, 1863, II, p. 533-534; cf. Boettger, 1879, p. 212.

<sup>1210</sup> Also transcribed as Charoḥana or Char(a)ḥana.

<sup>1211</sup> Clédat, 1923b, p. 141-142.

<sup>1212</sup> Cf. Gauthier, 1928, V, p. 104-105.

<sup>1213</sup> See s.v. Rinokoloura.

<sup>1214</sup> Cf. e.g. Helck, Wolfgang, s.v. Zypern und Ägypten, in LÄ, VI, 1986, col. 1452-1455.

<sup>1215</sup> Vandersleyen, 1994, p. 42-45.

<sup>1216</sup> Nibbi, 1985, p. 125.153; followed by Vandersleyen, 1994, p. 45.

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word 'arish' in Hebrew is translated as 'succa', 'booth'<sup>1217</sup>. Also the suggestion of a phonetic link between the names el-Arish and Alush, one of the stations of the Israelites on their journey through the Sinai<sup>1218</sup>, is gratuitous.

The 'brook of Egypt', known in biblical and Assyrian sources as the southern border of Palestine, most likely corresponds with the Nahal Besor, which lies between Gaza and Rafah, and not with the Wadi el-Arish. A city named 'Brook of Egypt', sometimes identified with el-Arish, did probably never exist<sup>1219</sup>. Greek and Latin Christian authors sometimes located the 'brook of Egypt' in the neighbourhood of Rinokoloura, but it is more likely that they made the link because Rinokoloura in their time lay near the border between Egypt and Palestine, just as the 'brook of Egypt', and not because they referred to a specific river in the neighbourhood of that city<sup>1220</sup>.

The city of Arza, situated next to the 'brook of Egypt' and plundered by the Assyrians in 679/678 BC, has often been identified with el-Arish, but in all likelihood has to be placed in Tell Djamma on the southern bank of the Nahal Besor in Palestine<sup>1221</sup>.

According to two Assyrian sources king Sargon II 'opened the sealed-off harbour of Egypt', 'mingled together the Assyrians and the Egyptians' and 'made them trade with each other', probably in 716 BC. No geographical information is given about the place, so different identifications have been suggested, including el-Arish<sup>1222</sup>. Since no Assyrian remains have been found near el-Arish, this suggestion seems very unlikely.

In P.Amh.Eg. 63, an Aramaic text written in demotic characters probably in the 5th century BC, a toponym often occurs that is read as 'rš [Aresh] by Steiner and Nims, but as rš [Resh] by Vleeming and Wesselius. Steiner proposes an identification with Arashi near Elam, with el-Arish or with Arza, but Vleeming is probably right identifying mount Resh with Ras el-Naqura on the border between Israel and Lebanon<sup>1223</sup>.

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<sup>1217</sup> For Sukkot(h) or Succoth (*Exodus*, 12, 37; 13, 20 and *Numeri*, 33, 5-6), cf. Odelain, 1978, p. 364, s.v. Sukkot.

<sup>1218</sup> Cf. Jarvis, 1938, p. 39. For Alush or Alus (*Numeri*, 33, 13-14), cf. Odelain, 1978, p. 21, s.v. Alush; Nibbi, 1985, p. 155.

<sup>1219</sup> See s.v. Brook of Egypt.

<sup>1220</sup> See s.v. Rinokoloura.

<sup>1221</sup> See s.v. Arza.

<sup>1222</sup> See s.v. The sealed harbour of Egypt.

<sup>1223</sup> Steiner, 1984, p. 106-107.114 (cf. Nims, 1983, p. 266); Vleeming, 1984, p. 116.132-133 and 1985, p. 54-55; for the date, cf. Bresciani, 1995, p. 98.

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Some scholars identify el-Arish with the city of Ariza mentioned by Hierokles in southern Palestine in the 6th century AD, but except for a certain phonetic similarity there are few arguments for this hypothesis<sup>1224</sup>.

The village of Arush is mentioned once in the Coptic-Arab Synaxar of possibly the 13th century AD without further geographical information<sup>1225</sup>. Amélineau tentatively identifies the place with el-Arish, but this identification is rejected for phonetic reasons by Timm<sup>1226</sup>.

A Coptic-Arabic colophon of 1616 AD (**159**) mentions the Coptic toponym 'Shorpo' parallel to the Arabic 'el-Arish', but Timm is not convinced that both names refer to the same place<sup>1227</sup>.

On the map of Sicard of 1722, followed by a Greek-Arab map of that same year, the name Ostrakine is linked with el-Arish and the name Rinokoloura with el-Za'aqa<sup>1228</sup>. These identifications are not compatible with the available geographical information, as it was already noticed by d'Anville.

#### Etymology

According to the 13th century Arab author Yaqut (**69**), the Arab name el-Arish means 'hut'<sup>1229</sup>. He tells that the brothers of the biblical Joseph son of Jacob, going to Egypt because of a famine in Canaan and waiting for permission to enter Egypt, built a hut on that spot. The story of Yaqut has been followed by Qazwini (**80**), Bakuwi (**106**) and Maqrizi (**122**)<sup>1230</sup>. Another version in Maqrizi (**122**), also known in a

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<sup>1224</sup> See s.v. Ariza.

<sup>1225</sup> *Synaxar*, Kihak 24 (Basset, 1909, III, p. 518); the toponym is also spelled Arūš, Arouch, Arousch, Aroušch.

<sup>1226</sup> Amélineau, 1893, p. 59-60; cf. Maspero, 1919, p. 125; Timm, 1984, I, p. 185-186. Basset, 1909, III, p. 518 and Delehayé, 1922, p. 98 do not identify the place.

<sup>1227</sup> Timm, 1984, I, p. 152, n. 10.

<sup>1228</sup> Sicard, 1982 [= 1722], II, p. 219 and III, p. 70-71.180; rejected by d'Anville, 1766, p. 103; cf. Munier, 1943, p. 58.60; Honigmann, 1961, p. 182. See also s.v. Rinokoloura, s.v. Ostrakine and s.v. el-Za'aqa.

<sup>1229</sup> Abel, 1940, p. 230 sees a link with the Arab word 'arīšeh meaning 'hutte de feuillage'; Nibbi, 1985, p. 125 looks for a parallel in 'irasa', the modern Berber word for a camping- or a tenting-place. Hommel, 1926, p. 722, n. 1 on the other hand translates 'Weinlaube' (to establish a fantasized link with the Dionysos cult); Dalman, 1924, p. 55 rightly fights the interpretation of Wiegand, 1920b, p. 37 (non vidi) that this name is an indication for the production of wine there in antiquity. Figueras, 2000, p. 79 translates the name el-Arish as 'the Palm-Trees', without any further remarks, but gives on p. 243 inconsequently the translation 'the Palm-Hut'. Cf. Wehr, 1979, p. 704-705, s.v. 'ariš, 'arbor, bower; hut made of twigs; booth, shack, shanty; trellis (for grapevines); shaft, carriage pole'.

<sup>1230</sup> Cf. Sepp, 1863, II, p. 534; Wüstenfeld, 1864, p. 466; Maspero, 1919, p. 126; Clédat, 1921, p. 191 and 1924, p. 54-55; Abel, 1940, p. 230.



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Jewish source of the late 15th century AD (148), states that Jacob himself stayed here in a hut which he constructed for himself during his journey from Canaan to Egypt<sup>1231</sup>. The detail of the hut is not mentioned in *Genesis*, 42-46 and the whole story is probably an Arab popular etymology for the name el-Arish.

In the 9th century AD Ibn Abd el-Hakam (7), followed by Istakhri (30), Ibn Hauqal (34) and Abu'l-Feda (99), accepts a similar etymology, based upon a verb with the meaning 'to build a hut', and relates it not to the bible, but to a verse of the *Koran* which states 'We destroyed the works of Pharaoh and his people and the things they built'.

Maqrizi (122) in the early 15th century mentions still another etymology. The original name of el-Arish would have been el-Arsh, derived from the 'arsh' or 'throne' that stood on the spot where Joseph met his father Jacob<sup>1232</sup>. el-Arsh later on would have been pronounced el-Arish. A last etymology is offered again by Maqrizi (122), who states that el-Arish is named after a certain el-Arish ibn Malek.

The name el-Arish is mentioned for the first time in Arab authors of the 9th century AD. There are several hypothetical possibilities for the origin of the name. First, the name is not Arab, but might be an Arab phonetic transcription of a toponym that already existed<sup>1233</sup>. Except for the Ariza of Hierokles, which is difficult to interpret, there is however no name that qualifies. Also the suggestion of van Senden that the Arab name el-Arish hides the earlier name of Rinokoloura<sup>1234</sup>, cannot be confirmed. Secondly, the name el-Arish might be given for unknown reasons to a city that existed already in the Byzantine period. But no Arab source mentions such a change of name for any city in the region, nor is there any plausible explanation for this change. Thirdly, the name might have been created together with a new settlement of some 'huts' somewhere in the 7th or 8th century AD. In this respect one could imagine that the city of Rinokoloura fell into ruins somewhere in the first half of the 7th century AD, out of which a community arose that the new inhabitants started to call el-Arish, after their poor living conditions.

#### Homonyms

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<sup>1231</sup> Cf. Oren, 1982a, p. 46; Pirone, 1987, p. 381; Baumgarten, 1990, p. 124.

<sup>1232</sup> Cf. Wehr, 1979, p. 704, s.v. 'arš, 'throne'.

<sup>1233</sup> Cf. Reinaud, 1848, II 1, p. 151, n. 2, who thinks that the name has an unknown Egyptian origin.

<sup>1234</sup> van Senden, 1851, I, p. 79.

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The name Larissa, found in some European sources, is a phonetic rendering of the Arab (e)l-Arish(a), and has nothing to do with the many places with the name Laris(s)a in Greece, Asia Minor and elsewhere.

Niebuhr incorrectly distinguishes a region el-Arish in the northeastern Delta from the city of el-Arish in the northern Sinai, apparently misled by his identification of the Brook of Egypt with the most eastern Nile branch<sup>1235</sup>.

#### **Analysis of the sources**<sup>1236</sup>

*The mythical past of el-Arish*  
*The wall of the old woman*  
*el-Arish in the 7th-11th centuries AD*  
*el-Arish in the 12th-17th centuries AD*

#### *The mythical past of el-Arish*

Some Arab sources refer to the history of el-Arish before the Arab conquest, but the historical value of these stories is often minimal. Maqrizi (**122**) mentions not less than six different accounts about the origin of the city of el-Arish<sup>1237</sup>.

Misraim or Misr, grandson or great-grandson of Noe according to the version, approaching Egypt after the flood built a shelter with the branches of some trees; later he created there a marvellous city with the name of Darsan or 'Gate of paradise'; between Darsan and the sea trees were planted and gardens, fields and dwellings created. This city is said to be identical with the later el-Arish<sup>1238</sup>. A second, similar story traces the history of el-Arish itself back to the period immediately after the flood. On that spot God made horses, donkeys, cows, sheep and camels come out of the sea for Misr.

Another source of Maqrizi thinks that el-Arish was the border place where Joseph met his father Jacob and his brothers on their way to Egypt. A royal throne

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<sup>1235</sup> Niebuhr, 1772, p. 420.

<sup>1236</sup> I have no information for the moment about the exact contents of Kindi (mentioned in Maspero, 1919, p. 125) (**33**) [about the invasion of 639-642 AD] and Yaqut, *Mu'qam al-buldan* (Wüstenfeld, 1866, I, p. 489.587; 1867, II, p. 190.302; 1869, IV, p. 546.744 - cf. the index Wüstenfeld, 1870, VI, p. 150-151) (**63-64, 66, 67, 72-73**). For a list of travellers passing by el-Arish between 1507 and 1917, cf. Schur, 1987, p. ix-xxxvi and especially p. xxv.

<sup>1237</sup> Maqrizi (translated in Bouriant, 1900, p. 622-624). See also § Etymology.

<sup>1238</sup> See also Maqrizi (translated in Bouriant, 1900, p. 50 [without a reference to el-Arish] and p. 391) (**115**), Ibn Iyas (mentioned in Maspero, 1919, p. 87) (**151**) and Murtada (Vattier, 1666, p. 116 in Wiet, 1953, with the note p. 121; cf. Maspero, 1919, p. 126) (**157**).

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stood there and Joseph had his father sit in it. The word for 'throne' is 'arsh' and therefore the place was called el-Arsh, later pronounced as 'el-Arish'<sup>1239</sup>.

A fourth tradition states that it was on that spot that the brothers of Joseph or their father Jacob himself had built a hut on their way from Canaan to Egypt while they were waiting for permission to enter the country. After the word 'arish' or 'hut' this place was called el-Arish<sup>1240</sup>.

A fifth tradition does not make Jacob build a hut there, but patriarch Abraham himself. A last tradition states that el-Arish has been built by and named after a certain el-Arish ibn Malek.

In some Arab legends mentioned by Ibn Iyas (**153**) in the 16th century AD el-Arish was founded by the Egyptian pharaoh el-Rayan ibn el-Walid<sup>1241</sup>, according to Mas'udi the king Joseph worked for<sup>1242</sup>, and maybe a link can be made with the traditions about el-Arish involving Joseph and his family. el-Muhallabi (**41**), as quoted by Yaqut (**69**), tells that el-Arish was a border place with a garrison 'in the time of the pharaohs', but he does not give more details<sup>1243</sup>.

#### *The wall of the old woman*

Ibn Abd el-Hakam, quoted in Maqrizi, describes in the 9th century AD how Pharaoh and all the nobles of Egypt drowned during the exodus of Moses and therefore Daluka<sup>1244</sup>, daughter of Zeba and 160 years old, was chosen queen of Egypt. To protect Egypt against foreign invaders she built a wall and in front of it a canal filled with water around the whole country and posted every three miles a large garrison and every mile a smaller one. The soldiers warned for danger with bells. The

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<sup>1239</sup> See also Maqrizi (translated in Bouriant, 1900, p. 544) (**121**), but it is not clear why Bouriant 'el-Arsh' here translates as 'les abris' and p. 623 'arsh' as 'trône'.

<sup>1240</sup> See also Ibn Zulaq in Yaqut, *Mu'qam al-buldan* (Wüstenfeld, 1868, III, p. 660; translated in Toussoun, 1926, I, p. 62-63) (cf. Wüstenfeld, 1864, p. 466; Marmardji, 1951, p. 138) (**42 / 69**), Qazwini (translated in Marmardji, 1951, p. 139) (**80**) and Bakuwi (mentioned in de Guignes, 1789b, p. 444-445) (**106**).

<sup>1241</sup> Ibn Iyas (mentioned in Maspero, 1919, p. 126).

<sup>1242</sup> Mas'udi (translated in Barbier de Meynard, 1914 [= 1861-1877], II, p. 366.397).

<sup>1243</sup> el-Muhallabi in Yaqut, *Mu'qam al-buldan* (Wüstenfeld, 1868, III, p. 661; translated in Toussoun, 1926, I, p. 63); cf. Wüstenfeld, 1864, p. 466; Marmardji, 1951, p. 139.

<sup>1244</sup> The name of the queen is also spelled Daloukâ, Daloukah, Dalûk, Dalûkah, Dalûkah, Deloukeh. The identification of Daluka with queen Hatshepsout of the 18th dynasty, as suggested by Clédât, 1921, p. 177, is not based on any real arguments.

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wall was built in six months and was called Ha'it el-Adjuz<sup>1245</sup> or 'wall of the old woman'. Traces of it still survived in the Sa'id (Upper Egypt) and the size of its bricks was much larger than usual in the time of the author<sup>1246</sup>. Daluka is also said to have asked a famous witch to build a temple where one could put a spell on every enemy that approached<sup>1247</sup>.

While Ibn Abd el-Hakam tells a mythical story without a precise location of the wall, Eutychios in his *Annales*, written ca. 935 AD, gives a completely different picture. He describes how queen Kleopatra (VII) became frightened of Octavianus and how she protected Egypt with a wall on the eastern bank of the Nile that went from Nubia till el-Farama (Pelousion) and with a wall on the western bank that went from Nubia till Alexandria. These walls were called 'wall of the old woman'<sup>1248</sup>. Maqrizi knows this story, but rejects that Kleopatra could have build this wall<sup>1249</sup>.

Anyway, the story about Daluka is definitely the more popular one and the theme becomes elaborated. Mas'udi, who wrote about 947 AD, gives a similar story as Ibn Abd el-Hakam, but adds that she also built the wall to protect her son, who loved hunting, against wild animals from the desert and the sea and against ambushes of foreign kings, and that she placed crocodiles and other animals along that wall<sup>1250</sup>. The witch of Ibn Abd el-Hakam is no longer mentioned, but instead Daluka self performed the magic<sup>1251</sup> and in later authors queen Daluka herself is called a witch<sup>1252</sup>. Another story makes the old woman build the wall to prevent the lions from coming down to the Nile to drink, in revenge for the death of the son, who had been devoured by a lion<sup>1253</sup>.

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<sup>1245</sup> Also spelled Ha'it el-Adjouz, Hait al-'agoûz, Hâ'it al-'Ajûz, hâ'it el-'agouz, Hayt al-'Ağûz, 'Mauer von al 'Ağuz', 'muraille d'Adgiouz', 'Mur de la Vieille' or gisr al-'agûz, Jisr al-'Ajûz ('dyke of the old woman'). This wall also occurs in many later authors from the 10th till the 16th century AD (mentioned in Evetts, 1895, p. 59-60, n. 4; Maspero, 1919, p. 72; Wiet, 1953, p. 97-98; Charles-Dominique, 1995, p. 92.1107), but I lack further information about the context there. Cf. also Evetts, 1895, p. 59-60, n. 4 and p. 170, n. 5; Butler, 1978 [= 1902], p. 197-198; Maspero, 1912, p. 21; Clédat, 1915a, p. 18, n. 1 and 1921, p. 176-181; Maspero, 1919, p. 72-73; Pirone, 1987, p. 147.154.

<sup>1246</sup> Ibn Abd el-Hakam in Maqrizi (translated in Bouriant, 1900, p. 105-106. 410. 578-579).

<sup>1247</sup> Ibn Abd el-Hakam in Maqrizi (translated in Bouriant, 1900, p. 106-108).

<sup>1248</sup> Eutychios, *Annales* (Alexandrian version) (translated in Breydy, 1985, II, p. 37).

<sup>1249</sup> Maqrizi (translated in Bouriant, 1900, p. 433).

<sup>1250</sup> Mas'udi (Barbier de Meynard, 1914 [= 1861-1877], II, p. 398-399), also paraphrased in Maqrizi (translated in Bouriant, 1900, p. 106).

<sup>1251</sup> Mas'udi (Barbier de Meynard, 1914 [= 1861-1877], II, p. 399-400), also paraphrased in Maqrizi (translated in Bouriant, 1900, p. 109).

<sup>1252</sup> Ibn Djubair (translated in Charles-Dominique, 1995, p. 92), probably referring to the work of el-Bakri, who wrote before 1094 AD.

<sup>1253</sup> Cf. Evetts, 1895, p. 59-60, n. 4.

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At least from the 11th century AD on new geographical elements enter the story. For el-Quda'i (46), quoted in Maqrizi (113), the wall went from el-Arish to Assuan, going around Egypt from east to west<sup>1254</sup>. In the 12th century AD el-Harawi mentions a wall starting in the region of Bilbeis in the eastern Delta built by a woman who ruled there<sup>1255</sup>. According to Ibn el-Wardi the wall lay south of Assuan and was ruined in his own time, sc. the early 15th century AD<sup>1256</sup>. Abu Salih in one passage gives a similar story as Eutychios, but he then speaks of a Ha'it el-Hudjuz or 'barrier-wall'<sup>1257</sup>. In another context Abu Salih (75) also mentions 'the wall of the old woman, sometimes called barrier-wall', said to run from el-Arish to Assuan<sup>1258</sup>. Abu Salih does not identify the old woman, but elsewhere he talks about the old woman Daluka, who founded two nilometres<sup>1259</sup>, a story already told by Mas'udi<sup>1260</sup>. Dimashqi mentions in the early 14th century AD the story as it is told by Ibn Abd el-Hakam, but when that author described how Egyptian women, by lack of man, took their slaves as husbands, Dimashqi states that it is Daluka who would have married women to slaves in order to increase the population<sup>1261</sup>. Mas'udi already stated that Daluka 'according to some authors' had built the Pharos of Alexandria<sup>1262</sup>, but for Dimashqi she even built Alexandria itself<sup>1263</sup>.

The relations between the different versions of the story are not always clear<sup>1264</sup>. Are Kleopatra and 'the old woman' identical and is the name Daluka a corruption for the name Kleopatra? Is Ha'it el-Hudjuz, 'barrier-wall' the original form corrupted into Ha'it el-Adjuz, 'wall of the old woman', or is it a later re-interpretation of this name? The only military action of Antonius and Kleopatra on the borders of Egypt known in classical sources is the installation of a garrison in Paraitonion and Pelousion after the battle of Aktion in 31 BC<sup>1265</sup>, but if these events are referred to, the corruption in the story of Eutychios has been considerable. Some authors look for

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<sup>1254</sup> el-Quda'i in Maqrizi (translated in Bouriant, 1900, p. 86).

<sup>1255</sup> el-Harawi (translated in Charles-Dominique, 1995, p. 1107).

<sup>1256</sup> Ibn el-Wardi (mentioned in de Guignes, 1789a, p. 31); cf. Maspero, 1919, p. 72.

<sup>1257</sup> Abu Salih (translated in Evetts, 1895, p. 170). Also spelled Ḥā'it al-Ḥujūz, 'the wall of al-Hujūz'.

<sup>1258</sup> Abu Salih (translated in Evetts, 1895, p. 59).

<sup>1259</sup> Abu Salih (translated in Evetts, 1895, p. 203-204).

<sup>1260</sup> Mas'udi (translated in Barbier de Meynard, 1861-1877, II, p. 366)

<sup>1261</sup> Dimashqi (translated in Mehren, 1874, p. 33-34).

<sup>1262</sup> Mas'udi (Barbier de Meynard, 1914 [= 1861-1877], II, p. 432).

<sup>1263</sup> Dimashqi (translated in Mehren, 1874, p. 321).

<sup>1264</sup> Cf. the general statement of Butler, 1978 [= 1902], p.226, n. 1: 'There is no sort of confusion not found among Arab historians'.

<sup>1265</sup> Cf. Florus, 2, 21, 9 and Orosius, 6, 19, 13.

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a parallel with the wall built by Sesostris from Pelousion till Heliou Polis<sup>1266</sup>, but this does not account for the wall on the western bank of the Nile. It is also notable that the eastern wall on a certain moment has been extended from el-Farama to el-Arish, probably a kind of 'up-date' to include the border town of that time, which under Kleopatra not even belonged to Egypt.

Butler is apparently convinced of the physical existence of this wall and even states that it ran from el-Arish to Suez (across the desert) and further on to the eastern bank of the Nile<sup>1267</sup>, but this is a very unlikely itinerary and anyway no traces of such a wall are known in Lower Egypt. In Upper Egypt on the other hand, already Ibn Abd el-Hakam, followed still by Ibn Djubair and Maqrizi, pointed out some brick walls in the Egyptian landscape that bore the name 'wall of the old woman'. For Maspero these walls existed till the early 19th century AD, and he thinks that similar constructions led to the creation of the story in or even before the Arab period<sup>1268</sup>. This does not, however, account for the historical setting of the story of Eutychios and - it has to be stressed - this author does not refer to physical evidence for this story in his own time, which one certainly would expect. Most likely the whole story is a conversion of some older, unrecognizable account, which afterwards was used to explain some existing walls in the landscape.

#### *el-Arish in the 7th-11th centuries AD*

On 12 December 639 AD the Arab general Amr ibn el-As crossed the Egyptian border with a force of about 4000 men and in two years he conquered the whole of Egypt<sup>1269</sup>. There exist several versions of the story about the very start of the expedition. The main line in some of them is that caliph Omar ibn el-Khattab after first giving the order to Amr to invade Egypt, sent a message to Amr that he should abort the mission unless he was already in Egypt. Amr was still in Palestine when the messenger reached him, but he refused to read the letter until he came to a village

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<sup>1266</sup> Evetts, 1895, p. 59-60, n. 59; Butler, 1978 [= 1902], p. 198; Maspero, 1919, p. 73. Cf. Diodoros, 1, 57, 4.

<sup>1267</sup> Butler, 1978 [= 1902], p. 197-198.

<sup>1268</sup> Maspero, 1919, p. 73; cf. also Evetts, 1895, p. 59-60, n. 59 and Butler, 1978 [= 1902], p. 198 for the archaeological remains.

<sup>1269</sup> Cf. Zotenberg, 1883, p. 556, n. 2; Lane-Poole, 1901, p. 1-2 and p. 13, n. 1; Butler, 1978 [= 1902], p. xxxvii.195-198.209.544; Maspero, 1912, p. 9.27-28; Maspero, 1919, p. 125; Buhl, F., s.v. al-'Arish, in *EncIslam*(2), I, 1960, p. 651; Bowman, 1986, p. 40; Mouton, 2000, p. 55-58.

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whose inhabitants told him that they belonged to Egypt. As he opened the letter on Egyptian ground, Amr considered himself justified to continue to the Egyptian fortress of el-Farama (Pelousion). The accounts do not only differ in the matter who took the initiative for the invasion, why Omar sent the letter and how Amr reacted - which is not at issue here -, but they also give a different geographical setting for the Egyptian starting point of the invasion. According to Baladuri (5), who wrote in 869 AD, Amr opened the letter in el-Arish and further in the text he adds that this place was the first stop of Amr on his way to el-Farama<sup>1270</sup>. For Ibn Abd el-Hakam (8), who wrote before 871 AD and is quoted in Maqrizi (125), the letter was opened in a village between Rafah and el-Arish<sup>1271</sup>. Ya'qubi, who wrote in 874 AD, refers to a village near el-Arish (11)<sup>1272</sup>. In the 10th century AD, Eutychios, possibly referring to an account similar to that of Ibn Abd el-Hakam, specifies that Amr opened the letter in a village after Rafah<sup>1273</sup>. Eutychios' *Annales* has been revised with some substantial alterations at the latest in the 13th century AD and in this so-called Antiochian version of the *Annales* the village is situated half way between Rafah and el-Arish; the text also quotes another story, not in the original version, that the letter was read in el-Arish (86)<sup>1274</sup>. For another source in Maqrizi (125-126), finally, the letter was read in el-Arish and it was on that spot that the troops made an offering<sup>1275</sup>. The original Arab account on the invasion of Egypt, as possibly reflected in Eutychios, had apparently only four geographical data: Rafah, a village south of Rafah belonging to Egypt<sup>1276</sup>, el-Arish and el-Farama. It seems that el-Arish later replaced the nameless village, because at that time it was considered the first Egyptian city for someone coming from Palestine.

According to Ibn Abd el-Hakam (9) Amr ibn el-As did not go directly from Rafah to el-Arish, but first went to the Djebel el-Hallal, a mountain some 50 km south of el-Arish, before heading for the city<sup>1277</sup>. Mouton suggests that the detour was made to attack a Roman garrison at the border or in el-Arish, but I do not see the military sense of such a manoeuvre. Anyway, a border garrison seems not likely, because Amr

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<sup>1270</sup> Baladuri (translated in Hitti, 1916, p. 335).

<sup>1271</sup> Ibn Abd el-Hakam in Maqrizi (translated in Casanova, 1906, p. 113).

<sup>1272</sup> Ya'qubi, *History* (translated in Marmardji, 1951, p. 138).

<sup>1273</sup> Eutychios, *Annales* (Alexandrian version) (translated in Breydy, 1985, II, p. 122).

<sup>1274</sup> Eutychios, *Annales* (Antiochian version) (translated in Pirone, 1987, p. 339-340).

<sup>1275</sup> Maqrizi (translated in Casanova, 1906, p. 113.115).

<sup>1276</sup> For a hypothetical identification of this village, see s.v. el-Shadjaratain.

<sup>1277</sup> Ibn Abd el-Hakam (mentioned in Mouton, 2000, p. 56-57).

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ibn el-As was apparently able to read the letter of the caliph on Egyptian territory without having to fight first. Further more, no account refers to even a skirmish in the northern Sinai before Amr reached el-Farama. It is therefore unlikely that the towns along the coast were protected with a Roman garrison<sup>1278</sup>. It is hard to decide whether the region had lost most of its importance and inhabitants during the harsh occupation of the Persians (618-628 AD)<sup>1279</sup> or was deliberately left without defence for military reasons and declined from 639 AD on. Anyway, almost none of the towns in the northern Sinai reappears as such in Arab sources.

About 640 AD Abdallah Yuqana, a lieutenant of Amr ibn el-As, came from Syria to Egypt; he left the desert and those fortresses that were upon the way to Egypt, on his right hand and so passed Rafah, el-Arish, el-Adad, el-Baqqara and el-Farama<sup>1280</sup>. This account ascribed to Waqidi (1) has not been considered very reliable and some of the problems involved have already been discussed. Also in this context the name el-Arish is probably used anachronically and even the description of el-Arish as a fortress is rather suspect because the manoeuvre of the lieutenant does not make much sense from a military point of view<sup>1281</sup>. Most likely the historical nucleus of the story is the lieutenant passed by Rinokoloura, but left the city aside.

According to Tabari, who wrote ca. 915-923 AD, el-Ashtar, a new governor for Egypt, wanted to enter his country via Qolzum near the Red Sea; the account is told twice, both for 656/657 and 658/659 AD<sup>1282</sup>. Mas'udi (28), who wrote some 25 years after Tabari, knows this story, but he states - without argumentation - that el-Ashtar arrived not in Qolzum, but in el-Arish; the 'dihkan' of that place was bribed with the promise of tax-exemption for twenty years; he poisoned the new governor, but was killed himself by the companions of the man<sup>1283</sup>. Again the use of the name el-Arish at the beginning of the Arab period is not unambiguous.

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<sup>1278</sup> Cf. Butler, 1978 [= 1902], p. 197.210.

<sup>1279</sup> For this occupation, cf. Bowman, 1986, p. 52.

<sup>1280</sup> Waqidi (translated in Butler, 1978 [= 1902], p. 195-196, n. 3); cf. Maspero, 1912, p. 28.40.135; Figueras, 2000, p. 111.225.

<sup>1281</sup> Against Maspero, 1912, p. 28, n. 3 and p. 40, n. 1.

<sup>1282</sup> Tabari (quoting Waqidi) (translated in Brockett, 1997, p. 184 and in Hawting, 1996, p. 145); Suyuti (mentioned in Mouton, 2000, p. 66)

<sup>1283</sup> Mas'udi (translated in Barbier de Meynard, 1861-1877, IV, p. 422-423); followed by Qazwini (translated in Marmardji, 1951, p. 139) (80); cf. Maspero, 1919, p. 125-126. Gil, 1992, p. 77 and Mouton, 2000, p. 63-64 only mention this version of the story.



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According to Tabari (**14-15**) a fight took place between Muhammad Ibn Abi Hudhayfah and Amr Ibn el-As near el-Arish in 658/659 AD, a date also given by Suyuti (**145**), but Tabari stresses that other sources as Waqidi (**2**) date the events in 656/657AD<sup>1284</sup>.

In the summer of 750 AD a military expedition chasing caliph Marwan II who was fleeing to Egypt, left Palestine on its way to el-Farama (Pelousion), and as far as el-Arish a fleet accompanied the troops marching on the shore (**16**)<sup>1285</sup>. When Marwan found out, he burnt down the environment of el-Arish in order to stop their progress, and continued further on to Egypt (**49**)<sup>1286</sup>.

el-Arish was involved in the political and military problems of about 824 AD (**117**)<sup>1287</sup>.

About 826 AD the emir Abdallah coming from Syria to Egypt was met in el-Arish (**60**)<sup>1288</sup>.

Ibn Khurdadbeh describes ca. 844-848 AD the road from Rafah to el-Farama. From Rafah it is 24 miles (ca. 48 km) through the sands to el-Arish and further on to el-Warrada 18 miles (ca. 36 km) (**3**)<sup>1289</sup>. It took 40 days to go from el-Shadjaratain, the border place between Rafah and el-Arish, to Assuan (**4**)<sup>1290</sup>.

In 849/850 AD 'el-Arish of Egypt' is considered the eastern border of the provinces of Africa and the Maghrib (**17**)<sup>1291</sup>.

About 869-870 AD the governor of Egypt Ahmad ibn Tulun set out for Palestine, arrived in el-Arish, but received an order there to turn back (**10**)<sup>1292</sup>.

The Frankish monk Bernardus (**6**) travelled about 870 AD from Damiette to Jerusalem. On his way he mentions Farama (el-Farama) and two road stations Albara (el-Warrada) and Albachara (el-Baqqara); after Albachara a fertile land started that

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<sup>1284</sup> Tabari (translated in Brockett, 1997, p. 175 and Hawting, 1996, p. 160); Suyuti (mentioned in Mouton, 2000, p. 66).

<sup>1285</sup> Tabari (translated in Williams, 1985, p. 173).

<sup>1286</sup> Ibn el-Athir (mentioned in Mouton, 2000, p. 66); cf. Schick, 1995, p. 90.

<sup>1287</sup> Maqrizi (translated in Bouriant, 1900, p. 513).

<sup>1288</sup> Michael Syrius, *Chronicon*, 12, 13 (Syriac) (translated in Chabot, 1905, III 1, p. 59).

<sup>1289</sup> Ibn Khurdadbeh (translated in de Goeje, 1889, p. 58); also quoted in Maqrizi (translated in Bouriant, 1900, p. 528.669) (**120, 123**).

<sup>1290</sup> Ibn Khurdadbeh (translated in de Goeje, 1889, p. 60).

<sup>1291</sup> Tabari (translated in Kraemer, 1989, p. 96).

<sup>1292</sup> Ya'qubi, *History* (mentioned in Gil, 1992, p. 300).

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went all the way to Gaza; Bernardus arrived in Alariza (el-Arish) and continued in Palestine<sup>1293</sup>:

ab Albachara invenitur iam terra secunda usque ad civitatem Gazam, que fuit Samson civitas, nimis opulentissima omnium rerum. deinde venimus Alariza. de Alariza adivimus Ramulam, ...

'After Albachara the fertile land begins and stretches till the city of Gaza, which was Samson's city, and is full of goods of every kind. Then we reached Alariza. From Alariza we came to Ramula, ...'

Bernardus apparently did not mention Gaza and Alariza in a strict geographical order. Although the text does not state it explicitly, it is most likely that Alariza lies somewhere in the fertile region described.

Ibn Abd el-Hakam (7), who wrote before 871 AD and is followed by Istakhri (30), Ibn Hauqal (34) and Abu'l-Feda (99), accepts an etymology for the name el-Arish, based upon a verb with the meaning 'to build a hut', and relates it to a verse of the *Koran* which states 'We destroyed the works of Pharaoh and his people and the things they built'<sup>1294</sup>.

In 891 AD Ya'qubi (12) mentions the road of Bernardus in reverse order: from Palestine to el-Shadjaratain, at the border with Egypt, and then to el-Arish, the first fortified place and the first district in Egypt, situated near the coast, and inhabited by people of the Djudam<sup>1295</sup> and other tribes; the next places mentioned are el-Baqqara, el-Warrada and el-Farama, the first city of Egypt<sup>1296</sup>. Ya'qubi apparently by mistake considers el-Baqqara as the first station east of el-Arish, while in fact this position was kept by el-Warrada<sup>1297</sup>.

Ibn el-Faqih (13), who wrote ca. 903 AD, states that the majority of the people of el-Arish were Banu-t-Ti'l<sup>1298</sup>.

On 4 November 905 AD a battle took place near el-Arish (18)<sup>1299</sup>.

Qudama, who wrote shortly after 929 AD, mentions a road going from Rafah to el-Arish over a distance of 24 miles or about 48 km. After this city the road

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<sup>1293</sup> *Itinerarium Bernardi Monachi Franci*, 9-10 (Tobler, 1879, p. 314); cf. the translation of Wilkinson, 1977, p. 142. There is no reason to link 'Alariza' with the Ariza of Hierokles as Schmitt, 1995, p. 65 and Figueras, 2000, p. 51 tentatively suggest.

<sup>1294</sup> Ibn Abd el-Hakam, Istakhri, Ibn Hauqal (translated in Gildemeister, 1883, p. 11-12); Abu'l-Feda, *Geography* (translated in Reinaud, 1848, II 1, p. 151); cf. Maqrizi (translated in Bouriant, 1900, p. 623) (122).

<sup>1295</sup> For the Djudam tribe at el-Arish, cf. el-Muhallabi in Yaqut, *Mu'qam al-buldan* (Wüstenfeld, 1868, III, p. 661; translated in Toussoun, 1926, I, p. 63) (41 / 69) (cf. Gildemeister, 1881, p. 89, n. 10; Marmardji, 1951, p. 139) and Lammens, 1912, p. 598-599.617.

<sup>1296</sup> Ya'qubi (translated in Wiet, 1937, p. 183); cf. Marmardji, 1951, p. 161.

<sup>1297</sup> Cf. Hartmann, 1910, p. 677.

<sup>1298</sup> Ibn el-Faqih (mentioned in Musil, 1907, II 1, p. 304); for the Banu-t-Ti'l or Banu Tha'l, cf. Mouton, 2000, p. 128.

<sup>1299</sup> Tabari (translated in Rosenthal, 1985, p. 156); cf. Lane-Poole, 1901, p. 78-79; Mouton, 2000, p. 67.

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bifurcates. The first track goes south through the Djifar desert and reaches el-Warrada after 18 miles (ca. 36 km). The second one goes north along the coast and reaches el-Makhlasa after 21 miles (ca. 42 km) **(19)**<sup>1300</sup>. el-Arish is mentioned again as one of the towns of Lower Egypt **(20)**<sup>1301</sup> and is finally listed by Qudama together with Rafah and el-Farama as Egyptian seaports **(21)**<sup>1302</sup>.

Two manuscripts of Abu Zaid el-Balchi, who died in 934 AD, contain a map on which the cities of el-Arish and el-Farama occur **(22-23)**<sup>1303</sup>. Towards the end of 939 AD a battle took place in the neighbourhood of el-Arish<sup>1304</sup>.

Saadia Gaon, who translated the bible into Arabic before 942 AD, rendered the 'brook of Egypt' as 'Wadi el-Arish' **(24)**<sup>1305</sup>. If this translation is influenced by the fact that some Christian authors associated the brook of Egypt with the city of Rinokoloura, this would be the only instance where el-Arish and Rinokoloura are explicitly linked. The possibility, however, cannot be ruled out that Saadia Gaon just mentioned the Wadi el-Arish because it was the nearest wadi in the border region between Syria and Egypt of his own time.

According to el-Hamdani, who wrote before 945 AD, the Bayadin Beduin tribe lived near el-Arish **(25)**<sup>1306</sup>.

In the middle of the 10th century AD Mas'udi **(26)** quotes the words of an old Copt who stated that there was once a strip of land between el-Arish and the island of Cyprus, which could be crossed by caravans, a lot faster than the trip by boat; some time afterwards the water of the sea rose and the road disappeared<sup>1307</sup>. Other authors claim a similar strip of land to have run between Cyprus and el-Farama<sup>1308</sup>. This highly imaginative story possibly recalls the theories of Eratosthenes about the changing level of the Mediterranean and other seas as expressed in the first two books

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<sup>1300</sup> Qudama (translated in de Goeje, 1889, p. 167).

<sup>1301</sup> Qudama (translated in de Goeje, 1889, p. 188).

<sup>1302</sup> Qudama (translated in de Goeje, 1889, p. 195).

<sup>1303</sup> Abu Zaid el-Balchi, map in ms. Berlin 1 (Miller, 1986, pl. 6-7 [10, 3]) and in ms. Bologna (Miller, 1986, pl. 2-3 [8, 1]).

<sup>1304</sup> Cf. Lane-Poole, 1901, p. 83; Gil, 1992, p. 318-319; Mouton, 2000, p. 67.

<sup>1305</sup> Saadia Gaon (mentioned in Dalman, 1924, p. 54); cf. Abel, 1933, I, p. 301; Na'aman, 1979, p. 74. See s.v. Rinokoloura and s.v. Brook of Egypt.

<sup>1306</sup> el-Hamdani (mentioned in Bailey, 1985, p. 20-21). For the Bayadin tribe, who later moved to the Qatia region, mainly between Bir el-Nuss and Bir el-Abd, cf. Clédat, 1910a, p. 210 and 1923a, p. 151; Abel, 1939, p. 210; Bailey, 1985, p. 20-21.31.47 and the map p. 23; Mouton, 2000, p. 128-130.133.142 and the map p. 202 (see also s.v. Anfushiya and s.v. Qatia).

<sup>1307</sup> Mas'udi (translated in Barbier de Meynard, 1861-1877, II, p. 375-376); also quoted by Maqrizi (translated in Bouriant, 1900, p. 506) **(116)**; cf. Daressy, 1931a, p. 210.217.

<sup>1308</sup> Maqrizi (translated in Bouriant, 1900, p. 626); cf. Van Esbroeck, 1982, p. 130-131, who states - not very convincingly - that the story reflects the Ptolemaic occupation of Cyprus.

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of Strabon. The link with el-Arish remains obscure. Maybe trading relations between the city and the island - by sea - formed the basis for this fabrication, but such relations are not confirmed elsewhere. Possibly it is only the distortion of a story about the strip of land that used to run north of lake Serbonis. Most likely, though, it is just a fairy tail without any historical basis.

In another context Mas'udi (27) describes the limits of the kingdom of Misr, the mythical eponymous king of Egypt. For the northeastern border his sources apparently mentioned three different border places: the Syrian city of Rafah, el-Arish, and el-Shadjaratain between Rafah and el-Arish; Assuan forms the southern border<sup>1309</sup>. Maqrizi in the 15th century AD tells a similar story, but only mentions the region of el-Shadjaratain, near el-Arish, as the northern border (111)<sup>1310</sup>.

In Mas'udi's division of the world in three parts or climates (29), el-Arish is situated on the borderline between the second (or southwest) and the third (or southeast) part<sup>1311</sup>. In the division of the world by Hippolytos in the 3rd century AD Rinokoloura held a similar position.

According to Istakhri, who wrote about 951 AD, the northeastern border of Egypt goes from Qolzum to the Djifar, behind el-Arish and Rafah (31). The same description also occurs in Ibn Hauqal (35)<sup>1312</sup>.

According to Ibn Hauqal (34), who wrote about 978 AD, el-Arish had two major mosques and some scattered buildings. The soil is mainly sand, but there are trees with a lot of fruit. This station on the road to Egypt, between Rafah and el-Warrada, lies close to the sea<sup>1313</sup>.

According to Muqaddasi, who wrote about 986 AD, there are seven towns residing under el-Farama, including el-Baqqara, el-Warrada and el-Arish (36)<sup>1314</sup>. In another context he mentions the Djifar region immediately west of Syria, with el-Farama as its capital and el-Baqqara, el-Warrada and el-Arish as chief towns in that

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<sup>1309</sup> Mas'udi (translated in Barbier de Meynard, 1861-1877, II, p. 395).

<sup>1310</sup> Maqrizi (translated in Bouriant, 1900, p. 55).

<sup>1311</sup> Mas'udi (translated in Reinaud, 1848, I, p. 288).

<sup>1312</sup> Istakhri and Ibn Hauqal (translated in Elad, 1992, p. 339, n. 155); cf. Grohmann, 1959, p. 17a, n. 8. el-Arish is also shown on a map found in an Istakhri manuscript; cf. the map in ms. Gotha 1 (Miller, 1986, p. 51, no. 68) (32).

<sup>1313</sup> Ibn Hauqal (translated in Gildemeister, 1883, p. 11-12), followed in 1154 AD by Idrisi (translated in Gildemeister, 1885, p. 122-123) (52); cf. Quatremère, 1811, I, p. 56; Le Strange, 1890, p. 397; Marmardji, 1951, p. 138; Buhl, F., s.v. al-'Arish, in *EncIslam*(2), I, 1960, p. 651. Ibn Hauqal's etymology for the name el-Arish has been mentioned already. The mosques mentioned probably correspond with the Fatimid mosque (969-1171) indicated on the map of Abd al-Malik, 1998, p. 171.

<sup>1314</sup> Muqaddasi (translated in Collins, 1994, p. 51).

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region (37)<sup>1315</sup>. There are two roads going from el-Farama to Rafah, apparently joining in or some distance before el-Arish: the first one goes - inland - via el-Baqqara and el-Warrada, the second one along the coast via Deir el-Nasara and el-Makhlasa (38)<sup>1316</sup>.

For el-Muhallabi, who wrote about 990 AD and is only preserved through quotations in the 13th century writer Yaqut, the most important towns of the Djifar are el-Arish, Rafah and el-Warrada (40 / 65)<sup>1317</sup>. In another context he gives a detailed description of el-Arish: The city has two mosques and two pulpits; the air is agreeable; the water is sweet and had a good taste; there is big market place, with large guest rooms and agents for merchants; there are a lot of palm trees, several kinds of dates and especially pomegranates that are exported to other regions. The people of el-Arish are Djudam Beduin. el-Muhallabi continues that Abi Ishaq, the first station on the road to Rafah after el-Arish, lies some 6 miles (ca. 12 km) east of the town (41 / 69)<sup>1318</sup>.

Ibn Zulaq, also quoted by Yaqut, describes the natural riches of el-Arish and the Djifar, including fowl, birds of prey, agricultural products, game and dried dates, and he adds that el-Arish was so famous for its pomegranates, that they were called 'el-Arishi'. el-Arish was apparently also known as el-Qassia because 'el-Qassi' were made there, probably the clothes that were named after el-Qass, another place in the northern Sinai (42 / 69)<sup>1319</sup>. The 13th century author Qazwini apparently copied passages from el-Muhallabi and Ibn Zulaq, because he gives a similar description of the city (80)<sup>1320</sup>.

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<sup>1315</sup> Muqaddasi (translated in Collins, 1994, p. 163). el-Arish, el-Warrada, el-Baqqara and el-Farama are also shown on a map found in a Muqaddasi manuscript; cf. the map in ms. Leiden 2 (Miller, 1986, pl. 2-3 [8, 3]) (39).

<sup>1316</sup> Muqaddasi (translated in Collins, 1994, p. 180-181).

<sup>1317</sup> el-Muhallabi in Yaqut, *Mu'qam al-buldan* (Wüstenfeld, 1867, II, p. 90; translated in Toussoun, 1926, I, p. 101); cf. Wüstenfeld, 1864, p. 465-466; Hartmann, 1916b, p. 375-376; Gaudefroy-Demombynes, 1923, p. 6-7, n. 2.

<sup>1318</sup> el-Muhallabi in Yaqut, *Mu'qam al-buldan* (Wüstenfeld, 1868, III, p. 661; translated in Toussoun, 1926, I, p. 63); cf. Wüstenfeld, 1864, p. 466; Gildemeister, 1881, p. 89, n. 10; Marmardji, 1951, p. 138-139.

<sup>1319</sup> Ibn Zulaq in Yaqut, *Mu'qam al-buldan* (Wüstenfeld, 1868, III, p. 660; translated in Toussoun, 1926, I, p. 62-63); cf. Blochet, 1901, VIII, p. 542, n. 6. The story about the brothers of Joseph, which also occurs in Ibn Zulaq, has already been discussed. For the 'el-Qassi', see s.v. el-Qass.

<sup>1320</sup> Qazwini (translated in Marmardji, 1951, p. 139). The stories about the brothers of Joseph and the murder on el-Ashtar, which also occur in Qazwini, have already been discussed.

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In 1024 AD el-Arish was attacked at night, burned down and sacked (122)<sup>1321</sup>. At the beginning of 1025 AD the place was attacked again and about 1077 AD some people there were massacred<sup>1322</sup>.

In one of the Cairo Geniza letters of ca. 1050 AD Solomon ben David el-Arishi is referred to, apparently a member of the Jewish community in el-Arish (43). Another Jewish letter in that same correspondence describes el-Arish as a large and flourishing city with two mosques and an important market; its fruit was sold all over the area (44)<sup>1323</sup>.

For the 11th century author el-Quda'i (45-46), quoted in Maqrizi (109, 113) el-Arish is the eastern border of Egypt and the place where the 'wall of the old woman' starts<sup>1324</sup>. He lists the administrative areas of the Delta and mentions the 'circle' of el-Farama, el-Arish and the Djifar in the Eastern Hauf (47 / 114)<sup>1325</sup>. This list was possibly adapted by Ibn Duqmaq (107), who wrote before 1407 AD<sup>1326</sup> and by Qalqashandi (108), who wrote before 1418 AD<sup>1327</sup>, both placing el-Farama and el-Arish in the Eastern Hauf, but omitting the Djifar.

The 11th century author el-Bakri considers the Euphrates and el-Arish as the northern and southern borders of Syria (48)<sup>1328</sup>. A similar phrasing occurs in Yaqut (68)<sup>1329</sup>. Also Dimashqi (94-95) apparently sees el-Arish as the most southern point of Syria<sup>1330</sup>. Usually, however, el-Arish is considered a city in Egypt. The location in Syria might reflect a changed administrative situation, but perhaps it is just a rather inaccurate mention of the Egyptian border town in a Syrian context.

#### *el-Arish in the 12th-17th centuries AD*

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<sup>1321</sup> Maqrizi (translated in Bouriant, 1900, p. 623); cf. Gil, 1992, p. 387; Mouton, 2000, p. 72.

<sup>1322</sup> Cf. Lane-Poole, 1901, p. 161; Gil, 1992, p. 389-390.412.

<sup>1323</sup> Cf. Braslawski, 1943, p. 70 (Hebrew) (non vidi); Oren, 1982a, p. 46; Baumgarten, 1990, p. 124; Gil, 1992, p. 621; Cytryn-Silverman, 2001, p. 10. Baumgarten probably exaggerates stating that the population of el-Arish consisted predominantly of Jews, who apparently called the city Hazor; I have no idea where this name is supposed to have come from.

<sup>1324</sup> el-Quda'i in Maqrizi (translated in Bouriant, 1900, p. 40.86).

<sup>1325</sup> el-Quda'i in Maqrizi (translated in Bouriant, 1900, p. 208); cf. Guest, 1912, p. 974; Maspero, 1919, p. 175.

<sup>1326</sup> Ibn Duqmaq (mentioned in Maspero, 1919, p. 126.184); cf. Guest, 1912, p. 974.

<sup>1327</sup> Qalqashandi (mentioned in Maspero, 1919, p. 186); cf. Wiet, 1937, p. 183, n. 6.

<sup>1328</sup> el-Bakri (translated in Marmardji, 1951, p. 80).

<sup>1329</sup> Yaqut, *Mu'qam al-buldan* (Wüstenfeld, 1868, III, p. 240; mentioned in Gaudefroy-Demombynes, 1923, p. 6, n. 1).

<sup>1330</sup> Dimashqi (translated in Mehren, 1874, p. 261.293); cf. Le Strange, 1890, p. 41; Marmardji, 1954, p. 156.

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The crusader king Balduinus I conquered Syria in 1116 AD all the way till el-Arish, a prosperous place then **(123)**<sup>1331</sup>.

This king later launched an attack on Egypt, but had to return from el-Farama to Jerusalem; he died near el-Arish on April 2nd, 1118 AD<sup>1332</sup>. The sources are not always consistent in the indication of his place of death. The account of Fulcherus **(50)**, who wrote ca. 1128 AD, is rather vague<sup>1333</sup>:

cumque ad usque villam, quae dicitur Laris, pervenissent, infirmitate ingruente et illum penitus consummante, defungitur.

'When they reached the village called Laris, he finally died, his body nearly wasted away with illness.'

While the phrasing in Fulcherus might leave some doubt for the exact location of the events, for Willelmus **(54)** some 60 years later it was clear that Balduinus died in Laris self<sup>1334</sup>:

sicque continuatis itineribus, transcurta ex parte solitudine que inter Egyptum et Syriam media diffunditur, Laris antiquam eiusdem solitudinis urbem perveniunt maritimam. ubi morbo superatus rex, ad extremum veniens in fata concessit.

'In this fashion by uninterrupted journeys, they crossed that part of the wilderness which extends between Egypt and Syria, and arrived at Laris, an ancient maritime city in that desert. There the king succumbed to his illness and yielded to fate.'

According to Abu Salih **(79)**, however, who wrote before 1260 AD, Balduinus died near, not in el-Arish<sup>1335</sup> and also the 15th century writer Abu'l-Mahasin **(139)** explicitly states that he died before he reached el-Arish<sup>1336</sup>. A crusaders' itinerary composed before 1289 AD **(85)**, situates the place of death of Balduinus specifically on a spot called Sabkhat Bardawil (or Lake Balduinus), about 7 to 9 'liues' (ca. 28 to 36 km) east of el-Arish<sup>1337</sup>. Also Abu'l-Feda **(100)** in the early 14th century AD apparently considers the neighbourhood of lake Bardawil as Balduinus' place of death<sup>1338</sup>. Probably these sources have the more correct version of the events and if Willelmus places the death of Balduinus in el-Arish itself, this is probably due to a wrong interpretation of his source.

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<sup>1331</sup> Maqrizi (translated in Bouriant, 1900, p. 670).

<sup>1332</sup> See s.v. Hadjar Bardawil.

<sup>1333</sup> Fulcherus Carnotensis, *Historia Hierosolymitana*, 2, 64, 3 (Hagenmeyer, 1913, p. 611); cf. the translation of Ryan, 1969, p. 222.

<sup>1334</sup> Willelmus Tyrensis, *Chronicon*, 11, 31 (Huygens, 1986, p. 544); cf. the translation of Babcock, 1943, I, p. 515. This point of view is apparently followed by Schlumberger, 1906, p. 75; Hagenmeyer, 1913, p. 611, Dalman, 1924, p. 52, Buhl, F., s.v. al-'Arish, in *Enclislam*(2), I, 1960, p. 651; Baumgarten, 1990, p. 124; Figueras, 2000, p. 28.166.249.

<sup>1335</sup> Abu Salih (translated in Evetts, 1895, p. 170-171).

<sup>1336</sup> Abu'l-Mahasin, *Annals* (translated in Recueil, 1884, III, p. 488).

<sup>1337</sup> *Via ad terram sanctam* (Kohler, 1904, p. 432); cf. *Memoria terre sancte* (Kohler, 1904, p. 455) **(87)**; Marino Sanudo, 3, 14, 12 (Röhricht, 1898, p. 121) **(89)**. See s.v. Hadjar Bardawil.

<sup>1338</sup> Abu'l-Feda, *Annals* (translated in de Slane, 1872, p. 11); cf. Clédat, 1926, p. 75.

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According to Fulcherus (51) the Egyptian fleet passed by 'Pharamia' and 'Laris' on its way to Palestine in 1126 AD<sup>1339</sup> and also Willelmus Tyrensis (55-59) frequently mentions the city of Laris during the wars of the crusaders between 1123 and 1177 AD<sup>1340</sup>. The place is described in phrases as 'Laris antiquam eiusdem solitudinis urbem maritimam' ('Laris, an ancient maritime city in that desert') 'usque Laris antiquissimam solitudinis urbem maritimam' ('as far as Laris, a very ancient maritime city in the desert'), 'usque Laris civitatem antiquam, sitam in solitudine' ('as far as Laris, an ancient city lying in the desert'), 'apud Laris antiquissimum eiusdem solitudinis opidum (sic)' ('at Laris, a very ancient fortress in that desert'), 'ad urbem antiquissimam, desertam tamen, Laris nomine' ('at the very ancient city of Laris, now deserted'), 'apud Laris civitatem' ('at the city of Laris'). el-Arish is situated near the sea in the desert between Egypt and Syria. It is called an 'urbs', 'civitas' or 'oppidum', which implies that it was considered an important place; therefore it is rather surprising to hear that the city was deserted in 1177 AD, especially because it is clear in other sources that the place continued to exist. The epithet 'antiqu(issim)a' or 'vetustissima' is also used by Willelmus for other 'old' places as Pharamia (el-Farama), Tampnis (Tennis?) and Damiata (Damiette) and is possibly reserved for places that existed at least already in the Byzantine period. Therefore this description of Willelmus can be used for a positive identification of Laris with one of the Byzantine towns in the northern Sinai.

Some manuscripts of Idrisi, who wrote in 1154 AD, contain a map on which the cities of el-Arish and el-Farama occur (53)<sup>1341</sup>. In August - September 1158 AD the Franks were beaten by Egyptian troops near el-Arish. This place was then apparently under Frankish control, since a certain 'prince of el-Arish' prepared an expedition against Egypt in that same year (82-83)<sup>1342</sup>.

After Saladin's defeat at Montgisard (Ramla) in 1177 AD Beduin pillaged his base camp at el-Arish<sup>1343</sup>.

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<sup>1339</sup> Fulcherus Carnotensis, *Historia Hierosolymitana*, 3, 56, 1 (Hagenmeyer, 1913, p. 804).; cf. the translation of Ryan, 1969, p. 296.

<sup>1340</sup> Willelmus Tyrensis, *Chronicon*, 12, 23; 17, 30; 19, 14; 21, 19; 21, 23 (Huygens, 1986, p. 575. 804. 883. 987. 993); cf. the translation of Babcock, 1943, I, p. 550 and II, p. 232-233. 315. 426-427. 433; his account of the death of Balduinus has been discussed already; cf. also Abel, 1940, p. 59, n. 6, p. 228, n. 5, p. 230, n. 2.

<sup>1341</sup> Idrisi, large map (Miller, 1986, p. 76, no. 73 (cf. pl. 100)).

<sup>1342</sup> Ibn Moyesser (translated in Recueil, 1884, III, p. 471.472).

<sup>1343</sup> Cf. Mouton, 2000, p. 140.



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In 1181 AD, according to el-Qadi el-Fadil (61), quoted in Maqrizi (122, cf. 127), most of the palm trees of el-Arish were stolen by the Franks<sup>1344</sup>.

Ca. 1220-1223 AD Jacques de Vitry (62) gave a very mixed-up description of the cities of el-Farama, el-Arish (situated near the sea) and Bilbeis (which he incorrectly identifies with Pelousion)<sup>1345</sup>: 'Beyond Pharamia comes another city, which stands in the wilderness near the seashore. It is called Laris; next to it (sic) is the city of Belbeis, which in the Prophets is called Pelousion (sic), and is five stadia from the seashore'.

According to Maqrizi it was perfectly possible in the first half of the 13th century AD, to travel safely from el-Arish to Cairo without the risk of being robbed (129)<sup>1346</sup>.

In the 13th century AD Yaqut mentions an itinerary from Rafah via el-Za'aqa, el-Arish and el-Warrada to Qatia (65)<sup>1347</sup>. el-Arish is a town of the first region in Egypt, near Syria, on the shore of the Mediterranean in the midst of the sand. It is the place of residence of the governor of the Djifar region. The poet and jurist Abul Abbas Ahmad el-Arishi came from el-Arish (69)<sup>1348</sup>. Yaqut locates el-Farama at the coast between el-Arish and el-Fostat (Cairo) (70)<sup>1349</sup>. In another context Yaqut places the road station el-Qass between el-Farama and el-Arish (71)<sup>1350</sup>. In his *Mushtarik* Yaqut states that there are some towns and villages in the Djifar, such as el-Arish, but that most of them are in ruins (74)<sup>1351</sup>. The *Marasid el-Itilla* repeats Yaqut's

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<sup>1344</sup> el-Qadi el-Fadil in Maqrizi (translated in Bouriant, 1900, p. 623) and Maqrizi, *History* (translated in Blochet, 1901, VIII, p. 542); Oren, 1982a, p. 47 by mistake dates the events in 1118 AD.

<sup>1345</sup> Jacques de Vitry, *Historia orientalis* (mentioned in Cytryn-Silverman, 2001, p. 11, n. 57); cf. Stewart, 1896, p. xxxviii-xxxix (non vidi); Butler, 1902, p. 214, n. 1.

<sup>1346</sup> Maqrizi, *History* (translated in Mouton, 2000, p. 161).

<sup>1347</sup> Yaqut, *Mu'qam al-buldan* (Wüstenfeld, 1867, II, p. 90; translated in Toussoun, 1926, I, p. 101); cf. Wüstenfeld, 1864, p. 465; Gaudefroy-Demombynes, 1923, p. 6-7, n. 2. The description of el-Muhallabi (40), mentioned by Yaqut in the same context, has already been discussed.

<sup>1348</sup> Yaqut, *Mu'qam al-buldan* (Wüstenfeld, 1868, III, p. 660-661; translated in Toussoun, 1926, I, p. 62-63); cf. Wüstenfeld, 1864, p. 466; Blochet, 1901, VIII, p. 542, n. 6; Jacoby, 1905, p. 48; Marmardji, 1951, p. 138-139. The etymology of the name el-Arish, the description of el-Muhallabi (41) and Ibn Zulaq (42) and the garrison 'in pharaonic times', also mentioned by Yaqut in the same context, have already been discussed. The reference to el-Arish being the governor's residence is incorporated by Yaqut in the description of el-Muhallabi, but rather seems to reflect a later source, since in the 10th century AD el-Farama was the capital of the Djifar (37); see s.v. Djifar.

<sup>1349</sup> Yaqut, *Mu'qam al-buldan* (Wüstenfeld, 1868, III, p. 883; translated in Toussoun, 1926, I, p. 88).

<sup>1350</sup> Yaqut, *Mu'qam al-buldan* (Wüstenfeld, 1869, IV, p. 94; translated in Toussoun, 1926, I, p. 123); cf. Hartmann, 1916b, p. 375.

<sup>1351</sup> Yaqut, *Mushtarik* (translated in Marmardji, 1951, p. 47).

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description (69), and adds that the place has been pillaged by the Franks and that nothing remains but some ruins (92)<sup>1352</sup>.

Among the seven branches of the Nile, Yaqut mentions a canal of el-Arshi, which is not known elsewhere<sup>1353</sup>. el-Arshi has nothing to do with el-Arish, as sometimes has been suggested, but according to Daressy it is a deformation of the name el-Qorashia, a village in the central Delta.

According to the so-called Abu Salih in the 13th century AD the greatest length of Egypt goes from el-Arish to Aidhab, which is most likely the ancient Berenike near the Red Sea (76)<sup>1354</sup>. Outside Egypt, beyond el-Arish, lies 'the district between the two rocks'. This might be the 13th century name for the region between el-Arish and Rafah, but it rather seems to be a deformation of the name of the border place el-Shadjaratain ('The two trees') (77)<sup>1355</sup>. Abu Salih also gives a detailed description of the el-Arish itself. In the region of el-Arish - apparently not in the city itself as it is sometimes inferred by modern scholars<sup>1356</sup> - two large churches, which have stood there 'from ancient times', were in ruins then, although their walls still remained up, as did the wall of the city, which ran along the side of the Mediterranean. The greater part and the largest specimens of the marble and columns found at that time in Cairo were said to have come from el-Arish (78)<sup>1357</sup>.

Bar Hebraeus (81) mentions el-Arish about 1235-1243 AD as the border from way back between the patriarchate of Alexandria and that of Antiocheia<sup>1358</sup>. Neither the passage of Bar Hebraeus, nor any other text I know, alludes to the fact that el-Arish would have been a Christian see. When Timm thinks that el-Arish was a Coptic bishopric in the Middle Ages<sup>1359</sup>, he is probably misled by the commentary of Abbeloos that el-Arish was a see of the patriarchate of Alexandria<sup>1360</sup>, while the latter apparently referred to the see of Rinokoloura. Some modern authors also speak

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<sup>1352</sup> *Marasid el-Itilla* (translated in Marmardji, 1951, p. 139); cf. Le Strange, 1890, p. 397.

<sup>1353</sup> Yaqut (mentioned in Daressy, 1930, p. 112 and 1931, p. 221-222).

<sup>1354</sup> Abu Salih (translated in Evetts, 1895, p. 70-71).

<sup>1355</sup> Abu Salih (translated in Evetts, 1895, p. 86). See s.v. el-Shadjaratain.

<sup>1356</sup> E.g. Butler, 1978 [= 1902], p. 197.

<sup>1357</sup> Abu Salih (translated in Evetts, 1895, p. 167). The wall of the old woman and the death of Balduinus, also mentioned by Abu Salih, have already been discussed.

<sup>1358</sup> Bar Hebraeus, *Chronicon ecclesiasticum*, I (Abbeloos, 1874, II, col. 657-658); cf. Akerblad, 1834, p. 348.

<sup>1359</sup> Timm, 1984, I, p. 151, n. 1. The presence of a small Coptic church in el-Arish about 1982, as mentioned in Oren, 1982a, p. 40, of course cannot be an argument in this discussion.

<sup>1360</sup> Abbeloos, 1874, II, col. 657, n. 2.

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of a bishopric Laris in the first centuries of Christianity<sup>1361</sup> or in the Byzantine period<sup>1362</sup>, but the use of the name Laris, which shows up for the first time in the 12th century AD, is anachronistic and again the see of Rinokoloura is meant, which is known under that name at least till 615 AD.

In 1253 AD the Egyptian Mamelukes and the Syrian Ayyubids placed the border between their realms in Bir el-Qadi, leaving el-Arish for some years at the Syrian side<sup>1363</sup>.

In *La devise des chemins de Babiloine* (84), written ca. 1289-1291 AD, a military itinerary goes from Rafah to Cairo. It mentions the station el-Arish at 4 'liues' (ca. 16 km) west of el-Kharruba and at 10 'liues' (ca. 40 km) east of el-Warrada<sup>1364</sup>:

Item dou Karrobler iusques au Hariss .iiij. liues.

Item de Hariss iusques à la Oarrade liues .x.

'Next from Karrobler to Hariss 4 liues.

Next from Harris to Oarrade 10 liues.'

A similar itinerary composed before 1289 AD is found in three different documents: the French *Via ad terram sanctam*, written ca. 1291-1293 (85); the Latin *Memoria terre sancte*, written ca. 1300-1321 (87); the Latin work of the Italian geographer Marino Sanudo (90), written in 1321 AD and based upon the *Memoria*. They also describe the road from Rafah to Cairo, each with some minor variants. They mention el-Arish at 4 'liues' (ca. 16 km) west of el-Ushsh and 3 'liues' (ca. 12 km) east of Bir el-Qadi. The road to el-Arish is sandy; there is good and plenty water and the place has a market<sup>1365</sup>:

(85) De Heus jusques a Larris, IIII liues tot sablon; bone aigue et assés; estassons de vendre et d'acheter.

'From Heus to Larris, 4 liues all sand; good and plenty water; places for selling and buying.'

(87) de Heus usque Lariz, .IIII. leuce, totum litus, bona aqua satis, et platea pro emendo et vendendo.

'From Heus to Lariz, 4 liues, all sand, good and plenty water, and a place for selling and buying.'

(90) inde usque Laris leuce IV; totum littus et aqua bona satis et platea ad emendum et vendendum.

'From there to Laris, 4 liues, all sand and good and plenty water and a place for selling and buying.'

In 1293 AD a water pit is built in el-Arish (128)<sup>1366</sup>.

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<sup>1361</sup> Baedeker, 1912, p. 122; Beer, Georg, s.v. Rinocolura, Rinocorura, in RE, I A 1, 1914, col. 842; Buhl, F., s.v. al-'Arish, in EncIslam(2), I, 1960, p. 651.

<sup>1362</sup> Baumgarten, 1990, p. 124.

<sup>1363</sup> Mouton, 2000, p. 34 and p. 172, n. 20.

<sup>1364</sup> *La devise des chemins de Babiloine* (Michelant, 1882, p. 242); cf. Maspero, 1919, p. 126.231; Clédat, 1923b, p. 156.

<sup>1365</sup> *Via ad terram sanctam* (Kohler, 1904, p. 432); *Memoria terre sancte* (Kohler, 1904, p. 454-455); Marino Sanudo, 3, 14, 12 (Röhrich, 1898, p. 121).

<sup>1366</sup> Maqrizi, *History* (mentioned in Hartmann, 1916a, p. 487, n. 10).

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The portulanus of Correr (**88**), made in 1318 AD, mentions the 'Gulffo de Rissu', referring to the Gulf of el-Arish<sup>1367</sup>.

Marino Sanudo mentions in 1321 AD the 'pelagus Rixe' and the 'gulfus Rixe', referring to a Sea and a Gulf of Rixa (el-Arish), probably two indications for the same gulf that possibly starts somewhere between Gaza and Rafah. The 'fundus gulfi Rixe', situated at 30 miles (ca. 45 km) west of Rafah and at the same distance east of the 'caput Staxi', might refer to el-Arish itself (**89**)<sup>1368</sup>.

a Daro ad caput Beroardi milia sunt XXX, a capite pelage Rixe per garbinum.  
a capite Beroardi in fundum gulfi Rixe per syrocum navigando milia sunt XXX.  
ab illo capite a meridie per occidentem versus magistrum milia sunt XXX.  
a predicto vero capite ad caput Staxi per garbinum navigando XXX milia computantur.  
'From Darum to the cape of Beroardum it is 30 miles, from the beginning of the sea of Rixa going south-west.  
From the cape of Beroardum to the end of the gulf of Rixa it is 30 miles sailing south-east.  
From that cape going west-north-west it is 30 miles.  
From the cape mentioned till the cape of Staxum it is 30 miles, sailing south-west.'

In another context Laris is called an old city in the desert near the sea (**91**)<sup>1369</sup>:

post Faramiam sequitur alia antiqua civitas, sita in solitudine prope mare, quae Laris nominatur.

'After Faramia follows another old city, situated in the desert near the sea, which is called Laris.'

Abu'l-Feda mentions el-Arish several times in his *Geography*, written in 1321 AD. The city lies on the coast of the Mediterranean; the coastline goes in eastern direction between Damiette and el-Arish, but east of the latter city it turns north towards Gaza (**96**)<sup>1370</sup>. The northern border of Egypt is formed by the Mediterranean and goes from Rafah to el-Arish, through the Djifar to el-Farama and further on to Damiette (**97**)<sup>1371</sup>. In the Djifar Abu'l-Feda mentions the places Rafah, el-Arish and el-Warrada, each at a distance of about one day; in el-Arish one could find the remains of ancient monuments in marble and in other materials; in his time the city accommodates horses for the post (**98**)<sup>1372</sup>.

For el-Omari, who wrote ca. 1345 AD, the jurisdiction of the governor of Syria went till the region of el-Arish, the border of Egypt (**101**)<sup>1373</sup>. He lists the road stations between Cairo and Gaza, including Bir el-Qadi, el-Arish and el-Kharruba. It was possible to find water for free in el-Arish and a serai has been built in the early

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<sup>1367</sup> Portulanus of Correr (mentioned in Rey, 1884, p. 346).

<sup>1368</sup> Marino Sanudo, 2, 4, 25 (Röhricht, 1898, p. 120). See s.v. Descriptions of the northern Sinai coastline.

<sup>1369</sup> Marino Sanudo (Bongars, 1611, II, p. 164 in Carrez-Maratray, 1999, p. 19).

<sup>1370</sup> Abu'l-Feda, *Geography* (translated in Reinaud, 1848, II 1, p. 34).

<sup>1371</sup> Abu'l-Feda, *Geography* (translated in Reinaud, 1848, II 1, p. 139).

<sup>1372</sup> Abu'l-Feda, *Geography* (translated in Reinaud, 1848, II 1, p. 150). His etymology for the name el-Arish has already been mentioned.

<sup>1373</sup> el-Omari (translated in Hartmann, 1916a, p. 23).

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14th century AD to protect it against raids of the Franks (**102**)<sup>1374</sup>. The same post stations on the same road are still mentioned in Qalqashandi junior (1464 AD) (**131**), Khalil el-Zahiri (before 1468 AD) (**135-136**) and Abu'l-Mahasin (before 1470 AD) (**138**)<sup>1375</sup>. el-Omari also knows el-Arish as one of the stations for the so-called snow-dromedaries (**103**)<sup>1376</sup>.

In 1355 AD Ibn Battuta (**104**) describes his journey from Cairo to Gaza in the summer of 1326 AD, during which he passed through stations as el-Warrada, el-Mutaileb, el-Arish and el-Kharruba. It is clear that the position of el-Mutaileb in this list is not to be trusted. Every station had a serai for travellers and their riding animals; outside that serai were a public watering place and a shop where all the necessary things could be bought<sup>1377</sup>.

The Catalan atlas of Abraham Cresques (**105**), made in 1375 AD, mentions Larissa (el-Arish) and the Golfo de Larissa (Gulf of el-Arish)<sup>1378</sup>.

For Bakuwi (**106**), who wrote in 1402 AD, el-Arish is a nice Egyptian town with healthy air and good water. A lot of birds fit for consumption are found there, and the pomegranates of el-Arish are even exported<sup>1379</sup>.

For Maqrizi, who wrote in the first half of the 15th century AD, the eastern border of Egypt differs according to the source that he used, and is situated quite inconsistently in the neighbourhood of el-Arish and Rafah (**109**)<sup>1380</sup>, in el-Shadjaratain near el-Arish (**111**)<sup>1381</sup> or in el-Arish itself (**109, 118**)<sup>1382</sup>. It is considered the first place of Syria, but also the last in Egypt (**119**)<sup>1383</sup>. It is the eastern border of the Djifar (**118**)<sup>1384</sup> although Maqrizi elsewhere includes Rafah in the Djifar, considering el-Arish only one of its five towns (**121**)<sup>1385</sup>. The town lies at the coast of the Mediterranean (**110**)<sup>1386</sup>. Together with el-Farama and el-Warrada it was a 'ribat'

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<sup>1374</sup> el-Omari (translated in Hartmann, 1916a, p. 487-488).

<sup>1375</sup> Qalqashandi junior (mentioned in Hartmann, 1910, p. 689.691). Khalil el-Zahiri (translated in Gaulmier, 1950, p. 199.201). Abu'l-Mahasin, *Chronicle* (mentioned in Popper, 1955, I, p. 47); cf. Clédat, 1923b, p. 152.156.

<sup>1376</sup> el-Omari (translated in Hartmann, 1916a, p. 502).

<sup>1377</sup> Ibn Battuta (translated in Gibb, 1958, I, p. 71).

<sup>1378</sup> Abraham Cresques (Buchon, 1841, p. 111); cf. Fontaine, 1955, p. 59.

<sup>1379</sup> Bakuwi (mentioned in de Guignes, 1789b, p. 444-445). His etymology for the name el-Arish has already been mentioned.

<sup>1380</sup> Maqrizi (translated in Bouriant, 1900, p. 39).

<sup>1381</sup> Maqrizi (translated in Bouriant, 1900, p. 55).

<sup>1382</sup> Maqrizi (translated in Bouriant, 1900, p. 40.41.523).

<sup>1383</sup> Maqrizi (translated in Bouriant, 1900, p. 526); cf. Quatremère, 1811, I, p. 53.

<sup>1384</sup> Maqrizi (translated in Bouriant, 1900, p. 524).

<sup>1385</sup> Maqrizi (translated in Bouriant, 1900, p. 544).

<sup>1386</sup> Maqrizi (translated in Bouriant, 1900, p. 45).

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or fortified post to protect the Islam against foreign attacks, probably of the crusaders called 'Franks' (**112**)<sup>1387</sup>. Listing the administrative units of the Eastern Hauf in the Delta at a not specified moment, Maqrizi mentions the 'circle' of Sa (Tanis) and Ablil with 46 villages, among which Senhur, el-Farama and el-Arish (**114**)<sup>1388</sup>. In el-Arish the graves of ten prophets were said to be (**122**)<sup>1389</sup>. For Maqrizi el-Arish is a point of reference in the northern Sinai; so he locates the ruins of Hatein - possibly incorrectly - in the region between Qatia and el-Arish (**124**)<sup>1390</sup>.

According to Khalil el-Zahiri, who wrote before 1468 AD, the northern border of Egypt ends in el-Za'aqa, Rafah and Amadj, which is also called el-Arish, all cities near the Mediterranean (**132**)<sup>1391</sup>. Also describing the southern border of Syria Khalil el-Zahiri mentions Amadj alias el-Arish, the last city of Egypt (**133**)<sup>1392</sup>, and Amadj as such is again mentioned as a border between Egypt and Syria (**134**)<sup>1393</sup>. In another context, however, and probably reflecting another source, Khalil el-Zahiri mentions only el-Arish at that same border (**137**)<sup>1394</sup>. Also Mujir el-Din (**150**), who wrote in 1496 AD, knows Amadj as 'the first border of Palestine, on the road to Egypt', and he adds that according to Abu Mahmud (?) this might be 'Ramakh which is el-Arish'<sup>1395</sup>. I have no further information about this identification of Amadj, Ramakh and el-Arish<sup>1396</sup>.

Abu'l-Mahasin in his *Annals*, written before 1470 AD, mentions el-Arish several times between 1404 and 1450 AD, between Qatia on the one hand and el-Za'aqa and Gaza on the other hand (**140-144**)<sup>1397</sup>.

In the register of toponyms of William Wey (**130**), composed in 1462 AD, the names Zacca (el-Za'aqa), Galachia (el-Salhiya), Saris, Bilbes (Bilbeis), Alariff (el-

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<sup>1387</sup> Maqrizi (translated in Bouriant, 1900, p. 76).

<sup>1388</sup> Maqrizi (translated in Bouriant, 1900, p. 207); cf. Guest, 1912, p. 974 and Maspero, 1919, p. 174, who, however, consider el-Farama and el-Arish separate circles next to the one of Sa.

<sup>1389</sup> Maqrizi (translated in Bouriant, 1900, p. 624).

<sup>1390</sup> Maqrizi (translated in Bouriant, 1900, p. 672). See s.v. Hittin / Hatein. A lot of other passages of Maqrizi mentioning el-Arish have already been discussed.

<sup>1391</sup> Khalil el-Zahiri (translated in Gaulmier, 1950, p. 37).

<sup>1392</sup> Khalil el-Zahiri (translated in Gaulmier, 1950, p. 62).

<sup>1393</sup> Khalil el-Zahiri (translated in Gaulmier, 1950, p. 172).

<sup>1394</sup> Khalil el-Zahiri (translated in Gaulmier, 1950, p. 218).

<sup>1395</sup> Mujir el-Din (translated in Marmardji, 1951, p. 163).

<sup>1396</sup> Gaulmier, 1950, p. 37.62.172 gives the name as 'Emeg', Marmardji, 1951, p. 163 as 'Amaj', and Dalman, 1924, p. 54, n. 2 as 'amaddsch'.

<sup>1397</sup> Abu'l-Mahasin, *Annals* (translated in Popper, 1954, II (14), p. 83.142.169; 1958, IV (18), p. 22; 1960, V (19), p. 226).

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Arish) and Catria (Qatia) follow each other without much logic<sup>1398</sup>. The form Alariff is a palaeographical mistake for Alariss.

In 1477/1478 AD sultan Qaitbay went in one day from el-Za'aqa to el-Arish and continued the next day to Umm el-Hasan (146)<sup>1399</sup>.

In 1479 AD Johannes Tucher passed by el-Arish on his way from Gaza to mount Sinai (147)<sup>1400</sup>.

In 1481 AD the Jewish rabbi Meshullam of Volterra (148) writes how he came from Umm el-Hasan and arrived in el-Arish, which he identifies with the Sukkot of the exodus, because the word 'arish' in Hebrew is translated as 'succa', 'booth' or 'tent'; he adds that it is on that spot that Jacob built a tent. From el-Arish he continued to el-Za'aqa<sup>1401</sup>.

In 1482 AD Joos van Ghistele mentions the Wadelaer (Wadi el-Arish) on the track between Khan Yunus and the Sinai monastery (154)<sup>1402</sup>. He travelled from Gaza to Cairo via Larijs (el-Arish), where once was 'a very big city', which extended towards the sea, but in his time was covered by the sand (155)<sup>1403</sup>.

The map of Bernhard von Breydenbach (149), drawn up between 1483 and 1486 AD, is not very trustworthy. He mentions after Gaza and Lughany the 'oppidum' Allariff (read 'Allariss') at 20 miles (ca. 30 km) and continues with Zaceha (el-Za'aqa) at 36 miles (ca. 54 km) arriving finally in Cattia (Qatia) and Salachia (el-Salhiya). It is clear from the other sources that the names Allariff and Zaceha have been switched. The fact that Breydenbach also mentions a city of Larissa (el-Arish) near the coast and the 'Golfus de Larissa', north of the described road, clearly indicates that he used different sources to draw up his map<sup>1404</sup>.

For Ibn Iyas (152) in the early 16th century AD el-Arish was the first Egyptian city near the Syrian border<sup>1405</sup>.

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<sup>1398</sup> William Wey (Röhricht, 1901, p. 133).

<sup>1399</sup> Ibn el-Dji'an (translated in Devonshire, 1922, p. 32); cf. Gildemeister, 1880, p. 249; Hartmann, 1910, p. 696; Abel, 1939, p. 220.

<sup>1400</sup> Johannes Tucher (mentioned in Niebuhr, 1772, p. 420); for Tucher, cf. Schur, 1987, p. xxxv, no. 354.

<sup>1401</sup> Meshullam of Volterra (mentioned in Cytryn-Silverman, 2001, p. 14.23); cf. Rothenberg, 1961, p. 32; Oren, 1982a, p. 46; Veronese, 1989, p. 60-63 (non vidi).

<sup>1402</sup> *Tvoyage van Mher Joos van Ghistele* (Gaspar, 1998, p. 167).

<sup>1403</sup> *Tvoyage van Mher Joos van Ghistele* (Gaspar, 1998, p. 169); cf. Demaekere, 1936, p. 78, who incorrectly abbreviates the passage.

<sup>1404</sup> Breydenbach (Röhricht, 1901, pl. 3); cf. Röhricht, 1898, p. 120, n. 5 and Hartmann, 1910, p. 688, n. 1.

<sup>1405</sup> Ibn Iyas (mentioned in Maspero, 1919, p. 125). The old name 'Gate of paradise' and the foundation by pharaoh el-Rayan ibn el-Walid, also mentioned by Ibn Iyas, have already been discussed.

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In 1560 AD Suleyman the Magnificent ordered the building of a fortress in el-Arish<sup>1406</sup>.

In 1565 AD Johann Helffrich (**156**) knows the stations Cannunis (Khan Yunus), Sacca (el-Za'aqa), Arisch, Nachile (Nakhla) and Hemelesin (Umm el-Hasan) on the road from Gaza to Cairo<sup>1407</sup>.

An atlas of the 16th century AD, kept in München (**158**), describes the coast of Palestine and mentions the 'G. de Larissa' or Gulf of el-Arish and the city Larissa itself<sup>1408</sup>. Both toponyms occurred already as such on the map of Breydenbach.

A Coptic-Arabic colophon of 1616 AD (**159**) mentions the writer 'Solomon of Shorpo, son of Michael, from the city of Mohonon' (ΣΩΛΟΜΟΝ ΝΩΡΠΟ ΠΩΗΡΙ ΜΙΧΑΗΛ ΕΤΕΠΟΛΙΣ ΜΟΖΟΝΟΝ); in the Arab version the ethnic 'of el-Arish' is given. Timm wonders whether Shorpo is another name for el-Arish<sup>1409</sup>. The fact that the name Solomon also occurs in the 4th century Rinokoloura, is hardly decisive.

Francesco Quaresmi (**160**) travelled ca. 1616-1626 AD from 'Cunianus' (Khan Yunus) to 'Aris' (el-Arish), where there was fresh water, and further on to 'Cathia' (Qatia), passing by some other, nameless wells; on the first track he travelled 75 miles (ca. 112,5 km) and on the second 145 miles (ca. 217,5 km), but both distances are definitely too high. It is not clear why he uses the epithet 'princeps' ('the first') for el-Arish<sup>1410</sup>.

tertius post istum, peractis quinquaginta milliaribus, qui "Aris Principis" nomine insignitur: ibi dulces aquae inveniuntur.

'the third place hereafter, fifty miles further, is called Aris Princeps: here one finds fresh water.'

About 1655 AD Hadji Khalifa (**161**) knows the stations Khan Yunus, el-Za'aqa, el-Arish, Umm el-Hasan and Bir el-Abd on the road from Gaza to Cairo<sup>1411</sup>.

el-Khiyari (**162**), who wrote before 1671 AD, lists the stations Khan Yunus, el-Arish and Bir el-Abd on the road from Gaza to Cairo<sup>1412</sup>.

In 1676 AD Ferdinand von Troilo (**163**) mentions the stations Hanna (Khan Yunus), Zacca (el-Za'aqa), Aziz (el-Arish), Beresanni (Qabr el-Sa'i?) and Melhesan

<sup>1406</sup> Cf. Cytryn-Silverman, 2001, p. 20.

<sup>1407</sup> Johann Helffrich (mentioned in Hartmann, 1910, p. 697).

<sup>1408</sup> Atlas of München (mentioned in Rey, 1884, p. 346).

<sup>1409</sup> Hebbelynck, 1937, p. 92 no. 26; cf. Timm, 1984, I, p. 152, n. 10, who incorrectly dates the manuscript to 1662 AD and (by mistake?) reads ΝΩΡΠΟ - 'n-šōpro'.

<sup>1410</sup> Francesco Quaresmi (De Sandoli, 1989, p. 432); cf. Abel, 1940, p. 227, n. 1.

<sup>1411</sup> Hadji Khalifa (mentioned in Hartmann, 1910, p. 698).

<sup>1412</sup> el-Khiyari (mentioned in Hartmann, 1910, p. 701).



#### 4. *Rinokoloura*

(Umm el-Hasan), referring to a trip to Egypt in 1661 AD. It took him eight hours to go from Zacca to Aziz and the next day six hours to get in Beresanni<sup>1413</sup>.

Fünfften Tages nach Zacca 8 Stunden.

Sechsten Tages nach Aziz 12 Stunden.

Siebenden Tages nach Beresanni 6 Stunden.

About 1697 AD el-Nabulusi (**164**) travelled in one day and night from Khan Yunus, passing by el-Za'aqa, to el-Arish, the first place in Egypt. The following stations are Bir el-Masa'id, Qabr el-Sa'i, Mahall el-Baraqat and Umm el-Hasan<sup>1414</sup>.

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<sup>1413</sup> Troilo (mentioned in Hartmann, 1910, p. 699).

<sup>1414</sup> el-Nabulusi (mentioned in Hartmann, 1910, p. 701); cf. von Kremer, 1850b, p. 824; Flügel, 1862, p. 672.

## 5. Ostrakine

### *Summary*

#### *Graeco-Roman period*

#### **Ostrakine**

#### *Arab period*

#### **el-Adad - el-Warrada - el-Makhlasa**

#### *Modern period*

#### **el-Felusiyat - Barasa el-M'kheizin / Barasa Aicha - el-Khuinat - el-Ratama - Umm el-Shuqafa**

#### **el-Zaraniq - Khirba (I) - Ras Straki - Ras el-Abid - Cape Mahatib - Djeziret el-Ghattafa / Djeziret el-Gleikha - Likleykha - el-Mataria**

### *Summary*

Before the Roman period the Ostrakine region seems to have been quite inaccessible because of lake Serbonis and the swampy area around it. No settlement is mentioned between Rinokoloura and Kasion before the late 1st century BC and the creation of the road station Ostrakine, half way between these two places, is possibly linked with the drying up of lake Serbonis and with changing environmental conditions. No mention is made of marshes near Ostrakine, while it is often linked instead with sand and desert and about 70 AD even had to import its water from elsewhere. Archaeological excavations in el-Felusiyat showed that from the 3rd century AD on the place kept on growing as an industrial and economic centre and eventually became a large and rich city. The first bishop of Ostrakine is attested in 359 AD and the three beautifully decorated churches of the 5th century AD indicate a prosperous Christian community. Apparently contemporary with the churches are the inscribed Christian tombstones, typically decorated with the face of the deceased, and probably coming from the nearby cemetery of el-Khuinat. An overall archaeological survey of the area is very difficult because at present the site is most of the time flooded, so it is not clear how the inland town and the so-called harbour area of el-Felusiyat and the Roman ruins in el-Khuinat, el-Ratama and Umm el-Shuqafa relate to each other.

At least one of the churches of el-Felusiyat survived the Arab conquest of 639 AD; it probably remained in use for another fifty years. There is a gap in our documentation till the early 9th century AD, when we hear of the road station el-Adad probably located in the neighbourhood of the old Ostrakine. It was quite soon

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replaced by the station el-Warrada, which grew into an important centre near the crossroad of the coastal and the inland road through the northern Sinai. Little is known about the place el-Makhlasa, some 6 km northwest of el-Warrada and only attested for the 10th century AD. el-Warrada lost its fame from the early 13th century AD on, which might be due - again - to environmental changes and the reappearance of the lake in the neighbourhood. The name el-Warrada disappears in the 15th century AD. The place might correspond with the Islamic settlement C121 found during the Israeli archaeological survey southwest of el-Felusiyat.

### *Graeco-Roman period*

#### **OSTRAKINE**

Modern name: el-Felusiyat

#### **Topographical situation**

The town of Ostrakine is attested from the late 1st century BC till the 7th century AD. For Iosephos (3) and P.Ryl. IV, 630\* (18) it is a one day march in eastern direction from Ostrakine to Rinokoloura, while the *Itinerarium Antonini* (15) and P.Ryl. IV, 627-628 (16-17) give a distance of 24 miles (ca. 36 km); this corresponds quite well with the 31 km of Ptolemaios (10) and the 23 miles (ca. 34,5 km) in the *Tabula Peutingeriana* (26). According to Iosephos (3) and P.Ryl. IV, 630\* (18) it also takes one day to go from Ostrakine to Kasion in western direction, while the *Itinerarium Antonini* (15) and P.Ryl. IV, 627-628 (16-17) give a distance of 26 miles (ca. 39 km); the corresponding figure in the *Tabula* (26) is lost. Ptolemaios (10) mentions the Ekregma of lake Serbonis between those two places, at some 31 km west of Ostrakine and probably very close to Kasion. Plinius (2) and Martianus Capella (33) situate Ostrakine at respectively 65 miles (ca. 97,5 km) and 66 miles (ca. 99 km) east of Pelousion, which well matches the (restored) figure of 62 miles (ca. 93 km) in P.Ryl. IV, 627-628 (16-17).

The position of Ostrakine relative to the changeable lake Serbonis is not easy to determine. For Aristeides (9) the lake apparently lay between the Kasion and Ostrakine, and - taken into account the dimensions of the lake as given by Diodoros

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and Strabon - the place is usually situated at the eastern edge of lake Serbonis. It is not clear, though, which dimensions or forms of the lake could correspond with Ptolemaios' location of lake Serbonis some 15,5 km south of Ostrakine, but it is very unlikely that it should imply that Ostrakine was situated on the narrow strip of land - the μικρὰ δίοδος of Strabon - between the lake and the Mediterranean, as some maps and authors suggest<sup>1415</sup>.

The extraction of sea salt is possibly alluded to in Rabbinical texts (**12**, **34-36**, **49**) and Ostrakine was indeed situated near the Mediterranean, but no source explicitly mentions the precise position of Ostrakine towards the sea, nor are there allusions to any harbour. Therefore, although some scholars mention a harbour in Ostrakine towards the Mediterranean or towards lake Serbonis<sup>1416</sup>, its existence remains a mere speculation.

Especially in the earlier sources Ostrakine is described as a waterless area. Krinagoras (**1**) speaks of a ψαφάρως or sandy Ostrakine. For Iosephos (**3**) the place was ἄνυδρος or 'waterless' and the locals had to import their water from elsewhere. Aristeides (**9**) situates Ostrakine in the middle of the Arab desert. Even at the time of Gregorios of Nazianzos (**21**) the lack of water at Ostrakine was still proverbial. The fact, though, that Theophanes (**18**) in the 4th century AD could buy there grapes, cheeses and cucumbers, indicates that the place was not destitute of agricultural means and in one way or another must have overcome the water supply problem<sup>1417</sup>. Perhaps the wells on the spot at first gave brackish water because of the presence of lake Serbonis, but the quality of the groundwater probably improved when the lake started to shrink in size.

About 193-196 AD (**11**) and probably in the 3rd century AD (**14**) some soldiers were stationed in Ostrakine, but further information about any military presence or defence line is lacking.

Between 359 and 431 AD three bishops are known in Ostrakine (**22**; **28**; **29-32**, **29a**), and the Medaba mosaic (**41**) perhaps shows a church in town, but the

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<sup>1415</sup> Cf. Brugsch, 1875, map; Wilkinson in Chester, 1880, p. 156; Honigmann, 1939a, p. 60 and pl. 1.4.

<sup>1416</sup> Le Quien, 1740, II, col. 545-546; Clédat, 1916a, p. 6 and 1924, p. 58; Daressy, 1930, p. 115; Oren, 1982a, p. 23; Grossmann, Peter, s.v. Khirbat al-Filusiyyah, in Atiya, 1991, p. 1414.

<sup>1417</sup> Cf. Daressy, 1930, p. 115: the relative fertility of the northern Sinai region is due to an intelligent use of the subterranean water layers.

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written sources are silent about Christian monuments. Perhaps there was a martyr for one of the twelve apostles or one of the other disciples of Jesus who is said to be buried in Ostrakine, but it is hard to assess the historical value of the very different accounts (45-47, 48, 54).

In the *Apophthegmata Patrum* (37) a leper is mentioned in Ostrakine, who makes a living weaving mats from palm leaves, and a widow, who works as a laundress.

### Administrative situation

Since Strabon does not mention Ostrakine in his detailed description of the northern Sinai, the place probably came into existence only in the late 1st century BC (cf. 1). It is remarkable that it took so long before a road station was created at a day's march of both Rinokoloura and Kasion, providing a useful resting place in between. This can only be due to the presence of lake Serbonis and the marshes around it, making every fixed habitation very difficult. The creation of Ostrakine therefore can probably be linked with the drying up of the lake.

For Plinius (2) Ostrakine was apparently the border place between Arabia (extending from Pelousion to Ostrakine) and Idumaea and Palestine (east of Ostrakine); Brugsch possibly refers to this passage when he considers the place rather incorrectly the eastern Egyptian border<sup>1418</sup>. At least from 70 AD on Ostrakine belonged to Egypt as it is shown by the itinerary of Titus (3). The fact that Iulius Honorius (38) locates the place east of the province of Egypt is only due to his geographical scheme. When the Ravennas geographus (43) places Ostrakine in Iudaea Palaestina, he probably reflects the situation of before 70 AD.

It is not known if or how Ostrakine was incorporated into the system of Egyptian nomes in the early Roman time<sup>1419</sup>. For Ptolemaios (10) Ostrakine belongs to the Kasiotis region, but this is probably no administrative, but a purely geographical indication. Only for the Byzantine period some information is available. Ammianus Marcellinus (25) places Ostrakine in the late 4th century AD in the

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<sup>1418</sup> Brugsch, 1875, map.

<sup>1419</sup> Jones, 1971, p. 342-343 (cf. Lallemand, 1964, p. 101.106; Martin, 1996, p. 65, n. 149 and p. 82-83) thinks that the station Ostrakine became a city in the late 3rd century AD due to a reorganization of the region, but he gives no arguments for this statement, nor does he explain why he considers the place described in Ammianus Marcellinus, 22, 16, 3 (25) a 'municipium'.

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Egyptian province Augustamnica and in the 6th century AD Hierokles (40) and Georgios of Cyprus (42) - followed by the late *Notitia Alexandrina* (55-57) - situate the city in the province Augustamnica I.

When Calderini calls Ostrakine 'a village'<sup>1420</sup>, this can only refer to the first centuries AD, since from the late Roman period on it had at least the size of a real city and the place is explicitly called a πόλις (30, 32, 46-47, 48, 54), 'urbs' (27), 'civitas' (32, 37, 51, 53) or 'oppidum' (38).

According to Hieronymus (27) the people in Ostrakine and the other cities in the neighbourhood between Rinokoloura and Kasion spoke Syrian, but since most of the epitaphs found in the region are written in Greek and a single one in Coptic, it is not clear to which part of the population Hieronymus refers<sup>1421</sup>.

### Identifications

Since Jean Clédat in 1910 discovered the remains of an important town in el-Felusiyat, most scholars agree that this is the site of the ancient Ostrakine.

Other suggested locations for this city, mainly for phonetic reasons, include the nearby Ras Straki and el-Zaraniq. The name Ras Straki, however, is first attested only in the 18th century AD and may represent a secondary tradition, while el-Zaraniq is the name of the boghaz or inlet between lake Bardawil and the Mediterranean and in first instance does not refer to an inhabited place<sup>1422</sup>.

When Ibrahim identifies Ostrakine with the elsewhere unknown Tell el-Shuqafiya ('The hill of the potsherds'), he probably just translated the Greek name instead of referring to an actual site<sup>1423</sup>.

Clédat rightly rejects the identification of Ostrakine with Mahammediya, which lies some 15 km east of Tell el-Farama, but he is wrong ascribing this false

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<sup>1420</sup> Calderini, 1983, III 4, p. 398. Cf. Wagner, 1993b, p. 101-116 and Worp, 1994, p. 316-317 for the problematic difference between a city and a village.

<sup>1421</sup> According to Oren, 1981c, p. 90 the distribution of Aramaic and Nabataean personal names in the area supports the remark of Hieronymus, but the only Arabic name known for the Ostrakine region is Alpheios; the names Abraham and Maria are of Hebrew origin, but are probably due to Christian influence; the names Ouersenouphis and Thenbotas, on the other hand, are Egyptian, and for the other names (Epimachos, Euzoios, Heron, Ob[...]echia(?), P...unus son of Phleus, Phileas, Philostratos, Sarapion, Theoktistos) it is impossible to say anything for certain about the ethnic origin of the person.

<sup>1422</sup> See s.v. el-Felusiyat, s.v. Ras Straki and s.v. el-Zaraniq.

<sup>1423</sup> Ibrahim, 1992, p. 748 ('Tell Ash-Shukafiah').

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assumption to Ascherson, and Clédat most likely misinterpreted Ascherson's article<sup>1424</sup>.

The first Arab toponym which can be situated near the ancient Ostrakine, is el-Adad, mentioned only once in the 9th century AD, and maybe it was quite soon replaced by the road station el-Warrada, well known in Arab itineraries of the 9th to 15th century AD. Since the archaeological survey of el-Felusiyat did not yield any Arab remains, those two places cannot have been located there and every identification with Ostrakine is therefore only 'approximate'<sup>1425</sup>.

The identification of Ostrakine with a fortress on the Karnak relief and in P.Anastasi I, or with any other related toponym in New Kingdom texts is gratuitous<sup>1426</sup>.

Brugsch identified Ostrakine with the *bḥn ʿ3 nḥt*, the 'castle Great-of-Victories', in the 19th dynasty P.Anastasi II, but Gardiner showed this to be a name for the royal palace at the Delta residence Piramesse<sup>1427</sup>.

In a demotic topographical onomasticon of the 4th-2nd centuries BC Chuvin reads *Mkṯl n3 bl'd*, 'Migdol of the potsherd', and since he considers it one of the four migdols situated at the eastern border, an identification with Ostrakine is evident for him. If so, it would be the earliest testimony for Ostrakine and this Greek name has to be considered then a translation of the demotic name. There is no consensus, however, about the reading of the name, or about its geographical context. So Zauzich

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<sup>1424</sup> Ascherson, 1887, p. 180; Clédat, 1905c, p. 604. See s.v. Mahammediya.

<sup>1425</sup> See s.v. el-Adad and s.v. el-Warrada.

<sup>1426</sup> Brugsch, 1879, p. 129.205-206.592 (cf. Clédat, 1916a, p. 10, n. 4; Hommel, 1926, p. 964, n. 3; Abel, 1940, p. 232, n. 1) for P3 *bḥn n Mn-m3'ṯ-t-R' t3 i3[...]* s3.f ('The castle of Men-ma'at-Ra, The [...] is his protection') [Karnak, 1986, IV, pl. 5, 18 (I)], also incorrectly read P3 *bḥn n Mn-m3'ṯ-t-R' m t3 D3h* ('The castle of Men-ma'at-Ra in the land of Djah') (cf. Gauthier, 1925, II, p. 31); Clédat, 1916a, p. 10, n. 4 and 1923a, p. 70 for T3 *'ṯ p3 m3i* ('The dwelling of the lion') [Karnak, 1986, IV, pl. 6, 38 (D)] (not accepted by Gardiner, 1920, p. 107, n. 2 and rejected by Clédat, 1923b, p. 140 and p. 154, n. 2 himself; cf. Gauthier, 1925, I, p. 161); Clédat, 1923b, p. 140.156 for T3 *ḥnm.t* (Sty Mr-n-Pth) ('The well of Sethos Mer-n-Ptah') [Karnak, 1986, IV, pl. 5, 22 (M)] (cf. Gauthier, 1927, IV, p. 202-203) and Sbl (or Sbr) [P.Anastasi I, 27, 5 (8)] and see also Sbwry [P.Golénischeff, 4, 5 (Gardiner, 1947, III, pl. X)] (cf. Gauthier, 1928, V, p. 4) [Clédat never made a link between T3 *ḥnm.t* (Mn-m3'ṯ-t-R') *'3 nḥt.w* ('The well (called) Men-ma'at-Ra, great of victories') [Karnak, 1986, IV, pl. 4, 18 (N)] and Ostrakine, as incorrectly stated by Gauthier, 1927, IV, p. 201]; Dalman, 1924, p. 48 for [Dmi qd.n] *ḥm.f m [m3]w.t* ('The town which His Majesty built anew') [Karnak, 1986, IV, pl. 5, 20 (K)].

<sup>1427</sup> P.Anastasi II, 1, 1 (= P.Anastasi IV, 6, 1). Cf. Brugsch, 1875, map ('Boxen āâ naḫt'); Brugsch, 1879, p. 129; Clédat, 1916a, p. 10, n. 4; Gauthier, 1925, II, p. 30 ('bkhn ââ nakht Menmaârâ'); Gardiner, 1937, p. 12.40; Caminos, 1954, p. 37-38.153-154; Bietak, 1975, p. 206.

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reads Mktr-<sup>ϕ</sup>p3-R<sup>ϕ</sup>-ib<sup>1</sup>, while locating the four migdols at the four different borders of Egypt, and every possible link with Ostrakine disappears<sup>1428</sup>.

Since there are no reasons to suppose that the environment of Ostrakine in the Ptolemaic period was fundamentally different from that of Rinokoloura, I do not follow Carrez-Maratray that the desolate description of Rinokoloura in the account of Diodoros in fact refers to the situation of Ostrakine<sup>1429</sup>.

In the so-called Invocation of Isis (P.Oxy. XI, 1380) after Pelousion, the Kasion and the Ekregma (l. 73-76) Arabia is mentioned (l. 76-77: ἐν τῇ Ἀραβίᾳ μεγάλην θεόν). Interpretations differ (the nome Arabia, Arabia Petraea, Arabia Felix), but it is not necessary at all to look for a strict order and to consider Arabia an indication for the place Ostrakine, as does Abel<sup>1430</sup>.

Katchatrian probably just by mistake equals the Mesopotamian region Osroene with Ostrakine<sup>1431</sup>.

On the map of Sicard of 1722, followed by a Greek-Arab map of that same year, the name Ostrakine is linked with el-Arish and the name Rinokoloura with el-Za'aqa<sup>1432</sup>. These identifications are not compatible with the available geographical information, as it is already noticed by d'Anville. Probably on the basis of this map, however, Fedalto accepts the identification of Ostrakine with the Arab el-Arish<sup>1433</sup>.

### Orthographic variants

Except for the form 'Assdrakina' in SB XXVI, 16607 (39), which is possibly due to bad understanding, and the lapse 'Ostranike' in Hierokles (40), the name Ostrakine in Greek, Latin and Coptic texts is quite uniformly spelled. The ethnicon is

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<sup>1428</sup> P.Cairo dem. 31169, 3, 22; cf. Spiegelberg, 1908, p. 273; Daressy, 1911a, p. 169 and 1911b, p. 6; Müller, 1911, col. 197; Offord, 1912, p. 204; Gardiner, 1920, p. 108; Gauthier, 1926, III, p. 21; De Meulenaere, 1951, p. 34; Cazelles, 1987 [= 1955], p. 203.212.214; Helck, 1971, p. 311 and s.v. Magdola 3, in LÄ, III, 1980, col. 1135; Thissen, P.Köln ägypt., 1980, p. 63; Cheshire, 1985, p. 21; Chuvin, 1986, p. 50; Zauzich, 1987a, p. 88 and handout; Ballet, 1998, p. 102; Carrez-Maratray, 1998, p. 89.92; DBL 2005, p. 135.

<sup>1429</sup> Diodoros, 1, 60, 6-10; cf. Carrez-Maratray, 1998, p. 91-92; see s.v. Rinokoloura.

<sup>1430</sup> Abel, 1939, p. 545. Cf. Figueras, 1988, p. 59, n. 15, who incorrectly thinks that Abel also identified the Arabia in P.Oxy. IV, 709, 5 with Ostrakine.

<sup>1431</sup> Katchatrian, 1962, p. 84-85.

<sup>1432</sup> Sicard, 1982 [= 1722], II, p. 219 and III, p. 70-71.180; rejected by d'Anville, 1766, p. 103; cf. Munier, 1943, p. 58.60; Honigmann, 1961, p. 182. See also s.v. Rinokoloura, s.v. el-Arish and s.v. el-Za'aqa.

<sup>1433</sup> Fedalto, 1988, p. 606.



'Ostrakinites' (19, 20), although also the unexplained spelling 'Ostrakonites' is attested (20).

### Etymology

The name Ostrakine is probably derived from the Greek adjective ὄστράκινος ('earthen, made of clay, like earthenware')<sup>1434</sup> based on the substantive ὄστρακον ('earthen vessel, potsherd'), while the female ending possibly corresponds with a word such as πόλις. Already some anonymous ancient authors quoted by Hieronymus (24, 27) saw a link between the two words. In modern studies the name is sometimes translated as 'City of sherds' and one usually thinks that the place is named after a concentration of potsherds found on the spot<sup>1435</sup>. Every connection, though, with the story of Herodotos about vessels transported in the Persian time to the northern Sinai, remains very unlikely.

Since ὄστρακον also means 'shell', some scholars translated the name Ostrakine as 'City of shells'<sup>1436</sup> and indeed such a name is not a priori unacceptable for a place which lies near the sea. The adjective ὄστράκινος, however, is not used elsewhere in this meaning and the association with 'potsherd' seems more likely.

### Homonyms

At least two villages in Middle Egypt between the 6th and 8th centuries AD had the element 'ostrakon' in their name. In the 6th-8th century an epoikion / chorion Ostrakinou was situated in the Herakleopolites, near the border with the Oxyrynchites<sup>1437</sup>. In the so-called tenth nome of Upper Egypt the 6th century 'kleros

<sup>1434</sup> Cf. Wagner, 1993a, p. 11 ('l'Argileuse').

<sup>1435</sup> Cf. Pape, 1911, p. 1082; Clédat, 1916a, p. 7; Hommel, 1926, p. 964, n. 3 ('Scherbenort'); How, 1928, I, p. 257; Damsté, 1968, p. 512 ('Schervenstad'); Austin, 1970, p. 37 and p. 71, n. 3; Figueras, 1988, p. 59 and n. 16; Graf, 1998, p. 109; see also Gascou, 1986, p. 142.

<sup>1436</sup> Sepp, 1863, II, p. 534 ('Muschelstadt'); Clédat, 1916a, p. 7.

<sup>1437</sup> P.Oxy. XVI, 1917, 62 (early 6th century AD) [ἐποικ(ίου) ὄστρακίνου]; P.Oxy. VI, 998 (late 6th century AD) [ὄστρακίνου]; SB XVIII, 13888, 6 (7th-8th centuries AD; Herakleopolites) [[χ(ωρίου) ὄστρακίνο(υ)]; see also Stud.Pal. X, 109, 5 [ἐν τ(ῷ) χ(ωρίῳ) ὄστρ( )], for Falivene possibly referring to Ostrakinou; cf. Prunetti, 1981, p. 127; Calderini, 1983, III 4, p. 398, Suppl. 1, 1988, p. 215, Suppl. 2, 1996, p. 143 and Suppl. 3, 2003, p. 116; Metzger, 1985, p. 246-248; Kramer, P.Nepheros, 1987, p. 14; Falivene, 1998, p. 154. Noordegraaf, 1938, p. 283 and Tsafirir, 1994, p. 198 incorrectly identify the Ostrakinou of P.Oxy. VI, 998 with Ostrakine in the northern Sinai.

## 5. Ostrakine

Ostrakinou' and 'topos Ostrakinou' and the 8th century 'epoikion Ostrako(u)' might in fact refer to the same place<sup>1438</sup>.

The name Psenbelleichis, known in the Pharbaitites in the 2nd century AD, is possibly a Greek transcription of the demotic P3-šy-n-bld, 'The lake of the ostraka'<sup>1439</sup>.

The same name Psenbellochis - with several spelling variants - is also known in the Panopolites in Greek sources of the 2nd to 3rd centuries AD. The place is probably identical with the Psinbeldje in that same nome in some Coptic sources and the Kom el-Shaqaf in an Arab translation<sup>1440</sup>. Because both Psinbeldje and Ostrakine are linked in some texts with the apostle Simon, it has been suggested that the passages about Simon in Ostrakine (45-46) actually refer to Psinbeldje<sup>1441</sup>; as long as the name of Ostrakine is not explicitly attested for the Panopolites, however, I see no reasons to link these passages with the Panopolites and not with Ostrakine in the northern Sinai.

In Syria, near Antiocheia, a second Ostrakine is attested in the 5th-6th centuries AD<sup>1442</sup>.

Near Mantinea in the Peloponnesos lies the mountain Ostrakina<sup>1443</sup>.

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<sup>1438</sup> P.Cair.Masp. I, 67101, 14 (511) [κλήρο(ς) (read κλήρου) Ὀστρακίνο(υ)]; SB XX, 14669, 195 (Gascou, 1986, p. 103-158) (ca. 525/526?) [τόπ(ου) Ὀστρακίνου]; P.Lond. IV, 1459, 63 (8th century AD) [ἑποικ(ιου) Ὀστράκο(υ)]; cf. Calderini, 1983, III 4, p. 398 and Suppl. 2, 1996, p. 142; Gascou, 1986, p. 142. Calderini and Gascou write 'topos Ostrakinos', but it seems more appropriate to use also here the form 'Ostrakinou'.

<sup>1439</sup> BGU I, 92, 15-16 (= Chrest.Wilck. 427) (187 AD) [Ψενβελλείχεως]; cf. Calderini, 1987, V, p. 149; Vandorpe, 1988, p. 147-148.156 (incorrectly identifying this place with Ostrakine in the northern Sinai).

<sup>1440</sup> Cf. Zoega, 1810, p. 237; Lipsius, 1884, II 2, p. 148.152-153; Amélineau, 1888, p. 145.428; Amélineau, 1893, p. 230.377-378.383-385; von Lemm, 1972, p. 6-10 [= 1899, p. 408-412]; Crum, 1939, p. 39; Müller, 1972, p. 24; Roquet, 1973, p. 2, no. 14b; Youtie, 1973, p. 272; Timm, 1985, III, p. 1464-1467 and 1988, IV, p. 2038-2039; Chuvin, 1986, p. 50 (incorrectly 'Tell el Shugafa'); Calderini, 1987, V, p. 153; Vandorpe, 1988, p. 148.155-156; Morard, 1993, p. 140 and n. 8; Roquet, 1993, p. 185-189. The Coptic name ΠΣΙΝΒΗΛΧΕ, ΠΣΙΝΒΛΧΕ, ΠΣΥΜΒΕΛΧ e.a. is also rendered as Bsumbeldj, Psenbelġ, Psenbelġe, Psenbelj, Psenbelle, Psenbldje, Psinbelġe, Psinbelgje, Psnbldje, Psnblle, Psoumeledj, Psumeledj, Psymbolġ, Psymboldj, Sinbeldje. Crum, 1939, p. 39 (cf. Roquet, 1973, p. 2, no. 14b and 1993, p. 196 e.a.) in this respect also refers to the name Ostrakine (Crum: Ὀστράκινη (sic); Roquet: Ὀστρακίνη (sic)), but it is not clear whether this Greek name is actually mentioned in the Arabic manuscript referred to, or is presented as a mere hypothesis. A link with the 'epoikion Ostrakou' of the tenth nome of Upper Egypt, as suggested by Crum, P.Lond. IV, 1910, p. 400, n., is denied by Gascou, 1986, p. 142. For other Arabic toponyms based upon the element 'shaqf', 'potsherd', see also s.v. Umm el-Shuqafa.

<sup>1441</sup> Cf. Morard, 1993, p. 140-141, n. 8 and Roquet, 1993, p. 196; for Simon in Psinbeldje, cf. von Lemm, 1972, p. 6-8 [= 1899, p. 408-410]; Timm, 1985, III, p. 1464-1465; Morard, 1993, p. 139-141.

<sup>1442</sup> Euagrios Scholastikos, *Historia ecclesiastica*, 2, 12; 6, 8 (Bidez, 1898, p. 64.227) [ἡ καλουμένη Ὀστρακίνη]; cf. Honigmann, Ernst, s.v. Ostrakine 2, in RE, XVIII 2, 1942, col. 1673.

<sup>1443</sup> Pausanias, 8, 12, 2 [ἡ Ὀστρακίνα]; cf. Meyer, Ernst, s.v. Ostrakina, in RE, XVIII 2, 1942, col. 1672-1673.

## Analysis of the sources

*Persian water supply*

*Philostratos*

*Ostrakine in the Roman period*

*Prophets and apostles*

*Ostrakine and the language of Canaan*

*Ostrakine in the Byzantine period*

### *Persian water supply*

Herodotos describes how the Persians, after the conquest of Egypt, provided water in the so-called desert of Syria, which probably refers to the northern Sinai. Jars of wine were imported in Egypt twice a year from Greece and Phoenicia; the empty jars of every village were collected by the demarchoi or village chiefs, brought to Memphis, then filled with water and taken to the desert of Syria, which is the entry to Egypt, where they were added to the old stock<sup>1444</sup>:

τὸ δὲ ὀλίγοι τῶν ἐς Αἴγυπτον ναυιλλομένων ἐννευώκασι, τοῦτο ἔρχομαι φράσω. ἐς Αἴγυπτον ἐκ τῆς Ἑλλάδος πάσης καὶ πρὸς ἐκ Φοινίκης κέραμος ἐσάγεται πλήρης οἴνου δις τοῦ ἔτεος ἑκάστου, καὶ ἐν κεράμιον οἰνηρὸν ἀριθμῶ κεινὸν οὐκ ἔστι, ὡς λόγῳ εἰπεῖν, ἰδέσθαι. κοῦ δῆτα, εἴποι τις ἄν, ταῦτα ἀναισιμουταί; ἐγὼ καὶ τοῦτο φράσω. δεῖ τὸν μὲν δήμαρχον ἑκάστον ἐκ τῆς ἑωυτοῦ πόλιος συλλέξαντα πάντα τὸν κέραμον ἄγειν ἐς Μέμφιν, τοὺς δὲ ἐκ Μέμφιος ἐς ταῦτα δὴ τὰ ἄνυδρα τῆς Συρίας κομίζειν πλήσαντας ὕδατος. οὕτω ὁ ἐπιφοιτέων κέραμος καὶ ἐξαιρεόμενος ἐν Αἰγύπτῳ ἐπὶ τὸν παλαιὸν κομίζεται ἐς Συρίην. οὕτω μὲν νυν Πέρσαι εἰσὶ οἱ τὴν ἐσβολὴν ταύτην παρασκευάσαντες ἐπ' Αἴγυπτον κατὰ δὴ τὰ εἰρημένα σάξαντες ὕδατι, ἐπεῖτε τάχιστα παρέλαβον Αἴγυπτον.

'(6, 1) I will now tell of a thing that but few of those who sail to Egypt have perceived. Earthen jars full of wine are brought into Egypt twice a year from all Greece and Phoenicia besides; yet one might safely say that there is not a single empty wine jar anywhere in the country. (6, 2) What then - one may ask - becomes of them? This too I will tell. Each demarchos must gather in all the earthen pots from his own city and take them to Memphis, and the people of Memphis must fill them with water and carry them to those waterless lands of Syria; so the earthen pottery that is brought to Egypt and unloaded and emptied there is carried to Syria to join the stock that has already been taken there. (7, 1) Now as soon as the Persians took possession of Egypt, it was they who thus provided for the entry into Egypt, filling pots with water as I have said.'

Some scholars think that this story is confirmed by the name Ostrakine<sup>1445</sup>.

Even if Herodotos' account on the transport of jars should be true<sup>1446</sup>, it is impossible to prove that the name Ostrakine is given because of the presence there of ceramics of especially the Persian period, and Ostrakine can certainly not be used to confirm the historicity of the story.

<sup>1444</sup> Herodotos, 3, 6, 1 - 7, 1.

<sup>1445</sup> Cf. How, 1928, I, p. 257; Damsté, 1968, p. 512; Austin, 1970, p. 37 and p. 71, n. 3; Figueras, 1988, p. 59 and n. 16; Figueras, 1999, p. 213; Figueras, 2000, p. 208.

<sup>1446</sup> Cf. Oren, 1982a, p. 18, who refers to the many 4th century BC jars found between Tell el-Farama and Mahammediya

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### *Philostratos*

The epigrammatist Krinagoras of Mytilene (1), whose youngest dated poem was probably written in 15 BC, describes how a certain Philostratos once lived in luxury among kings in Egypt and Judaea, but had 'the fruits of his labour' divided among foreigners and finally would be buried in the sandy Ostrakine<sup>1447</sup>:

1 ὦ δύστην' ὄλβοιο Φιλόστρατε, ποῦ σοι ἐκεῖνα  
σκῆπτρα καὶ αἱ βασιλέων ἄφθονοι εὐτυχίαι,  
αἷσιν ἐπηώρησας ἀεὶ βίον ἢ ἐπὶ Νείλῳ  
ἢ ἐν Ἰουδαίοις ὧν περίοπτος ὄροις;  
ὄθνεῖοι καμάτους τοὺς σοὺς διεμοιρήσαντο,  
6 σὸς δὲ νέκυς ψαφαρῆ κείσεται ἐν Ὀστρακίνῃ.

'Ill-starred in your prosperity, Philostratos, where are those sceptres and abundant princely blessings, on which you ever made your life depend, a man of eminence whether on the Nile <or within> the boundaries of Judaea?

Strangers have shared out the fruits of your labour, and your corpse shall lie in sandy Ostrakine.'

It has generally been accepted that Philostratos is identical with the philosopher - orator who in 49 BC stayed in Sicily and afterwards showed up at the court of Kleopatra VII. When Octavianus took Alexandria in 30 BC, Philostratos was spared with the help of Areios Didymos<sup>1448</sup>. Although the story of Ploutarchos describes how Philostratos was pardoned and set free by Octavianus, and does not even allude to a further punishment at that time<sup>1449</sup>, scholars on the basis of this epigram think that only Philostratos' life was spared, but that he was banished to Ostrakine. The epithet ψαφαρός, 'sandy', makes it clear that no other Ostrakine than the one in the northern Sinai can be meant. Since Octavianus had marched from Syria to Alexandria through the northern Sinai at the beginning of that year, he might have known the place personally, when he sentenced Philostratos. When the epigram was written, Philostratos probably still lived in Ostrakine<sup>1450</sup>. Some remarks, however, can be made on this traditional view.

The interpretation of l. 3b-5 is not evident because of a lacuna in l. 4. Cichorius, Beckby and Gow restore ἢ ἐπὶ Νείλῳ ἢ ἐν οἱ παρ' Ἰουδαίοις ὧν περίοπτος ὄροις ('a man of eminence whether on the Nile <or within> the

<sup>1447</sup> Krinagoras, *Anthologia Palatina*, 7, 645 (Beckby, 1965, II, p. 378.621).

<sup>1448</sup> Cf. Cichorius, 1922, p. 314-318; von Fritz, Kurt, s.v. Philostratos 7, in RE XX 1, 1941, col. 123-124; Solmsen, Felix, s.v. Philostratos 8, in RE XX 1, 1941, col. 124; Waltz, 1960, V, p. 127, n. 3-4; Beckby, 1965, II, p. 603; Bowersock, 1966, p. 33.37; Gow, 1968, II, p. 227-228; PP, 1968, VI, no. 16795 and 16810.

<sup>1449</sup> Ploutarchos, *Antonius*, 80, 2-3: ταύτης δὴ τῆς τιμῆς ἔτυχε παρὰ Καίσαρος Ἄρειος, καὶ τῶν ἄλλων ἐξητήσατο συχνούς· ὧν ἦν καὶ Φιλόστρατος ... πυθόμενος δὲ Καίσαρ ... διῆκε ('this honour Caesar bestowed upon Areios, and he pardoned many other persons also at his request; among these was Philostratos ... When Caesar learned of this, ... he pardoned him').

<sup>1450</sup> Cf. Cichorius, 1922, p. 314 and Gow, 1968, II, p. 228 against Bowersock, 1966, p. 33.37.

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boundaries of Judaea'). Philostratos so had been living in fame both in Egypt and in Judaea. His possessions were confiscated by Roman foreigners, although Gow admits that the designation ὀθνεῖοι is remarkable coming from the Roman-minded Krinagoras. Waltz on the other hand restores ἡ ἐπὶ Νείλῳ κείσασαι Ἰουδαίους ὡν περίοπτος ὄροις; ('do you really lie near the Nile, to be observed by the boundaries of Judaea?'), and so thinks that the place of exile is situated by Krinagoras near the Nile and near the borders of Judaea. Although the second element matches quite well<sup>1451</sup>, a position near the Nile is unacceptable for Ostrakine and must then be considered a poetical liberty. The foreigners of l. 5 in this case might be the people of Ostrakine sharing the intellectual benefits of the philosopher among them. Both reconstructions, however, are hypothetical.

The date of the epigram is a major problem. Cichorius thinks that the poem is written about 27 BC, when Krinagoras came to Rome and heard of Philostratos' banishment to Ostrakine in 30 BC. Despite Cichorius' erudite construction of the events this lapse of time remains rather strange. I am not convinced, either, that there was already an Ostrakine in the northern Sinai in 30 BC, for the place is not mentioned in the detailed description of the region in book 16 of Strabon. This book is completed only after 6 AD, but Strabon gathered most of his material between 20 and 7 BC, and the passage about the northern Sinai might even go back to his stay in Egypt between ca. 25 and 20 BC<sup>1452</sup>. If Ostrakine existed already in 30 BC, as implied by the reconstruction of the events by Cichorius, I cannot find any reason why Strabon should not have known it, especially if it was the place of exile of a former courtier. So, since Ploutarchos does not mention any punishment of Philostratos in 30 BC, and since it is most likely that Ostrakine at that time did not yet exist, I am not inclined to link the epigram with any banishment of the courtier Philostratos about 30 BC, but to consider it one of the later poems of Krinagoras and to look for a date about 20-15 BC. Whether it is the philosopher Philostratos or some homonym who spent his last days in Ostrakine, is impossible to say. If Ostrakine really came into being only after the visit of Strabon to Egypt, the epigram might allude to one of the first events of its history, but anything further would be a mere hypothesis.

### *Ostrakine in the Roman period*

<sup>1451</sup> Against Cichorius, 1922, p. 317.

<sup>1452</sup> Cf. Lasserre, François, s.v. Strabon, in KP, V, 1975, col. 381-384.

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Plinius (2) situates Ostrakine quite correctly at 65 miles (ca. 97,5 km) east of Pelousion, probably at the border between Arabia<sup>1453</sup> in the west on the one hand and Idumaea and Palestine in the east on the other hand<sup>1454</sup>:

a Pelusio Chabriae castra, Casius mons, delubrum Iovis Casii, tumulus Magni Pompeii. Ostracine Arabia finitur, a Pelusio LXV p. mox Idumaea incipit et Palaestina ab emersu Sirbonis lacus ...

'After Pelusium (come) the camp of Chabrias, mount Casium, the temple of Iuppiter Casius, the tomb of Pompeius Magnus. With Ostracine Arabia ends, 65 miles from Pelusium. Then begins Idumaea and Palestine, starting from the outlet of lake Sirbonis ...'

Plinius' phrasing, however, is not clear and he probably mixes an older tradition, which considers the Ekregma ('emersus') of lake Serbonis the border with Syria, with the more recent situation, which makes Ostrakine the new border place, and so incorrectly locates the Ekregma east of Ostrakine.

Solinus (13) copies this passage about the middle of the 3rd century AD, but incorrectly associates the tomb of Pompeius with Ostrakine and not with the Kasion<sup>1455</sup>:

a Pelusio Cassius mons est et delubrum Iovis Cassii, atque ita Ostracine locus Pompeii Magni sepulchro inclitus. Idumaea inde incipit ...

'After Pelusium comes mount Cassium and the temple of Iuppiter Cassius, and so Ostracine, the place famous for the tomb of Pompeius Magnus. Then begins Idumaea ...'

In the 5th century AD Martianus Capella (33) shortens the passage of Plinius and he locates Ostrakine not at 65, but at 66 miles (ca. 99 km) east of Pelousion<sup>1456</sup>:

Ostracine Arabia finitur, a Pelusio sexaginta sex milibus passuum.

'With Ostracine Arabia ends, sixty-six miles from Pelusium.'

This distance matches the 66 miles of the *Itinerarium provinciarum Antonini Augusti* (15) on that same track, but it would be too hazardous to suggest that Martianus changed the round figure of Plinius accordingly.

At the beginning of 70 AD Vespasianus sent his son Titus with an army from Alexandria to Jerusalem (3). Leaving Pelousion Titus camped the first night near the sanctuary of Zeus Kasios, the second near Ostrakine and the third evening he arrived

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<sup>1453</sup> Figueras, 1999, p. 213 tentatively identifies this region Arabia, which extends between Pelousion and Ostrakine, with an alleged Arabia mentioned by Herodotos and extending east of mount Kasion; for Herodotos (e.g. 3, 5, 1-3), however, the Kasion is the border between Egypt and Syria, his Arabia being situated between Kadytis and Ienysos (see s.v. Kasion).

<sup>1454</sup> Plinius, *Naturalis historia*, 5, 14, 68.

<sup>1455</sup> Solinus, 34, 1 (Mommsen, 1895, p. 153).

<sup>1456</sup> Martianus Capella, 6, 679 (Willis, 1983, p. 241).

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at Rinokoloura. At the station Ostrakine itself no water was found, but its inhabitants import it from elsewhere<sup>1457</sup>:

... προελθὼν σταθμὸν ἓνα διὰ τῆς ἐρήμου πρὸς τῷ τοῦ Κασίου Διὸς ἱερῷ στρατοπεδεύεται, τῇ δ' ἡσπεραία κατὰ τὴν Ὀστρακίνην· οὗτος ὁ σταθμὸς ἦν ἄνυδρος, ἐπεισάκτοις δὲ ὕδασιν οἱ ἐπιχώριοι χρῶνται. μετὰ ταῦτα πρὸς Ῥινοκορούροις ἀναπαύεται ...

'... advancing one station through the desert, he encamped near the temple of Zeus Kasios, and on the next day at Ostrakine; this station was destitute of water; the inhabitants use water that is brought in from elsewhere. He next rested near Rinokoroura ...'

Iosephos does not specify where the people got their water from or how they imported it. Donne thinks that it was brought by a canal from the Delta and this idea was elaborated by Clédat<sup>1458</sup>, but it is impossible to interpret the text of Iosephos that way. Daressy suggests that the water was imported from the Delta by boats via lake Serbonis, but there are no arguments to support this theory<sup>1459</sup>. The water probably came just from some well in the neighbourhood<sup>1460</sup>, brought in jars on the back of beasts of burden, the same way as in the 19th century AD el-Zaraniq was still supplied with water from el-Arish<sup>1461</sup>.

About 147-149 AD Aristeides (9) discusses the water system of lake Serbonis, located east of Pelousion and the Arab mountains, which for him include mount Kasion, and apparently west of Ostrakine. The latter place is situated in the middle of the Arab desert<sup>1462</sup>:

ἡ δ' αὖ Σερβωνίς λίμνη περιφανῶς ἕξω τῶν ὀρῶν τούτων ἐστίν· ὑπερελθόντι γὰρ Πηλούσιον καὶ τῶν ὀρῶν τῶν συγκλειόντων τὴν Αἴγυπτον θάτερον ἐστὶ πρὸς Ὀστρακίνην βαδίζοντι, ἥπερ ἐστὶ μέση μάλιστα τῆς ἀνύδρου τῆς Ἀραβικῆς. ...

<sup>1457</sup> Iosephos, *Bellum Iudaicum*, 4, 11, 5 (661); cf. the Latin adaptation of Pseudo-Hegesippos, *Historia*, 4, 33, 3 (Ussani, 1932, p. 292) (23): *successit ei Ostracine mansio, aqua locus indigena, tamen diligentia incolae sibi subsidium comparaverant, ut instituerent ductus aquarum* ('Next came for him the station Ostracine, a place destitute of water, but with dedication the inhabitants had found a solution for themselves, so that they arranged the supply of water'). Calderini, 1983, III 4, p. 398 incorrectly lists instead two other passages of Iosephos, where not Ostrakine, but Rinokoloura is mentioned.

<sup>1458</sup> Donne, William Bodham, s.v. Ostracina, in Smith, 1857, II, p. 504; Clédat, 1910a, p. 232-233; Naville, 1912, p. 312; Clédat, 1916a, p. 8 (with n. 3 referring to Donne, but linking the hypothesis of the canal not with the Iosephos passage, but incorrectly with the reference to Martianus Capella mentioned by Donne immediately after the paraphrase of Iosephos); Clédat, 1916b, p. 22; Gardiner, 1918a, p. 244; Clédat, 1919a, p. 191.194; 1920, p. 110-111; 1924, p. 54-61 and especially p. 60; cf. Gauthier, 1925, I, p. 217. Clédat, apparently followed by Oren, 1982a, p. 25, also looks for evidence for this canal in Strabon, 17, 1, 24 (C 804), but this passage in fact refers to some lakes immediately east of the Pelousiac Nile branch; see s.v. Lake Serbonis.

<sup>1459</sup> Daressy, 1930, p. 115 (also incorrectly referring to Martianus Capella).

<sup>1460</sup> Hölscher, 1903, p. 56.

<sup>1461</sup> Chester, 1880, p. 157; a similar situation existed also for the 19th century Suez, cf. Seetzen, 1854, III, p. 122.132.152.

<sup>1462</sup> Aristeides, 36 (48), 74 (Keil, 1898, II, p. 287). I prefer the restoration τῆς ἀνύδρου τῆς Ἀραβικῆς of Kaibel and Keil, which is well paralleled, instead of the reading τῆς ἀσπόρου τῆς Ἀραβικῆς ('the unsown district of Arabia') of Reiske and Behr, 1981, p. 210.461.

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'But on the other hand lake Serbonis is clearly outside these mountains. For it is located beyond Pelousion and one of the two mountains which enclose Egypt as you go toward Ostrakine, which is right in the middle of the waterless district of Arabia. ...'

Ptolemaios (10), the geographer of the middle of the 2nd century AD, places Ostrakine (Ὀστρακίνη) in the Kasiotis at 64° 15' - 31° 10', an acceptable location<sup>1463</sup>. Ostrakine so lies 25' east of the Ekregma of lake Serbonis and 25' west of Rinokoloura, i.e. in both cases at a distance of about 167 stadia (ca. 31 km), while all three places lie on the same latitude. The figures are too low in comparison with the other sources, which is partially due to Ptolemaios' assumption of too small a value for the length of a degree. Ostrakine is also situated some 10' or about 15,5 km north of lake Serbonis; this distance is rather surprising since the city probably lay near the eastern end of the lake.

A Latin military account probably drawn up in 193-196 AD (11) mentions the financial situation of 'P...unus' son of 'Phleus' from Antaiou Polis in Middle Egypt, an auxiliary soldier of an unknown unit enlisted in 180 AD, next to which a second hand added an abbreviation for Ostrakine; this probably indicates the place where the man was stationed<sup>1464</sup>.

37 [68] Ostraçi(nae?) P.[.].UNUS PHLEI · ANTEOPOL(ITANUS)  
lořictitis in dep(ositis) (denarios) CCVI in viatico (denarios) LXXV  
accepit stipendi (denarios) LXXXIV ob(olos) XV (dodrantem)  
ex eo collatio (denarios) IIII ob(olos) XXII s(emis)  
reliquos tulit (denarios) LXXIX ob(olos) XXI (quadrantem)

42 [73] habet in dep(ositis) (denarios) CCVI in viatico (denarios) LXXV  
'At Ostracine. P...unus son of Phleus: Anteopolitanus. In the strongbox: on deposit, 206 denarii; as viaticum, 75 denarii. Received of his pay 84 denarii, 15 3/4 oboli. From that, contribution, 4 denarii, 22 1/2 oboli. Took the rest, 79 denarii, 21 1/4 oboli. Has on deposit 206 denarii; as viaticum, 75 denarii.'

In another, very fragmentary Latin military account (14), palaeographically dated in the 3rd century AD, Rinokoloura, Ostrakine and Gerra are probably mentioned as some of the places where soldiers of an unknown unit are staying<sup>1465</sup>:

20 [.]te  
[Rin]ocuroris

<sup>1463</sup> Ptolemaios, 4, 5, 6 (Müller, 1901, I 2, p. 682). Ball, 1942, p. 105 transposes 64° 15' - 31° 10' into the 'Greenwich system' as 33° 40' - 31° 10'; cf. Ball, 1942, pl. 2.3.

<sup>1464</sup> ChLA X, 410, 6866 A, II, 37-42 (68-73); cf. Lesquier, 1918, p. 401, n. 8 and p. 532; Abel, 1940, p. 232, n. 1; Marichal, 1945, p. 68; De Kuyffer, 1989, p. 936, no. 190; Daris, 1994a, p. 191. I could not identify the name 'Phleus'. Cf. also the previous entry in the papyrus for Pathermouthis stationed in Rinokoloura. In ChLA X, 410, 6866 B, frag. d, 18 (127) the reading 'Os[traci(nae)?]' (cf. Fink, Rom.Mil.Rec., 1971, p. 262, n. 18) has not been accepted.

<sup>1465</sup> ChLA XI, 479, 20-23; for the supplements, cf. Daris, 1994a, p. 189-191.



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[ Ostra]cine  
23 [ ] Cerro  
' [ ] at Rinocurora. [ ] at Ostracine. [ ] at Cerrum'

In the early 3rd century AD the Rabbinical *Tosefta* mentions a kind of salt of lesser quality than that of Sodom, which is called in Hebrew אַסְתְּרוּקְנִית [3struknit] (12)<sup>1466</sup>. In the 5th century *Talmud of Babylon* a similar opposition occurs (34-36)<sup>1467</sup>, and in the 11th century AD Rashi adds that is taken from the sea by human labour (49)<sup>1468</sup>. Because the passages involved do not offer any further geographical data, and in other texts also different names are used for this coarser salt, there is some discussion about the interpretation of its name. Already Reland identified its place of origin with Ostrakine, but also other suggestions have been made<sup>1469</sup>. As long, therefore, as there are no other sources confirming the export of salt from Ostrakine, the identification of the expression [3struknit] remains uncertain.

### *Prophets and apostles*

Possibly already from the 1st century AD on several versions of fabulous *Vitae* have been created about the prophets of the Old Testament. The prophet Habacuc probably lived in the late 7th century BC, but historical information about his life is scarce. In his *Vita* (4-8) it is stated that he fled to Ostrakine when

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<sup>1466</sup> *Tosefta, Menahot*, 9, 15 (Hebrew) (translated in Neusner, 1978, p. 120): 'And how do we know that if one did not find salt of Sodom, he should bring [3struknit] salt?'; cf. Reland, 1714, p. 60; Krauss, 1910, I, p. 119 and p. 499-500, n. 658; Lesêtre, H., s.v. Sel, in DB, 1912, V 2, col. 1569; Clédat, 1923a, p. 99; Applebaum, 1976, p. 670; Oren, 1982a, p. 25; Figueras, 1988, p. 60; Oren, 1993b, p. 306 and n. 2; see also Évieux, 1995, p. 32.

<sup>1467</sup> *Talmud of Babylon, Betza*, fol. 39a (Hebrew) (Epstein, 1983, p. 39a): 'There is no difficulty; the one treats of salt of Sodom and the other of [3struknit] salt' (cf. Goldschmidt, 1930, III, p. 523; Avery-Peck, 1986, p. 321) (34); *Talmud of Babylon, Baba Bathra*, fol. 20b (Hebrew) (Epstein, 1976, I, p. 20b): 'One speaks of salt of Sodom and the other of salt of [3struknit]. ... even the salt of [3struknit] may be used for this purpose' (cf. Goldschmidt, 1933, VIII, p. 78) (35); *Talmud of Babylon, Menahot*, fol. 21a (Hebrew) (translated in Neusner, 1991, p. 110): 'How, then, on the basis of Scripture, do we know that if one could not get salt from Sodom, he may present salt of [3struknit] [which is coarse and comes from rocks]?' (cf. Goldschmidt, 1935, X, p. 456) (36).

<sup>1468</sup> Rashi (Hebrew) (translated in Oren, 1982a, p. 25): 'Le sel de Sodome se déverse sur la rive et est recueilli là, celui d'Ostrakine est arraché à la mer par le labeur humain; le sel de Sodome est fin, celui d'Ostrakine grossier'.

<sup>1469</sup> For Hottingerus in Reland, 1714, p. 60 the city of Astrachan at the Caspian Sea is referred to. For Epstein, 1976, I, p. 20b and 1983, p. 39a, and Neusner, 1978, p. 120 and 1991, p. 110 it is the city of Istria at the Black Sea. Cf. the doubt expressed in Krauss, 1910, I, p. 119 and p. 499-500, n. 658 and Goldschmidt, 1930, III, p. 523, n. 53. A possible argument against an identification with Ostrakine, indeed, is the fact that the latter name is rendered as [srk3ni] in the Rabbinical *Pesikta Rabbati*, 17, 4 (52) (cf. Alt, 1943, p. 68, n. 2), which does not really match the [3struknit] in this context.

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Nebuchadnezzar invaded Judaea, and lived in the land of Ismael, which can refer to Arabia, Nabataea or Egypt<sup>1470</sup>:

... καὶ ὅτε ἦλθε Ναβουχοδονόσορ ἐν Ἱερουσαλήμ, ἔφυγεν εἰς Ὀστρακίνην καὶ παρώκησεν ἐν γῆ Ἰσμαήλ. ...  
'... And when Nabouchodonosor entered Jerusalem, (Habacuc) fled to Ostrakine and sojourned in the land of Ismael. ...'

The mention of Ostrakine in a 7th century BC context is no doubt anachronistic. There is also no reason to assume that his tomb was visited by Christian pilgrims, as suggested by Figueras<sup>1471</sup>.

Similar fabulous *Vitae* have also been composed - again in several versions - about the twelve apostles and the other disciples of Jesus. Some of them are said to have done missionary work in the northern Sinai and to have died in Ostrakine. So a certain Simon Ioudas was crucified under Traianus (ca. 106 AD) and buried in Ostrakine in Egypt (45)<sup>1472</sup>:

Σίμων ὁ ἐπικληθεὶς Ἰούδας, ὁ καὶ ἐπίσκοπος γενόμενος μετὰ τελευτὴν Ἰακώβου ἐν Ἱερουσαλήμ ἐπὶ Τραιανοῦ τοῦ βασιλέως σταυρῶ προσδεθείς ἐτελειώθη ἐν Ὀστρακίνη τῆς Αἰγύπτου ζήσας ἔτη ρκ'.

'Simon, who was also named Ioudas and was bishop after the death of Iakobos in Jerusalem, was crucified under king Traianus and he died in Ostrakine in Egypt, at the age of 120 years.'

In another version this Simon Ioudas is considered a missionary in the region between Gaza and Egypt, thus locating Ostrakine in the northern Sinai (46)<sup>1473</sup>:

Σίμων δὲ ὁ ἐπικληθεὶς Ἰούδας ἐν Ἐλευθεροπόλει καὶ ἀπὸ Γάζης ἕως Αἰγύπτου κηρύξας τὸν Χριστὸν θάπτεται ἐν τῇ Ὀστρακίνη πόλει τῆς Αἰγύπτου σταυρωθεὶς ἐπὶ Τραιανοῦ τοῦ βασιλέως.

'Simon, who was also named Ioudas and spread the word of Christ in Eleutheropolis and from Gaza till Egypt, is buried in the city of Ostrakine in Egypt, crucified under king Traianus.'

In a third version (47) it is not Simon Ioudas, but Ioudas Thaddaios, who is buried in Ostrakine<sup>1474</sup>:

Θαδδαῖος ὁ Λεββαῖος καὶ Ἰούδας· οὗτος Ἐδεσηνοῖς ἐκήρυξε· τέθαπται δὲ ἐν Ὀστρακίνη τῇ πόλει τῆς Αἰγύπτου σταυρωθεὶς.

'Thaddaios, who is also named Lebbaios and Ioudas: he spread the word in Edessa; he is buried in the city of Ostrakine in Egypt, crucified.'

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<sup>1470</sup> *Vitae prophetarum, recensio anonyma* (Schermann, 1907a, p. 85-86; translation in Hare, 1985, p. 393) (7); cf. Schermann, 1907a, p. 20.57.102 (4, 6, 8) and p. 32 [= *Chronicon paschale*, 150 CD (Dindorf, 1832, I, p. 282)] (5) for the other 'recensiones' giving no relevant differences; the Syriac translator of the 'recensio prior Epiphani' (p. 20) (4) was apparently not familiar with the toponym Ostrakine and instead gives: 'he fled to the house of a potter'. Cf. also Schermann, 1907b, p. 62-67 and Abel, 1940, p. 231, n. 3.

<sup>1471</sup> Figueras, 1999, p. 213.

<sup>1472</sup> *Index apostolorum discipulorumque Domini, Epiphania attributus* (Schermann, 1907a, p. 113).

<sup>1473</sup> *Index apostolorum discipulorumque Domini, Pseudo-Dorothei* (Schermann, 1907a, p. 156) [= *Chronicon paschale*, 435 (Dindorf, 1832, II, p. 138)]; cf. the Latin version (Dolbeau, 1990, p. 70): 'in civitate in Egipto Obtarquini sepultus est' ('he is buried in the city of Obtarquini (sic) in Egypt').

<sup>1474</sup> *Index apostolorum discipulorumque Domini, textus mixtus* (Schermann, 1907a, p. 199).

## 5. Ostrakine

In later sources similar events are told about the apostle Iakobos son of Alphaios. According to the 9th century writer Niketas David (48) he went from Palestine to Egypt, stayed there for a long time and was crucified in Ostrakine<sup>1475</sup>:

... ὅσα ἐν Ἐλευθεροπόλει παρὰ τῶν τῆς ἀσεβείας ἀνέσχευεν ὑπασπιστῶν· ὅσα ἐν Γάζῃ καὶ Τύρῳ, καὶ ταῖς ἐχομέναις τῶν ἀλλοφύλων κωμοπόλεσιν, ... καὶ γὰρ τὴν Αἴγυπτον ἐπιῶν, ... καὶ ἐπὶ πολὺ παρὰ τοῖς Αἰγυπτίοις ὁ ἀληθινὸς Ἰσραηλίτης, ... οὕτως ὑπὲρ πάντων ἀνῆλθεν ἐπὶ σταυροῦ· ἐν μιᾷ μὲν τῶν κατ' Αἴγυπτον πόλεων (Ὀστρακίνη καλουμένη) ὡς ἀμνὸς καταθυόμενος· ...

'... How much did he bear in Eleutheropolis from the shield-bearers of impiety; how much in Gaza and Tyros, and in the adjacent village-towns of the foreigners, ... and when he went to Egypt, ... and this true man of Israel lived for a long time with the Egyptians, ... so he died for all men at the cross; in one of the cities of Egypt (called Ostrakine) he was sacrificed as a lam; ...'

For Nikephoros Kallistos (54) Iakobos first travelled to the outskirts of Egypt and finally stayed for a long time in the so-called Ostrakine, where he was crucified<sup>1476</sup>:

ὁ τοῦ Ἀλφαίου Ἰάκωβος, εἷς δὲ καὶ οὗτος τῶν δώδεκα, ... ἐν Γάζῃ μὲν πρῶτα, εἶτα ἐν Ἐλευθερουπόλει, καὶ ταῖς ἐκεῖσε περιόκοις τῶν ὁμοφύλων πόλεσι διατρίψας, ... ἐντεῦθεν τῇ Αἰγύπτῳ προσβαλὼν, καὶ ταῖς ἐσχατιαῖς αὐτῆς, τὸν Χριστὸν Ἰησοῦν Σωτῆρα καὶ Θεὸν εὐαγγελισάμενος, τὸ τελευταῖον ἐπὶ τῇ Ὀστρακίνη λεγομένη πόλει γενόμενος, πολλῶ τῷ χρόνῳ τὰς διατριβάς ἐκεῖσε πεποιηκώς· κινδύνους τε ἅμα καὶ ἄθλοις ὡς πλείστοις ἐνηθληκώς, ὕστερον εἰς βεβαίωσιν τῶν μαθητευθέντων αὐτῷ σωτηρίας, σταυρῷ καὶ οὗτος πρὸς τινῶν ἀνθισταμένων τῷ λόγῳ τῆς πίστεως προσηλοῦται, ...

Iakobos son of Alphaios, also he one of the twelve, ... he first stayed in Gaza, later in Eleutheropolis, and in the cities of the same race there in the neighbourhood, ... next he went to Egypt, till its outskirts, spreading the word of Jesus Christ the Saviour and God; when he finally arrived in the so-called city of Ostrakine, he stayed there for a long time; he knew at the same time very much dangers and challenges, and finally - in order to strengthen the salvation of his pupils - also he was crucified because of some men who reacted against the word of belief, ...'

The stories apparently mix up elements from the lives of the apostle Simon Zelotes or Kananites, the bishop of Jerusalem Simon son of Klopas, the apostle Ioudas son of Iakobos, the disciple Thaddaios or Lebbaios and the apostle Iakobos son of Alphaios<sup>1477</sup>. Although it is not unlikely at all that Christian missionaries went to the northern Sinai from the 1st century AD on, it is hard to assess the historical value of these accounts, especially because there are a lot of other stories about these men, mentioning other regions of missionary or other places where they are supposed to have died<sup>1478</sup>.

<sup>1475</sup> Niketas David, *Summorum apostolorum orationes laudatoriae*, 8 (Migne, PG 105, 1862, col. 157-159).

<sup>1476</sup> Nikephoros Kallistos, *Ecclesiastica historia*, 2, 40 (Migne, PG 145, 1865, col. 864).

<sup>1477</sup> Cf. the analysis of Lipsius, 1883, I, p. 26 and 1884, II 2, p. 142-163.210-211.233-234. See also *Acta sanctorum Maii*, 1866, I, p. 18-35; Nilles, 1896, I, p. 299; Schermann, 1907b, p. 280-283; Abel, 1940, p. 231, n. 3; Thomsen, 1942, p. 124; O'Callaghan, R. T., s.v. Madaba, in *DB*, Suppl. V, 26, 1953, col. 695; Oren, 1982a, p. 36. It is maybe due to this tradition that Lorber, 'reconstructing' the *Evangelium Iacobi Minoris* 'with the help of the Holy Spirit', states that Jesus' family fled from Bethlehem - via Tyros - to 'Ostrazine' (sic), where they lived for some years (cf. Lorber, 1984 [= 1852], p. 59.67-70 and passim).

<sup>1478</sup> According to Nesbitt, 1999, p. 5-7 (unpublished) and Figueras, 1999, p. 213 Ostrakine might have been a place of pilgrimage where one of these saints was worshipped, but this is a mere hypothesis, not confirmed in the sources.

## 5. Ostrakine

### *Ostrakine and the language of Canaan*

*Isaias*, 19, 18 prophesies how one day Egypt will be terrified for Judah and how there will be five towns in Egypt speaking the language of Canaan and pledging themselves to Yahweh; one of them will be called 'Ir-ha-heres'<sup>1479</sup>.

'That day in Egypt there will be five towns speaking the language of Canaan and pledging themselves to Yahweh Sabatoh; one of them will be called Ir-ha-heres.'  
The name Ir-ha-heres can be rendered as 'City of destruction' or - more likely - 'City of the sun', according to the reading of 'heres' with the letter 'heth' or 'he'<sup>1480</sup>. Some later Christian authors look for a link between this place and Ostrakine.

The Septuaginta rendered 'Ir-ha-heres' as 'Polis-asedek'<sup>1481</sup>:

τῇ ἡμέρᾳ ἐκείνῃ ἔσονται πέντε πόλεις ἐν Αἰγύπτῳ λαλοῦσαι τῇ γλώσσῃ τῇ Χανανίτιδι καὶ ὀμνύουσαι τῷ ὀνόματι κυρίου· Πόλις-ασεδεκ κληθήσεται ἢ μία πόλις.

'On that day there will be five cities in Egypt speaking in the language of Canaan and pledging by the name of the lord; one city will be called Polis-asedek.'

'Polis-asedek' probably reflects the Hebrew 'City of justice' and therefore does not translate the original expression; it is possibly due to an interference with the 'City of saving justice' mentioned in *Isaias*, 1, 26<sup>1482</sup>.

Aquila (ca. 130 AD) and Theodotion (late 2nd century AD), on the other hand, rendered the name quite literally as ἀρες. Symmachos (ca. 170 AD) translated πόλις ἡλίου, 'City of the sun'<sup>1483</sup>.

Eusebios thinks that the toponym is not the name of one of the five cities, but instead refers to the one city of the holy church, which is called Asedek or 'City of justice' by the Septuaginta, 'City of the sun' by Symmachos and 'Areopolis' or 'City of the earth' in the Hebrew bible, apparently translating 'ares' as 'earth'; he illustrates the different interpretations with quotations from the bible<sup>1484</sup>:

εἰ δὲ πέντε λέγονται πόλεις αἱ θεσπιζόμεναι, ἀλλ' οὐ χρὴ ἀγνοεῖν, ὡς αἱ πέντε μία τυγχάνουσι. διὸ καὶ ἐν ὄνομα κατὰ πασῶν ἐπιλέγεται τὸ Ἄσεδέκ, ὅπερ ὁ Σύμμαχος ἡρμήνευσεν ἡλίου· τίνα οὖν εἴποις ἂν ταύτην εἶναι ἢ τὴν ἁγίαν τοῦ θεοῦ ἐκκλησίαν, κατὰ μὲν τοὺς ἑβδομήκοντα καλουμένην Ἄσεδέκ, ὃ δὴ σημαίνει δικαιοσύνης, κατὰ δὲ τὸν Σύμμαχον ἡλίου, περὶ οὗ λέλεκται· τοῖς δὲ φοβουμένοις με ἀνατελεῖ ἥλιος δικαιοσύνης, καὶ ἴασις ἐν ταῖς πτέρυξιν αὐτοῦ, κατὰ δὲ τὸ ἀκριβὲς τῆς Ἑβραϊκῆς λέξεως ἢ Ἀρεόπολις λέλεκται. ὅπερ οὕτως ἂν ἐρμηνευθεῖ· πόλις τῆς γῆς κληθήσεται ἢ μία πόλις· αὕτη γὰρ μόνη καθ' ὅλης τῆς γῆς ἴδρυται τῷ θεῷ πόλις, ὡς εἰρησθαι περὶ αὐτῆς· 'δεδοξασμένα ἐλαλήθη περὶ σοῦ, ἢ πόλις τοῦ θεοῦ'. ... ἡλίου δὲ καὶ φωτὸς πόλιν εἰκότως τὴν ἐκκλησίαν ὠνόμασε διὰ τὸν Χριστὸν τοῦ θεοῦ φῶς ὄντα τὸ φωτίζον

<sup>1479</sup> Also spelled Ir-ha-hérès, 'ir ha-heres, 'ir ha-heres, Ir-haheres, Ir Haheres.

<sup>1480</sup> Cf. Field, 1875, p. 463; Marcus, 1943, p. 257, n. e; Odelain, 1978, p. 180, s.v. Ir-ha-hérès; Van der Kooij, 1981, p. 52; Gryson, 1987-1993, p. 457.

<sup>1481</sup> Septuaginta, *Isaias*, 19, 18 (Ziegler, 1939, p. 191).

<sup>1482</sup> Cf. Van der Kooij, 1981, p. 52-55; Lust, 1992, I, p. 66.

<sup>1483</sup> Cf. Origenes, *Hexapla, Isaias*, 19, 18 (Field, 1875, p. 463). There is no reason to look for a link between 'Ares' and the names el-Arish or Arza; cf. Abel, 1940, p. 231.

<sup>1484</sup> Eusebios, *Commentarius in Isaiam*, 76, 19, 18 (Ziegler, 1975, p. 133).

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"πάντα ἄνθρωπον, ἐρχόμενον εἰς τὸν κόσμος". διὸ κατὰ Σύμμαχον εἴρηται· πόλις ἡλίου κληθήσεται ἢ μία πόλις.

'If the five prophesied cities are mentioned, it is necessary to know very well that the five are actually one. Therefore also one name is given for all, Asedek, which Symmachos translates as 'of the sun'; what else could you say that it is than the holy church of god, which according to the Septuaginta is called Asedek, which means 'of justice', according to Symmachos 'of the sun', about which is told: 'for the people that fear me, the sun of justice will rise, and there will be healing in its wings' [*Malachias*, 3, 20]; according to the accurate Hebrew phrasing she is called Areopolis. This can be explained as such: the one city will be called the city of the earth; for only this city in the whole world is founded as a city for god, as it is referred to: 'one speaks of glory for you, the city of god' [*Psalmi*, 87, 3]. ... Someone rightly calls the church city of sun and light because of Christ the son of god, who is the light that gives light to 'every man, coming into the world' [cf. *Ioannes*, 1, 9]. Therefore it is said according to Symmachos: the one city will be called the city of the sun.'

Eusebios apparently also discussed the name 'Asedek' in his *Onomasticon*, but this passage is only preserved in the Latin adaptation by Hieronymus (24), so it is not sure whether the mention of Ostrakine there comes from Eusebios or is inserted only later by Hieronymus. This writer does not dwell on the Septuaginta name 'Asedek', but, while referring to a lost passage in his *Hebraicae quaestiones*, he discusses the Hebrew reading 'Aares' and states that it is translated as 'sun' or as 'potsherd', since these are both dry, depending on the identification with Heliou Polis or with Ostrakine as proposed by some unidentified authors<sup>1485</sup>:

Asedec. et hanc Esaias profeta futuram in Aegypto vaticinatur. sciendum autem quod in Hebraeo pro hoc nomine scriptum sit Aares, quod a siccitate quidam interpretantur in solem, et alii in testam transferunt, volentes vel Heliopolim significare vel Ostracinen. sed et huius rei disputationem, quia longior est, in libris Hebraicarum quaestionum repperies.

'Asedec. And Isaias the prophet foretells that this will be (a city) in Egypt. One has to know, however, that in Hebrew instead of this name 'Aares' is written, which because it implies something dry, some people translate as 'sun', and others render as 'potsherd', suggesting that it means either Heliopolis or Ostracine. But also the discussion of this matter, which is too long (to be repeated here), you will find in the books of *Hebrew matters*.'

Hieronymus himself prefers the interpretation of 'City of the sun' in his *Vulgata* translation<sup>1486</sup>:

in die illa erunt quinque civitates in terra Aegypti loquentes lingua Chanaan et iurantes per Dominum exercituum civitas solis vocabitur una.

'On that day there will be five cities in the land of Egypt speaking in the language of Canaan and pledging by the lord of the armies; one will be called the city of the sun.'

In his commentary on *Isaias* Hieronymus (27) elaborates upon the problem. The Septuaginta - for reasons unknown to him - wrote 'asedec', which is translated as 'city of justice', while the Hebrew 'ares' was incorrectly interpreted as 'earth'. Hieronymus here probably refers the passage of Eusebios already mentioned. He prefers the translation 'city of the sun' of Symmachos, since the word 'ares' is

<sup>1485</sup> Hieronymus, *Liber de situ et nominibus locorum Hebraicorum*, s.v. Asedec (Klostermann, 1904, p. 39) (cf. the (inaccurate) translation of Freeman-Grenville, 2003, p. 28); cf. Hieronymus map (Miller, 1895, III, p. 14.17) (51): 'c(ivitas) Ostrakena'; see also Hereford map (Miller, 1896, IV, p. 30 and map) (53): 'Ostrochena c(ivitas)'.

<sup>1486</sup> Hieronymus, *Vulgata, Isaias*, 19, 18 (Weber, 1975, p. 1115); cf. *Vetus Latina, Isaias*, 19, 18 (Gryson, 1987-1993, p. 457-458).

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ambiguous and can mean just as well 'potsherd' as 'sun'. The Jewish priest Onias, who according to Iosephos<sup>1487</sup> built a temple in the Heliopolites in Egypt in the 2nd century BC, choose 'Heliou Polis' in reference to this prophecy of Isaias, but according to Hieronymus, who probably prefers an allegorical interpretation, he did not understand the passage properly. Some people go on with the meaning of 'potsherd' and - since the Greek word for 'potsherd' is 'ostrakon' - they think that Ostrakine was one of the five places in Egypt<sup>1488</sup>, while also the others are situated in the neighbourhood of Rinokoloura and Kasion, for it is obvious that till their own time (i.e. probably till the 4th century AD) the people there speak 'the language of Canaan' or Syrian. They also think that Syrians and Arabs from the neighbourhood are settled in that region by the Babylonian king Nebuchadnezzar, an account that is maybe somehow linked with the story of the prophet Habacuc (4-8), who fled for Nebuchadnezzar to Ostrakine<sup>1489</sup>:

pro civitatis solis, nescio quid volentes LXX interpretati sunt asedec, quam quidam nostrorum urbem iustitiae interpretatur, et ductus errore, quod iuxta Hebraicum ares nscriptum sit, terram putat, quae aliis litteris scribitur. melius ergo transtulit Symmachus: *civitas solis vocabitur una*. Ares enim verbum ambiguum et testa dicitur et sol, eo quod utrumque areat et siccum sit. hunc locum non intellegens Onias, templum exstruxit in Aegypto in oppido Ἡλιοπόλεως. lege Iosephi Historias. alii ares, id est ὄστρακον, hoc est testam, urbem Ostracinem intellegi volunt, et ceteras iuxta Rhinocoruram et Casium civitates, quas usque hodie in Aegypto lingua Chananitide, hoc est, Syra loqui manifestum est; et putant e vicino Syros atque Arabas a Nabuchodonosor in illam terram fuisse translatos.

'Instead of 'the city of the sun' the 70 for unknown reasons translated 'asedec', which someone of us [sc. Eusebios?] translated as 'the city of justice', and lead by the mistake that in the Hebrew text 'ares' was written, he identifies it with 'earth', which is written with other letters. Symmachos therefore rendered better: 'one will be called the city of the sun'. For the word 'ares' is ambiguous and means both 'potsherd' and 'sun', because both are arid and dry. Onias, who did not understand this passage, built a temple in Egypt in the place Heliopolis. Read the *Histories* of Iosephus. Others understand 'ares', sc. 'ostrakon', i.e. 'sherd', as the city of Ostracine and the other cities near Rhinocorura and Casium, of which it is clear that they still today speak in the language of Canaan, i.e. in Syrian; and they believe that Syrians and Arabs from the neighbourhood were transferred by Nabuchodonosor to that country.'

In the Rabbinical *Pesikta rabbati* (52) the five cities are mentioned nominatim, and so Ir-ha-heres is identified with **סַרְקָאָנִי** [srk3ni] or Ostrakine<sup>1490</sup>:

'... "one shall be the city of Heres" - a name which signifies either the 'city of sherds' or 'city of the sun'. [These are the five cities]: No - that is, Alexandria; Noph - that is, Memphis; Tehaphnehes - that is, Hupianas; the city of sherds - that is, Ostrakine; and the city of the sun - that is, Heliou Polis.'

<sup>1487</sup> Iosephos, *Antiquitates Iudaicae*, 13, 3, 1-3 (62-73); cf. Carrez-Maratray, 1999a, p. 4-5.

<sup>1488</sup> There is no reason to follow Abel, 1940, p. 231, for whom this passage implies that 'Hârès' is the Aramaic name of Ostrakine.

<sup>1489</sup> Hieronymus, *Commentarii in Esaïam*, 5, 19, 18 (Adriaen, 1963a, p. 197-198).

<sup>1490</sup> *Pesikta rabbati*, 17, 4 (Hebrew) (translated in Braude, 1968, I, p. 367); cf. Neubauer, 1868, p. 408-409; Alt, 1943, p. 68, n. 2.

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The passage is still discussed in other commentaries on Isaias<sup>1491</sup>, but no further mention is made of the city of Ostrakine in this context.

### *Ostrakine in the Byzantine period*

In the *Itinerarium provinciarum Antonini Augusti* (15), composed ca. 300 AD, Ostrakine is situated at 24 miles (ca. 36 km) from Rinokoloura and at 26 miles (ca. 39 km) from Kasion<sup>1492</sup>.

Rinocorura

Ostracena m.p. XXVIII

Cassio m.p. XXVI

'(From) Rinocorura (to) Ostracena: 24 miles; (from Ostrakine to) Cassium: 26 miles.'

The official Theophanes travelled from Upper Egypt to Antiocheia in Syria, possibly in 322 or 323 AD. Some memoranda and accounts of this journey - both drafts and fair copies - are preserved (16-17). On 20 Pharmouthi (15 April) Theophanes came from Kasion, travelled 26 miles (ca. 39 km) - his ninth stage - and arrived in Ostrakine, where he spent the night. The next day he travelled 24 miles (ca. 36 km) to Rinokoloura. This itinerary is mentioned twice, both as a draft and as a fair copy<sup>1493</sup>:

(627, draft)

233 θ [ἀ]πὸ Κασίου εἰς Ὀστρακίην μίλι(α) κς  
234 [ι ἀπὸ Ὀστρακίνης εἰς Ῥινοκόρουνα μίλι(α) κδ  
'9 From Kasion to Ostrakin[e milia] 26  
[10 From Os]trakine to Rin[okorona milia] 24'

(628, fair copy)

8 [θ ἀπὸ τῶν] Κασίου εἰς Ὀστ[ρακίην]  
9 [ι ἀπὸ Ὀστρακίνης εἰς Ῥινοκόρουρα]  
'[9 From] the Kasion to Ost[rakine]  
[10 From O]strakine to Rinok[oroura]'

On his way back from Antiocheia to Egypt Theophanes (18) travelled again from Rinokoloura to Ostrakine, where he bought grapes for lunch, cheeses,

<sup>1491</sup> Hieronymus, *Commentarii in Esaiam*, 7, 19, 1-23 (Adriaen, 1963a, p. 277-287); Hesychios of Jerusalem, *Interpretatio Isaiæ prophetæ*, 19, 18 (Faulhaber, 1900, p. 58); Kyrillos of Alexandria, *Commentarius in Isaiam prophetam*, 19, 18 (Migne, PG 70, 1859, col. 468-469); Theodoretos, *Commentaria in Isaiam*, 6, 19, 18 (Guinot, 1982, II, p. 140-142); Pseudo-Athanasios, *Dialogus Athanasii et Zacchæi*, 56 (Conybeare, 1898, p. 34-35). See also s.v. Rinokoloura.

<sup>1492</sup> *Itinerarium provinciarum Antonini Augusti*, 151, 4 - 152, 2 (Cuntz, 1929, p. 21). The figures '26 or 29' and '16 or 23 miles' between Ostrakine and Kasion in Amélineau, 1893, p. 211.289 are probably just a mistake.

<sup>1493</sup> P.Ryl. IV, 627, 233-234 is a draft for P.Ryl. IV, 628, 8-9.

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cucumbers, one pot<sup>1494</sup> and a kind of fish (?) named hexatilia<sup>1495</sup> - probably in the morning of 11 Mesore (4 August)<sup>1496</sup>:

470 ια  
 ἐν Ὀστρακίνῃ  
 σταφύλων εἰς ἄριστ(ον) (δρ.) σ  
 τ[υρί]ων (δρ.) σ  
 σ[ι]κυδίων (δρ.) ρ  
 475 ὑπερ σαμβάθ(ου) α (δρ.) τ  
 ἑξατιλίων (δρ.) ρ

'(Mesore) 11. In Ostrakine: grapes for lunch: 200 dr.; cheeses: 200 dr.; cucumbers: 100 dr.; for 1 pot: 300 dr.; hexatilia: 100 dr.'

In 359 AD the Arian bishop of Ostrakine Theoktistos (Θεόκτιστος ἐπίσκοπος Ὀστρακίνης) attended the synod of Seleukeia (22)<sup>1497</sup>. This is the first reference to a Christian community in Ostrakine.

On the 17th of April 370 AD the naukleros or shipowner Aurelius Dio[ ] son of (?) Philophilos(?) from Ostrakine wrote a receipt to the Flavii Hephaistas, Eustochios and Ambrosios, who possibly were military active in Middle Egypt, where the papyrus has been found. The contents of the receipt is lost, but perhaps it confirms the transfer of a ship's cargo (19)<sup>1498</sup>:

1 [ὕ]ψ[α] [τε] [α] τῶν δεσποτῶν ἡμῶν Οὐαλεντιανοῦ καὶ Οὐάλεντος τῶν αἰωνίων  
 Αὐγούστων τὸ γ' Φαρμούθι κβ. Αὐρήλιος Διο[.].  
 [Φ]ιλοφίλου(?) Ὀστρακινίτης ναύκληρος πλοίου [ ]  
 Φλαουίους) Ἡφειστᾶ καὶ Εὐστοχίῳ καὶ Ἀμβροσίῳ ...]

5 traces

'In the consulatus of our lords Valentinianus and Valens the perpetual | Augusti for the third time, Pharmouthi 22. Aurelius Dio[ ] | son of (?) [Ph]ilophilos(?) from Ostrakine, naukleros of a [private? public?] ship [ ] | to the Flavii Hephestas and Eustochios and Ambrosios [ ]'

In the 4th century AD, possibly ca. 341-397 AD, a fragmentarily preserved list of payments or deliveries of grain (?) mentions four persons from Rinokoloura

<sup>1494</sup> Roberts, P.Ryl. IV, 1952, p. 145.148 (followed by Tscherikower, C.Pap.Jud. III, 1964, p. 15-16; Oren, 1982a, p. 25; Figueras, 2000, p. 61.212) saw a link with the word 'Sabbath' and considered it a payment to a local Jewish community in Ostrakine, but Rea, 1966, p. 41 (BL V, 1969, p. 88) and P.Oxy., XXXIV, 1968, p. 133 (ad 2728) (BL VI, 1976, p. 124) rightly established the interpretation 'for one pot'; cf. Cadell, 1989, p. 318. The draft P.Ryl. IV, 637 reads σαμβάθ(ων) γ, 'for three pots', and because the price is 300 dr. (3 x 100 dr.?), it is not impossible that the fair copy, which only mentions one pot, is wrong and that Theophanes actually bought three pots.

<sup>1495</sup> The word is not known outside this papyrus, and Theophanes bought this food on several occasions between Byblos and Kasion. Roberts, P.Ryl. IV, 1952, p. 148, who writes ἑξατιλίων, suggests that it is a corrupt form of 'saxatilis', used of fish found in rock pools; LSJ, 1996, Suppl., p. 120, s.v. ἑξατίλιον, τό, or -ιος, ὁ, cautiously follows the suggestion of Roberts; cf. Kalleris, 1953, p. 714, n. 1.

<sup>1496</sup> P.Ryl. IV, 630\* [633: fair copy; 637: draft], 470-476 (= C.Pap.Jud. III, 457c).

<sup>1497</sup> Epiphanius, *Panarion adversus haereses*, 73, 26, 4 (Holl, 1985, p. 300); cf. Munier, 1943, p. 7; Van Gucht, 1982, p. 127; Worp, 1994, p. 303; Martin, 1996, p. 65.75-76.82-83.96.101. Fedalto, 1988, p. 606 specifies that Theoktistos attended a meeting on 27 September 359.

<sup>1498</sup> P.Heid. inv. G 748 (Hagedorn, 2002b, p. 163); cf. Kramer, 2003, p. 328.



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dealing with the Oxyrynchites in Middle Egypt (l. 1-4), and at least eight persons from Ostrakine dealing with either the Oxyrynchites or the Herakleopolites: Dioskoros son of Tebas (perhaps mentioned twice), [ ]...on, [ ]atienis, [ ]..ion, [ ], [ ]oros son of Kasios, [ ]os(?) son of Daimon grandson of Diokolles(?), and Hermanoubas son of Petronius (20)<sup>1499</sup>.

- 5 [ ].  
 [Δι]οσκόρου Τεβᾶς Ὀστρακινίτου [ ]  
 [ ]...ωνος Ὀστρακονίτου [ ]  
 [ ]ατιηις Ὀστρακινίτου [ ]  
 [ ]..ίωνος υἱο.. Ὀστρακονίτου γυμ[ ]
- 10 [ ] ἐπιστασίαι.[ ]  
 [ ].[ ]  
 [ ].[ ]  
 [ ].[ ]  
 [ ]..πρ..το..... Ὀστρακ(ινιτ ) [ ]
- 15 [ ]ώρου Κασίου Ὀστρακινίτου [ὑπερ] Ὀξυρυγχί(του) [ ]  
 [ ]λ( )  
 [ ]ου Δαίμωνος Διοκόλλου Ὀστρακ(ινίτου) ὑπ(έρ) Ἡρακλεοπ[ολίτου ]  
 [ ] Ἑρμανουβᾶ Πετρωνίου Ὀστρακινίτου ὑπ(έρ) Ἡρακλεοπολίτου [ ]  
 [ ]..
- 20 [ Διο]σκόρου Τεβατα Ὀστρακονίτου ὑπ(έρ) Ἡρακλεοπολ(ίτου) [ ]
- 5 [ ].  
 [of Di]oskoros son of Tebas(?) from Ostrakine [ ]  
 [of ]...on from Ostrakine [ ]  
 [of ]atienis(?) from Ostrakine [ ]  
 [of ]..ion ... from Ostrakine ...[ ]
- 10 [ ] ... [ ]  
 [ ].[ ]  
 [ ].[ ]  
 [ ].[ ]  
 [ ] ... from Ostrakine [ ]
- 15 [of ]oros son of Kasios from Ostrakine on behalf of the Oxyrynchites [ ]  
 [ ]..  
 [of ]os(?) son of Daimon grandson of Diokolles(?) from Ostrakine on behalf of the Herakleopolites  
 [of ] Hermanoubas son of Petronius from Ostrakine on behalf of the Herakleopolites  
 [ ]..
- 20 [of Dio]skoros son of Tebas(?) from Ostrakine on behalf of the Herakleopolites'

About 370-373 AD Gregorios of Nazianzos (21) asks the help of the hermit Amphilochios, who also lives in Cappadocia, stressing that he does not want anything impossible like water from the people of Ostrakine<sup>1500</sup>:

ἄρτους μὲν οὐκ ἠτήσαμεν παρὰ σοῦ, ὅτι μηδ' ὕδωρ παρὰ τῶν Ὀστρακίνην οἰκούντων.  
 'Bread we did not ask from you, and neither water from the inhabitants of Ostrakine.'

It is not clear whether Ostrakine in the 4th century AD still did not have sufficient provisions of water, or whether Gregorios alludes to a literary tradition related to Iosephos' statement that there was no water in Ostrakine. The lack of water, however,

<sup>1499</sup> P.NYU Inv. # 461 Ro, 6-20 (Nielsen, 2002, p. 143); cf. Kramer, 2003, p. 327. The restoration Ἄγαθ]οῦ by the editors in l. 17 is apparently *exempli gratia*.

<sup>1500</sup> Gregorios of Nazianzos, *Epistulae*, 25, 1 (Gallay, 1964, p. 33).

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is not confirmed in other sources of the 4th to 7th centuries AD and the phrasing indeed seems to have a rather proverbial character<sup>1501</sup>.

About 391/392 AD (?) Ammianus Marcellinus (25) mentions Ostrakine as one of the places in the Egyptian province Augustamnica<sup>1502</sup>:

in Augustamnica Pelusium est oppidum nobile ... et Cassium ... et Ostracine et Rhinocorura.

'In Augustamnica is the famous town of Pelusium ... and Cassium ... and Ostracine and Rhinocorura.'

On the *Tabula Peutingeriana* (26), a map that possibly shows the situation of the 4th century AD, 'Ostracine' is mentioned at a distance of 23 miles (ca. 34 km) west from Rinokoloura. Kasion is the next station in western direction, but the distance between the two places is lost<sup>1503</sup>.

Probably about 404 AD, even after the sentence on Ioannes Chrysostomos the patriarch of Constantinopolis, Sarapion of Ostrakine was still helping his banished followers (28)<sup>1504</sup>:

ἐπῆνει δὲ καὶ ἐθαύμαζεν ... Σαραπίωνα τὸν Ὀστρακίνης, τεσσαρακοστὸν πέμπτον ἔτος ἔχοντα ἐν τῇ τῆς ἐπισκοπῆς λειτουργίᾳ.

'(Ioannes Chrysostomos) praised and uttered his admiration ... about Sarapion of Ostrakine, who had been in the ministry of bishop for forty-five years.'

Sarapion had been bishop for 45 years, which implies an accession about 359-360 AD, probably immediately after Theoktistos<sup>1505</sup>.

On the Council of Ephesos held in 431 AD Abraham was bishop of Ostrakine<sup>1506</sup>:

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<sup>1501</sup> Cf. Figueras, 2000, p. 207.

<sup>1502</sup> Ammianus Marcellinus, 22, 16, 3.

<sup>1503</sup> *Tabula Peutingeriana* (Miller, 1916, col. 813), with a drawing of this section of the *Tabula* col. 857-858 - for Ostrakine, see section IX 5 - and the data transposed to a modern map col. 813-814.

<sup>1504</sup> Palladios, *Dialogus de vita sancti Ioannis Chrysostomi*, 20 (Malingrey, 1988, I, p. 408-409); cf. Baur, 1930, II, p. 346; Martin, 1996, p. 65, n. 151. Évieux, 1995, p. 75 incorrectly identifies this bishop with the banished Sarapion, archdeacon and later bishop of Herakleia, mentioned in Palladios, *Dialogus de vita sancti Ioannis Chrysostomi*, 20 (Malingrey, 1988, I, p. 399); cf. Malingrey, 1988, II, p. 135 (index).

<sup>1505</sup> Cf. Gams, 1873, p. 461 (ca. 403); Van Gucht, 1982, p. 127 (ca. 350-404); Fedalto, 1988, p. 606 (accession before 398-404); Worp, 1994, p. 303 (ca. 360-400).

<sup>1506</sup> *Concilium universale Ephesenum*, 33, 144; 62, 138 (Schwartz, 1927, 1, 1, 2, p. 7.60); see also 95, 96 (Schwartz, 1927, 1, 1, 3, p. 36); 73, 140; 79, 156 (Schwartz, 1929, 1, 1, 7, p. 88.116), with the name written as Ἀβραάμ; Latin version: 11, 1, 145; 19, 11, 153 (Schwartz, 1925-1926, 1, 2, p. 30.74); 24, 1, 143; 46, 43, 158 (Schwartz, 1929, 1, 3, p. 56.139); 38, 1, 139; 38, 84, 151 (Schwartz, 1924-1925, 1, 5, 1, p. 88.115); *Concilium universale Chalcedonense*, 911, 144 (Schwartz, 1935, 2, 3, 1, p. 201); cf.

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(29, 31) Ἀβραάμ Ὀστρακίνης (33, 144; 73, 140) - Abraham Ostracinae (11, 1, 145) - Abraham Ostracinae (24, 1, 143) - Abraham Ostracines (38, 1, 139) - (29a) Abramio Ostracinensi (911, 144)

'Abraham of Ostrakine'

(30, 32) Ἀβραάμ ἐπίσκοπος πόλεως Ὀστρακίνης (62, 138; 79, 156) - Abraham episcopus civitatis Ostracinae (19, 11, 153) - Abraham episcopus civitatis Ostracinae (46, 43, 158) - Abraham episcopus civitatis Ostracines (38, 84, 151).

'Abraham bishop of the city of Ostrakine'

In the Coptic lists of the Council the Greek name of the city is transliterated<sup>1507</sup>:

ΑΦΡΑΖΑΜ ΠΕΠΙΣΚΟΠΟΣ ἸΤΡΑΚΙΝΗ ('Afraham the bishop of Trakine') - ΑΒΡΑΗΑΜ ἸΝΟΣΤΡΑΚΙΝΗ ('Abraham of Ostrakine') (29)

Abraham of Ostrakine is probably addressed in the correspondence of Isidoros of Pelousion<sup>1508</sup>.

In one of the anonymous *Apophthegmata Patrum* (37) of the 4th-5th centuries AD it is told how some Greeks came to the city of Ostrakine. Because they wanted to distribute alms, they went to the stewards or 'oikonomoi' of the church to bring them to people that were really destitute: a leper, who made a living weaving mats from palm leaves, and a widow, who worked as a laundress, and one of her daughters, but all of them refused the alms<sup>1509</sup>:

venerunt aliquando quidam Graecorum, ut darent eleemosynam in civitate Ostracines, et assumpserunt sibi oconomos ecclesiae, ut ostenderent eis qui necessitatem maiorem haberent. illi autem duxerunt eos ad quemdam leprosum, et dederunt ei. ille autem volebat accipere, dicens: ecce modicas palmas habeo, quas operor, et facio plectas, et ex eis manduco panem. iterum duxerunt eos ad cellam unius viduae, quae erat cum filiabus suis. et cum pulsarent ostium, cucurrit filia eius ad ostium nuda. mater autem eius abierat ad quoddam opus; erat enim candidatrix, et dabant filiae eius vestimentum et nummos. illa autem volebat accipere, dicens venisse matrem suam, et dixisse sibi: confide, quia voluit deus, et inveni opus quod faciam hodie, unde habeamus victum nostrum. et cum venisset mater eius, rogabant eam ut acciperet; et noluit, dicens: ego habeo curatorem meum deum, et eum tollere vos vultis a me hodie? illi autem agnoscentes fidem eius, glorificaverunt deum.

'Once, certain Greeks came to give some alms in the city of Ostracine, and they took with them the stewards of the church to show them who had the greatest needs. Those men brought them to some leper, and they gave him (alms). But he refused to accept anything, saying: 'Behold, I have these few palm leaves, with which I work, and I make mats, and because of these I eat bread'. They brought them further to the dwelling of a widow who lived with her daughters. And when they knocked at the door, a daughter of her came to the door, naked. But her mother had left to some

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Gams, 1873, p. 461. Fedalto, 1988, p. 606 specifies that Abraham appeared in Ephesos between 22 June and 22 July 431 AD. Worp, 1994, p. 303 lists the name of the bishop as 'Abraamios'.

<sup>1507</sup> Cf. Bouriant, 1892, p. 71; Amélineau, 1893, p. 288, n. 1; Kraatz, 1904, p. 65; Gerland, 1936, p. 96, no. 278; Munier, 1943, p. 17; Muysier, 1946, p. 146.

<sup>1508</sup> Isidoros of Pelousion, *Epistulae*, 1264 (5, 38) (Évieux, 1997, I, p. 264-265); cf. Le Quien, 1740, II, col. 545-546; Fedalto, 1988, p. 606; Évieux, 1995, p. 45.62-63.74-77.306.387 and passim.

<sup>1509</sup> *Apophthegmata Patrum* - Latin translation of Pelagius, 5, 6, 18 (Migne, PL 73, 1849, col. 891); cf. the translation of Regnault, 1966, p. 92-93 and 1985, p. 96; see also the Syriac version, 2, 299 (Budge, 1907, II, p. 218): 'in the city of 'Estarkînâ', the Armenian version, 6, 8 (Leloir, 1975, II, p. 126): 'in-Ostrakini' and the Coptic version, 69a-b (Elanskaya, 1991, p. 16-17; cf. the translation p. 29 - see also Elanskaya, 1994, p. 15-16.28): ΖΗΟΥΣ ΤΡΑΤΡΑΚΙΝΗ ('in Oustratrakine'); every version differs in some minor details.

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work, for she was a laundress; and they wanted to give her daughter clothes and money. But she refused to accept anything, saying that her mother had come and had told her: 'Have confidence, because god has wanted it so, and I found work that I can do today, from which we will have our food'. And when her mother came, they asked her to accept it; and she refused, saying: 'I have god who takes care of me, and you want to take him away from me today?' So when they recognized her belief, they glorified god.'

It is difficult to assess who those Greeks were, why they came to Ostrakine, and whether the indication 'Greeks' is used here in some kind of opposition to the ethnic composition of the city of Ostrakine.

In the *Cosmographia* of Iulius Honorius (38), probably written in the 4th-5th centuries AD, 'Ostracine oppidum' is - possibly together with Pelousion - one of the 'oppida oceani orientalis' ('towns of the eastern ocean')<sup>1510</sup>. The order in which the cities of this area are listed, is not very consistent. The fact that Egypt belongs to the area of the 'southern ocean' and the northern Sinai to that of the 'eastern ocean' does not have any geopolitical consequences, since this division is due to the geographical scheme used by Honorius<sup>1511</sup>.

The papyrus SB XXVI, 16607 (39), probably written in the 5th century AD, contains an itinerary of places in Egypt, Palestine and Asia Minor. Ἀσσοδρακίνα (Ostrakine) is mentioned between Πικασπίσω (Kasion) in the west and Ρινοκόλορα (Rinokoloura) in the east<sup>1512</sup>. The beginning of the name (Ἀσ-) is also found in a variant spelling for the toponym in Iulius Honorius (38).

Ca. 527/528 AD Hierokles (40) mentions Ostrakine (Ὀστρακίνη - sic) between Rinokoloura and Kasion as one of the thirteen towns lying in the ἐπαρχία Ἀυγούστα α' (province Augustamnica D)<sup>1513</sup>.

In the Medaba mosaic (41), possibly made ca. 560-565 AD, Ostrakine (Ὀστρακίνη) is drawn on the map as a small city between Rinokoloura and

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<sup>1510</sup> Iulius Honorius, *Cosmographia*, 6 (Riese, 1878, p. 26-27).

<sup>1511</sup> Cf. Miller, 1898, VI, p. 70-71 and map 4.

<sup>1512</sup> SB XXVI, 16607 (P.von Scherling G110), 10-12; cf. Noordegraaf, 1938, p. 274.

<sup>1513</sup> Hierokles, 727, 1 (Honigmann, 1939a, p. 46).

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Kasion<sup>1514</sup>. The sketch of the city is of the same size as that of Kasion, both somewhat smaller than that of Rinokoloura, and perhaps shows a church with a red roof<sup>1515</sup>.

Ca. 591-603 AD Georgios of Cyprus (**42**) mentions Ostrakine (Ὀστρακίνη) in the ἐπαρχία Αὐγουσταμνικῆς (province Augustamnica, sc. I) belonging to the dioikesis of Egypt. The place is listed between Rinokoloura on the one hand and Pentaschoinon and Kasion on the other hand<sup>1516</sup>.

Grossmann supposes that Ostrakine has been destroyed by the Persians in 619 AD<sup>1517</sup> and according to Clédat the city fell under the Arabs in 639 AD<sup>1518</sup>, but neither of this can be confirmed in the sources.

In the 7th century AD the Ravennas geographus mentions 'Ostracina' in two instances. First it is listed in 'Iudee Palestine' between Gaza and Rafah on the one hand and Kasion on the other, while Rinokoloura is strangely omitted (**43**). In a second list mentioning places from Libya to Syria Ostrakine is placed between Kasion and Rinokoloura (**44**)<sup>1519</sup>.

The Greek *Notitia Alexandrina* (**55-57**), found on a map of 1722 AD, is based upon an alphabetically arranged Latin bishops' list of 1661 AD, which goes back on a not alphabetical list of 1641 AD. The bishopric Ostrakine (Ostracina ... Episcopus Ostracinae ... [1641] - Ostracinae [1661] - Ὀστρακίνη [1722]) is situated in the province Augustamnica I<sup>1520</sup>.

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<sup>1514</sup> Medaba mosaic (IGLS XXI 2, 153), 128.

<sup>1515</sup> Donner, 1992, p. 78 describes the sketch as 'a basilica flanked by two towers', but this interpretation seems too hazardous.

<sup>1516</sup> Georgios of Cyprus, 692 (Honigmann, 1939a, p. 58). Jacoby, 1905, p. 47 and Fedalto, 1988, p. 606 erroneously consider the work of Georgios and its previous edition in *Notitia episcopatum*, I (Parthey, 1866) as two different works. The list of Georgios has been copied as a list of bishoprics in *Notitia episcopatum*, B, 1, 5 (Benešević, 1927, p. 69) (**58**) [Ὀστρακίνης].

<sup>1517</sup> Grossmann, Peter, s.v. Khirbat al-Filusiyyah, in Atiya, 1991, p. 1414; he apparently follows Clédat, 1916a, p. 10.11.13, who refers to a Persian destruction of Ostrakine in the 5th century AD and to other Persian actions in the 6th century AD, which are all only the figment of Clédat's imagination.

<sup>1518</sup> Clédat, 1916a, p. 7.10.13.

<sup>1519</sup> Ravennas geographus, 2, 14 (Pinder, 1860, p. 83, 8; Schnetz, 1940, p. 25) and 5, 7 (Pinder, 1860, p. 356, 7; Schnetz, 1940, p. 90), quoted by Guido, 93 (Pinder, 1860, p. 524, 9; Schnetz, 1940, p. 133) (**50**).

<sup>1520</sup> *Notitia Alexandrina*, 34 (Honigmann, 1961, p. 156-157); cf. Gelzer, 1893b, p. 25.

## *Arab period*

### **EL-ADAD**

#### **Topographical situation**

el-Adad, attested once in the early 9th century AD, lies along the road through the northern Sinai between el-Arish on the one hand and el-Baqqara and el-Farama on the other hand (1). Later in the 9th century AD it seems to have been replaced by el-Warrada, which possibly lay in the neighbourhood.

Waqidi (1) calls el-Adad a fortress, but there is some doubt about the value of this designation.

#### **Identifications**

el-Adad was probably created somewhere in the 7th or the 8th century AD as an Arab station on the southern road. It is not impossible that its name has been used anachronically by Waqidi to indicate one of the earlier Byzantine towns on the Mediterranean coast<sup>1521</sup>. Every link between el-Adad and this other place remains purely hypothetical, but it would be no wild guess if el-Adad was situated somewhere south of the old Ostrakine and was replaced later on by the station el-Warrada. Maqrizi indeed states that el-Warrada used to be situated on another spot<sup>1522</sup> and maybe he refers to the station of el-Adad. Since there is only testimony for the name el-Adad, one might even wonder whether it would be more correct to read the name of el-Warrada instead.

#### **Analysis of the sources**

About 640 AD Abdallah Yuqana, a lieutenant of Amr ibn el-As, came from Syria to Egypt; he left the desert and those fortresses that were upon the way to Egypt,

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<sup>1521</sup> Cf. Maspero, 1912, p. 135.

<sup>1522</sup> See s.v. el-Warrada.

## 5. Ostrakine

on his right hand and so passed el-Arish, el-Adad, el-Baqqara and el-Farama<sup>1523</sup>. This account ascribed to Waqidi (1) has not been considered very reliable and some of the problems involved have already been discussed<sup>1524</sup>. To resume some of the conclusions, because the manoeuvre of the lieutenant does not make much sense from a military point of view, the designation 'fortress' for el-Adad becomes suspicious. The name el-Adad may have been taken from an Arab itinerary of the 7th or 8th century AD to be used instead of the name of a Byzantine city in the original account of the expedition, possibly even without any geographical link between the Greek and the Arab name. Maybe the original account of the expedition mentioned Ostrakine or some other place, but this just remains speculation.

## EL-WARRADA

### Topographical situation

The road station el-Warrada, attested from the 9th till the 15th century AD, lies on the road from Syria to Egypt west of el-Arish and - according to the period and the track used - east of el-Tha'ama, el-Baqqara or el-Sawada. The distances in the sources differ. For Ibn Khurdadbeh (1) and Qudama (4) the place lies 18 miles or about 36 km west of el-Arish, which matches the 9 'liues' or about 36 km in the *Via* (20), while the *Devises* (19) gives 10 'liues' (ca. 40 km); the *Via* also knows the smaller station Bousser at 2 'liues' or about 8 km east of el-Warrada. The distance of 3 parasangs or about 18 km<sup>1525</sup> between el-Warrada and el-Arish, as stated in Yaqut (16), is unacceptable.

With regard to its western neighbours, Ibn Khurdadbeh (1) probably refers to the northern road and situates el-Warrada 18 miles or about 36 km east of el-Tha'ama. For Qudama (4), referring to the southern road, it lies at 20 miles or about 40 km east of el-Baqqara. The later itineraries mention el-Sawada as the first station west of el-Warrada, in the *Devises* (19) at 5 'liues' or about 20 km, in the *Via* (20) at 4 'liues' or about 16 km. Since the distances in the *Via* are a bit more accurate than those in the

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<sup>1523</sup> Waqidi (translated in Butler, 1978 [= 1902], p. 195-196, n. 3); cf. Maspero, 1912, p. 135.

<sup>1524</sup> See s.v. Itineraries.

<sup>1525</sup> Cf. Hinz, 1970, p. 62: one (Arab) parasang is about 6 km.

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*Devise*, el-Warrada probably lay about 36 km west of el-Arish, some 40 km east of el-Baqqara and in later periods about 16 km east of el-Sawada<sup>1526</sup>.

el-Warrada was apparently situated in a sandy area. For Bernardus (2) it is located in the middle of the desert and he stresses that nothing grows in its immediate neighbourhood. Ya'qubi (3) calls el-Warrada a place situated among the sand-hills and a similar setting is found till the 14th century AD in Yaqut (16), in the *Via* (20) and in Abu'l-Feda (24). At the same time, though, the place seems to lie in the neighbourhood of the sea, as stated by Idrisi (12) and as inferred from the Frankish raid of 1242/1243 AD (21). Although Qudama, mentioning the harbours of Rafah, el-Farama and el-Arish, does not know any harbour in el-Warrada in the 10th century AD<sup>1527</sup>, the place apparently had one in 1171 AD (15 / 32)<sup>1528</sup>.

el-Warrada was at least in the 9th and 10th centuries AD one of the more important places in the Djifar with a market, a mosque, baths and a garrison (18), which implies that the supply of water was not really problematic. From the 13th century AD on it had lost most of its importance (18). The name disappears in the late 15th century AD.

### Identifications

The distance of about 36 km between el-Arish and el-Warrada matches the one between Rinokoloura and Ostrakine in Roman sources and it is most likely that el-Warrada lay somewhere in the neighbourhood of Ostrakine at a distance of maximum a few kilometres<sup>1529</sup>. The Islamic settlement C121 found during the Israeli archaeological survey southwest of el-Felusiyyat with pottery mainly from the 8th-13th centuries AD most likely corresponds with the remains of the Mameluke city (1250-1517) excavated by the Egyptian Antiquities Organisation in the neighbourhood of el-Khuinat; there is for the time being little information published about this site, but it well matches the situation of el-Warrada<sup>1530</sup>.

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<sup>1526</sup> Discussing the map of d'Anville, 1766, p. 218, Fontaine, 1955, p. 78 incorrectly renders the unparalleled toponym 'Belba' between el-Farama and el-Qass as 'Varadeh (Ostracine)', while he does not mention the 'Varadeh' near Ras Straki.

<sup>1527</sup> Qudama (translated in de Goeje, 1889, p. 195).

<sup>1528</sup> Cf. Hartmann, 1910, p. 678.

<sup>1529</sup> Cf. Abel, 1938, II, p. 218.

<sup>1530</sup> Cf. Abd al-Malik, 1998, p. 176 and Cytryn-Silverman, 2001, p. 22.24. See s.v. el-Khuinat.



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Maqrizi (35) states that el-Warrada used to be situated on another spot and he might refer to the ancient Ostrakine or to the station of el-Adad. Waqidi indeed mentioned this place instead of the usual el-Warrada between el-Arish and el-Baqqara, so it is not impossible that el-Adad was the predecessor of el-Warrada and lay somewhere in its neighbourhood.

el-Warrada has also often been identified with Ostrakine itself<sup>1531</sup> or with the so-called harbour area of this town<sup>1532</sup>, but the site of el-Felusiyat lacks Arab archaeological remains. Since Ostrakine is often linked with Ras Straki, el-Warrada has also incorrectly been identified with this place<sup>1533</sup>. Clédat gratuitously suggested Umm el-Shuqafa as a possible location for the Arab city of el-Warrada<sup>1534</sup>.

The identifications of el-Warrada with one of the fortresses on the Karnak relief and in P.Anastasi<sup>1535</sup> and with the biblical toponym Bered<sup>1536</sup> are not based on any evidence.

Dalman identifies el-Warrada, Qabr el-Sa'i and Bir el-Generat<sup>1537</sup>, but his suggestions are not compatible with the geographical information about each place.

### Etymology

Maqrizi gives two different etymologies for the name el-Warrada, but probably neither of them is to be trusted. First the name el-Warrada is said to have been derived from the Arabic word [el-wrwd], 'the arrival' (32). Elsewhere Maqrizi states that the name comes from 'el-Warid' [el-wrid], 'the one who descends to the watering place' (33)<sup>1538</sup>.

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<sup>1531</sup> Cf. De-Vit, 1887, IV, p. 844; Clédat, 1910a, p. 224; 1916a, p. 7-11; 1916b, p. 22; 1920, p. 108.118; 1923b, p. 140.152.156 (cf. Vincent, 1922, p. 583; Gauthier, 1927, IV, p. 202-203 and 1928, V, p. 4); Fontaine, 1955, p. 78.238; Wilkinson, 1977, p. 149.167 (incorrectly mentioning el-Baqqara); Oren, 1982a, p. 46 and 1993a, p. 1171.

<sup>1532</sup> Abel, 1940, p. 60.231 and pl. 7.

<sup>1533</sup> See s.v. Ras Straki.

<sup>1534</sup> See s.v. Umm el-Shuqafa.

<sup>1535</sup> Clédat, 1923b, p. 156 (cf. Gauthier, 1927, IV, p. 202-203 and 1928, V, p. 4). See s.v. Ostrakine.

<sup>1536</sup> *Genesis*, 16, 14; cf. Socin, 1891, p. 82; see also Dalman, 1924, p. 53 and s.v. Bir el-Generat.

<sup>1537</sup> Dalman, 1924, p. 53. See s.v. Qabr el-Sa'i and s.v. Bir el-Generat.

<sup>1538</sup> Cf. Wehr, 1979, p.1243, s.v. wurūd, 'coming, arrival', and s.v. 'wird', 'watering place'; it is not clear why Vincent, 1922, p. 583 transcribes 'el-Yerūd'. Clédat, 1916a, p. 7-8 quite arbitrarily links the first etymology with the harbour of el-Warrada and the second one with the alleged canal in the neighbourhood of Ostrakine.

## 5. Ostrakine

Wright interprets the 'Albara' of Bernardus (2) as 'el-bir', 'the well'<sup>1539</sup>. He did apparently not know the full name el-Warrada, and his etymology is not to be accepted.

### **Analysis of the sources**<sup>1540</sup>

Maqrizi (32) describes how the Muslims (ca. 640 AD?), on their way from the Egyptian Delta to Palestine, converted the inhabitants of el-Warrada to the Islam<sup>1541</sup>. The name el-Warrada is here perhaps anachronically used to indicate the city of Ostrakine.

Maqrizi (34) mentions the presence of Arabs of the tribe of Gedam, called Qate', in the places el-Farama, el-Baqqara and el-Warrada. He knows their chef Gera and a certain Abd el-Aziz, who died in 820 AD<sup>1542</sup>.

About 844-848 AD Ibn Khurdadbeh (1) mentions the road from Rafah to el-Farama. From el-Arish it is 18 miles (ca. 36 km) to el-Warrada and further on to el-Tha'ama again 18 miles (ca. 36 km)<sup>1543</sup>.

The Frankish monk Bernardus (2) travelled about 870 AD from Tamiathis to Jerusalem. After Farama (el-Farama) the desert starts, in which there are two road stations, Albara and Albachara (el-Baqqara), where Christians and Muslims sell all things necessary for the trip through the desert. In their immediate neighbourhood nothing grows, but after Albachara a fertile land starts that goes all the way to Gaza<sup>1544</sup>:

sunt autem in medio itinere duo hospitia, unum quod vocatur Albara, alterum quod vocatur Albachara, in quibus negotia exercentur a Christianis et paganis emendi, que necessaria sunt iter agentibus. in eorum vero circuitu nichil preter quod dictum est, gignit terra. ab Albachara invenitur iam terra secunda usque ad civitatem Gazam.

'Along this route are two inns, one called Albara and the other Albachara, and travellers can buy what they need in the Christian and pagan shops there, but nothing grows in the land round them

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<sup>1539</sup> Wright, 1848, p. 25, n.; cf. Wilkinson, 1977, p. 142, n. 14, who also mentions a translation 'the Land', which I do not understand.

<sup>1540</sup> I have no information for the moment about the exact contents of Ibn Duqmaq (mentioned in Maspero, 1919, p. 230) (29). Quatremère, 1811, I, p. 53 also read the name el-Warrada in Maqrizi's chapter on the city of Bilbeis, but Bouriant, 1900, p. 526 translates the toponym as el-Marada.

<sup>1541</sup> Maqrizi (translated in Bouriant, 1900, p. 528), quoting the author of *The history of Damiette*; cf. Mouton, 2000, p. 57.64 and n. 28.43.

<sup>1542</sup> Maqrizi (translated in Bouriant, 1900, p. 628).

<sup>1543</sup> Ibn Khurdadbeh (translated in de Goeje, 1889, p. 58); cf. Marmardji, 1951, p. 103.

<sup>1544</sup> *Itinerarium Bernardi Monachi Franci*, 9 (Tobler, 1879, p. 314); cf. the translation in Wilkinson, 1977, p. 142 and the commentary p. 149.167, where he is not aware of any problem with regard to the order of the toponyms.

## 5. *Ostrakine*

apart from what we have mentioned. After Albachara the fertile land begins and stretches till the city of Gaza.'

The place Albara is probably to be identified with el-Warrada<sup>1545</sup>. This station would fit very well the description of a major trading centre in the middle of the northern Sinai, and even a phonetic link between the two names is not unlikely. The fact that Bernardus places Albara west of Albachara, is probably a mistake; in this respect also the fertile land did apparently not start east of Albachara, but east of Albara<sup>1546</sup>.

In 891 AD Ya'qubi (3) mentions the same road in reverse order: from el-Arish in the border region one goes to el-Baqqara, then to el-Warrada, a place situated among the sand-hills, and finally to el-Farama, the first city of Egypt<sup>1547</sup>. Ya'qubi apparently by mistake places el-Warrada west of el-Baqqara<sup>1548</sup>. Because Ya'qubi calls el-Farama the first city in Egypt for one coming from Palestine, it is sometimes stated that el-Warrada was situated near the Egyptian border<sup>1549</sup>; in the account of Ya'qubi, though, the border lies not between el-Warrada and el-Farama, but the phrasing implies that all the stations before el-Farama are villages or smaller towns and that el-Farama is the first real city.

Qudama (4), who wrote shortly after 929 AD, describes the route from Rafah to el-Farama. After the city of el-Arish the road bifurcates. The track goes south through the Djifar desert and reaches el-Warrada after 18 miles (ca. 36 km); the next station el-Baqqara lies 20 miles (ca. 40 km) further west<sup>1550</sup>.

Ibn Hauqal (5) in 978 AD mentions el-Warrada between el-Arish and el-Baqqara, and compares the road station with el-Arish<sup>1551</sup>. Idrisi (12) in 1154 AD copies Ibn Hauqal, but somewhat inaccurately omits el-Baqqara and adds that el-Warrada was situated near the sea<sup>1552</sup>.

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<sup>1545</sup> Against Figueras, 2000, p. 161.

<sup>1546</sup> Cf. Hartmann, 1910, p. 677; Abel, 1940, p. 239.

<sup>1547</sup> Ya'qubi (translated in Butler, 1978 [= 1902], p. 197, n. 1).

<sup>1548</sup> Cf. Hartmann, 1910, p. 677.

<sup>1549</sup> Butler, 1978 [= 1902], p. 197, n. 1 referring to Quatremère, 1811, I, p. 53.

<sup>1550</sup> Qudama (translated in de Goeje, 1889, p. 167).

<sup>1551</sup> Ibn Hauqal (translated in Gildemeister, 1883, p. 12); cf. Quatremère, 1811, I, p. 56; Maspero, 1919, p. 231.

<sup>1552</sup> Idrisi (translated in Gildemeister, 1885, p. 123); cf. Clédat, 1923b, p. 188. el-Warrada is also shown on a map found in some Idrisi manuscripts; cf. the large map in ms. Oxford 2 (Miller, 1986, p. 79) (13) and the small map (Miller, 1986, p. 54, no. 58 and p. 76, no. 74) (14). Clédat, 1916a, p. 8, n. 1 possibly implies that Idrisi - according to the translation of Jaubert, 1836, I, p. 340 (non vidi) - also states that the name el-Warrada is derived from the Arabic word for 'the arrival' (cf. (32)), but the passage does not occur in the translation of Gildemeister, 1885, p. 122-123.

## 5. Ostrakine

According to Muqaddasi, who wrote about 986 AD, there are seven towns residing under el-Farama, including el-Baqqara, el-Warrada and el-Arish (6)<sup>1553</sup>. In another context he mentions the region Djifar immediately west of Syria, with el-Farama as its capital and el-Baqqara, el-Warrada and el-Arish as chief towns in that region (7)<sup>1554</sup>. The inland road from el-Farama to el-Arish passes by el-Baqqara and el-Warrada, with each of the places at a distance of 'one stage' from the other (8)<sup>1555</sup>.

For el-Muhallabi (10), who wrote about 990 AD and is only preserved through quotations in the 13th century writer Yaqut (16), the most important towns of the Djifar are el-Arish, Rafah and el-Warrada<sup>1556</sup>. el-Warrada lies three parasangs (ca. 18 km) from el-Arish (11 / 17)<sup>1557</sup>.

el-Qadi el-Fadil (15), quoted in Maqrizi (32), visited el-Warrada at some point between 4 September and 3 October 1171 AD. He arrived in the morning, spent the night in the harbour of el-Warrada and then walked through the city. On the minaret of the mosque he could read the year 408 (1017/1018 AD) and the name of caliph el-Hakim<sup>1558</sup>.

In the 13th century AD Yaqut mentions an itinerary going through the Djifar via el-Arish, el-Warrada and Qatia, places where travellers in a number of shops can buy whatever they need (16)<sup>1559</sup>. In another context he describes el-Warrada. It used to be an important city with a market, a great mosque, baths and a garrison, but in his days the situation has changed. It is still only a station for caravans, somewhere between the dunes; there are some houses and there is still a minor mosque; on the

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<sup>1553</sup> Muqaddasi (translated in Collins, 1994, p. 51).

<sup>1554</sup> Muqaddasi (translated in Collins, 1994, p. 163). el-Arish, el-Warrada, el-Baqqara and el-Farama are also shown on a map found in a Muqaddasi manuscript; cf. the map in ms. Leiden 2 (Miller, 1986, pl. 2-3 [8, 3]) (9).

<sup>1555</sup> Muqaddasi (translated in Collins, 1994, p. 180-181); cf. Maspero, 1919, p. 230.

<sup>1556</sup> el-Muhallabi in Yaqut, *Mu'qam al-buldan* (Wüstenfeld, 1867, II, p. 90; translated in Toussoun, 1926, I, p. 101); cf. Wüstenfeld, 1864, p. 465; Hartmann, 1916b, p. 375; Gaudefroy-Demombynes, 1923, p. 6-7, n. 2.

<sup>1557</sup> el-Muhallabi in Yaqut, *Mu'qam al-buldan* (Wüstenfeld, 1868, III, p. 661; translated in Toussoun, 1926, I, p. 63); cf. Blochet, 1901, VIII, p. 542, n. 6; Gaudefroy-Demombynes, 1923, p. 6-7, n. 2; Marmardji, 1951, p. 138.

<sup>1558</sup> el-Qadi el-Fadil in Maqrizi (translated in Bouriant, 1900, p. 528); cf. Hartmann, 1910, p. 678.679; Clédat, 1916a, p. 10.13; Oren, 1982a, p. 46; Mouton, 2000, p. 72. For the Fatimid mosque, cf. the map in Abd al-Malik, 1998, p. 172.

<sup>1559</sup> Yaqut, *Mu'qam al-buldan* (Wüstenfeld, 1867, II, p. 90; translated in Toussoun, 1926, I, p. 101); cf. Wüstenfeld, 1864, p. 465; Gaudefroy-Demombynes, 1923, p. 6-7, n. 2. The reference to el-Warrada in el-Muhallabi (10), which was written in the same context, has already been discussed.

## 5. Ostrakine

market one can buy only food and the water tastes salty. The only notable feature is a pigeon tower used to send messages (18)<sup>1560</sup>.

In 1242/1243 AD some Franks arrived with their ships in el-Warrada, plundered the place and made captives. They continued on their raid to Qatia, where they were beaten (21)<sup>1561</sup>. The fact that the crusaders could reach el-Warrada with their ships, implies that the place might have had a harbour or lay near the sea.

In the second half of the 13th century the pigeon tower in el-Warrada was destroyed by Melek Naser Daud<sup>1562</sup>.

In *La devise des chemins de Babiloine* (19), written ca. 1289-1291 AD, a military itinerary goes from Rafah to Cairo. It mentions the station el-Warrada at 10 'liues' (ca. 40 km) west of el-Arish and at 5 'liues' (ca. 20 km) east of el-Sawada<sup>1563</sup>:

Item de Hariss iusques à la Oarrade liues .x.  
Item de la Oarrade iusques à la Soade liues .v.  
'Next from Harris to Oarrade 10 liues.  
Next from Oarrade to Soade 5 liues.'

A similar itinerary composed before 1289 AD is found in three different documents: the French *Via ad terram sanctam*, written ca. 1291-1293 (20); the Latin *Memoria terre sancte*, written ca. 1300-1321 (22); the Latin work of the Italian geographer Marino Sanudo (23), written in 1321 AD and based upon the *Memoria*. They also describe the road from Rafah to Cairo, each with some minor variants. They mention el-Warrada at 9 'liues' (ca. 36 km) west of el-Arish, with the smaller station Bousser at 2 'liues' (ca. 8 km) east of the place, and at 4 'liues' (ca. 16 km) east of el-Sawada. The road to el-Warrada is rather sandy; there is a good lodging place, plenty of water and the place has a good market<sup>1564</sup>:

(20) ... et vait a l'Aorade, et a sablon assés. La dite Aorade si est bone herberge et aigue assés et bone place de vendre et d'acheter; et si ne a de Bousser jusques a la Aorade que ll liues.

'... it leads to Aorade, and there is a lot of sand. In Aorade there is a good lodging place, plenty of water, and a good place for selling and buying; from Bousser to Aorade it is only 2 liues.'

(21) ...et vadit recte ad locum vocatum Carade, et habet satis littore. dicta satis Carade habet satis de herbagio et aqua satis et bona, et platea pro emere et vendere; et non distat Bousser ab Carade nisi duabus leucis.

<sup>1560</sup> Yaqut, *Mu'qam al-buldan* (Wüstenfeld, 1869, IV, p. 917; translated in Toussoun, 1926, I, p. 191); cf. Wüstenfeld, 1864, p. 466-467; Schefer, 1884, p. 94-95; Hartmann, 1916b, p. 375; Gaudefroy-Demombynes, 1923, p. 6-7, n. 2.

<sup>1561</sup> *History of the patriarchs of Alexandria* (mentioned in Blochet, 1904, X, p. 350-351, n. 2); cf. Clermont-Ganneau, 1906b, p. 199; Clédât, 1916a, p. 8 (who dates the events incorrectly in 1249 AD); Clédât, 1920, p. 108; Abel, 1940, p. 60; Oren, 1993b, p. 306; Figueras, 2000, p. 14.213.

<sup>1562</sup> Cf. Quatremère, 1845, I<I>?, p. 90-91, n. in Clédât, 1916a, p. 10, probably referring to a passage from Abu'l-Mahasin.

<sup>1563</sup> *La devise des chemins de Babiloine* (Michelant, 1882, p. 242).

<sup>1564</sup> *Via ad terram sanctam* (Kohler, 1904, p. 432); *Memoria terre sancte* (Kohler, 1904, p. 455); Marino Sanudo, 3, 14, 12 (Röhrich, 1898, p. 121).

## 5. Ostrakine

'... it leads straight to Carade, and there is a lot of sand. In Carade there is a good lodging place, plenty of good water, and a good market place for buying and selling; from Bouser to Aorade it is only two liues.'

(22) de Bouser usque Tarade leuce II; satis habet de littore, de herbacio et bona aqua et ibi platea.

'from Bouser to Tarade, 2 liues; there is a lot of sand, a lodging place, good water and a marketplace.'

According to Clédat the earthquake that destroyed Cairo in 1302 AD, also marked the end of el-Warrada<sup>1565</sup>, but this is not confirmed by any source and the place certainly still existed after that date.

Abu'l-Feda (24), who wrote in 1321 AD, states that el-Warrada is the second most important road station of the Djifar, after Qatia; in both places one finds habitation and some palm trees. Rafah, el-Arish and el-Warrada are at a distance of about one day of each other. el-Warrada is described as a kind of village in the middle of the sand, where couriers could change their horses<sup>1566</sup>.

el-Omari, who wrote ca. 1345 AD, lists the road stations between Cairo and Gaza, including el-Sawada, el-Warrada and Bir el-Qadi (25), while el-Warrada is also mentioned as one of the stations for the carrier pigeons (26) and for the so-called snow-dromedaries (27)<sup>1567</sup>. The same post stations on the same road are mentioned in Qalqashandi junior (1464 AD) (37), Khalil el-Zahiri (before 1468 AD) (38-40) and Abu'l-Mahasin (before 1470 AD) (41)<sup>1568</sup>. el-Omari adds that el-Warrada is a small place, with a mosque, built by sultan el-Malik el-Ashraf Khalil (1290-1293), in the middle of the road; it is quite comfortable to dwell there; the Mameluke secretary Fakhr el-Din, who died in 1331/1332 AD, built an hostelry (ribat), which has later been sold (25).

Ibn Battuta (28) tells in 1355 AD how he travelled in the summer of 1326 AD from Cairo to Gaza and passed through stations as el-Sawada, el-Warrada, el-Mutaileb and el-Arish; it is clear that the position of el-Mutaileb in this list is not to be trusted. Every station had a serai for travellers and their riding animals; outside that serai were a public watering place and a shop where all the necessary things could be bought<sup>1569</sup>.

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<sup>1565</sup> Cf. Clédat, 1916a, p. 10.13; Oren, 1982a, p. 46; Grossmann, Peter, s.v. Khirbat al-Filusiyyah, in Atiya, 1991, p. 1414; Oren, 1993a, p. 1171; Oren, 1993b, p. 306.

<sup>1566</sup> Abu'l-Feda, *Geography* (translated in Reinaud, 1848, II 1, p. 149-150).

<sup>1567</sup> el-Omari (translated in Hartmann, 1916a, p. 487.500.502).

<sup>1568</sup> Qalqashandi junior (mentioned in Hartmann, 1910, p. 689.691). Khalil el-Zahiri (translated in Gaulmier, 1950, p. 197.199.201). Abu'l-Mahasin, *Chronicle* (mentioned in Popper, 1955, I, p. 47); cf. Clédat, 1923b, p. 152.156.

<sup>1569</sup> Ibn Battuta (translated in Gibb, 1958, I, p. 71-72).

## 5. Ostrakine

Maqrizi in the first half of the 15th century AD probably refers to a 10th century source when he calls el-Warrada one of the five towns of the Djifar (**32-33**)<sup>1570</sup>. The old territory of el-Warrada is situated east of the eastern Delta city el-Salhiya; there are some traces of constructions, but palm trees are scarce (**32**)<sup>1571</sup>. He compares the road through the northern Sinai in use before and after 1106/1107 AD and states that el-Warrada used to be situated on a different spot (**35**)<sup>1572</sup>. el-Warrada is a point of reference to locate other places; so el-Qeis (el-Qass) is situated between el-Sawada and el-Warrada (**31**)<sup>1573</sup>, and Umm el-Arab is placed in the area between Qatia and el-Warrada (**35**)<sup>1574</sup>. The mosque there was open to services till after the year 700 (1300/1301 AD) (**32**)<sup>1575</sup>. Together with el-Farama and el-Arish the place was a 'ribat' or fortified post to protect the Islam against foreign attacks, probably of the crusaders called 'Franks' (**30**)<sup>1576</sup>. The name el-Warrada is said to have been derived from the Arabic word [el-wrwd], 'the arrival' (**32**)<sup>1577</sup>, but on another occasion Maqrizi states that the name comes from 'el-Warid' [el-wrid], 'the one who descends to the watering place' (**33**)<sup>1578</sup>.

It is hard to assess whether the name el-Warrada was still used by the locals in the following centuries. The name 'Varadeh' does occur on the map of d'Anville<sup>1579</sup> and is apparently known about 1799 AD<sup>1580</sup>, but this use is perhaps only due to an 18th century scholarly reconstruction based upon older itineraries.

## EL-MAKHLASA

### Topographical situation

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<sup>1570</sup> Maqrizi (translated in Bouriant, 1900, p. 528.544).

<sup>1571</sup> Maqrizi (translated in Bouriant, 1900, p. 528).

<sup>1572</sup> Maqrizi (translated in Bouriant, 1900, p. 669-670); cf. Clédat, 1916a, p. 10.

<sup>1573</sup> Maqrizi (translated in Bouriant, 1900, p. 520).

<sup>1574</sup> Maqrizi (translated in Bouriant, 1900, p. 670); followed by Ibn Iyas (translated in von Kremer, 1850a, p. 78) (**42**).

<sup>1575</sup> Maqrizi (translated in Bouriant, 1900, p. 528); cf. Clédat, 1916a, p. 10; for this mosque Maqrizi also quoted the testimony of el-Qadi el-Fadil (**15**) already mentioned,.

<sup>1576</sup> Maqrizi (translated in Bouriant, 1900, p. 76).

<sup>1577</sup> Maqrizi (translated in Bouriant, 1900, p. 528).

<sup>1578</sup> Maqrizi (translated in Bouriant, 1900, p. 544); cf. Vincent, 1922, p. 583 ('el-Yerîd').

<sup>1579</sup> d'Anville, 1766, p. 218 (cf. Maspero, 1919, p. 230).

<sup>1580</sup> Cf. Clédat, 1923b, p. 140-141, quoting a letter of Bonaparte to general Vial.

## 5. *Ostrakine*

The road station (?) el-Makhlasa is only attested for the 10th century AD. Maybe the place has been abandoned some time afterwards because of the decline of the coastal road.

According to Qudama (1) el-Makhlasa lies on the road along the coast at 21 miles or about 42 km west of el-Arish and at 24 miles or about 48 km east of el-Qasr. Muqaddasi (2) just locates the place at one 'stage' west of el-Arish and one 'stage' east of Deir el-Nasara, which is probably identical with el-Qasr.

### **Identifications**

The situation near the coast at about 42 km east of el-Arish corresponds roughly with an area some 6 km northwest of both Ostrakine and el-Warrada, but there are no elements that confirm an identification with an ancient or a modern site.

### **Analysis of the sources**

Qudama (1), who wrote shortly after 929 AD, describes the route from Rafah to el-Farama. After the city of el-Arish the road bifurcates. The track north along the coast reaches el-Makhlasa after 21 miles (ca. 42 km) and continues to el-Qasr, which lies 24 miles (ca. 48 km) more west<sup>1581</sup>.

The road from el-Farama to el-Arish along the coast, as described by Muqaddasi (2) about 986 AD, first passes Deir el-Nasara (el-Qasr?) and continues to el-Makhlasa, with every place at a distance of one 'stage' from the other<sup>1582</sup>.

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<sup>1581</sup> Qudama (translated in de Goeje, 1889, p. 167). Figueras, 2000, p. 55.202 incorrectly ascribes this passage to Ibn Khurdadbeh.

<sup>1582</sup> Muqaddasi (translated in Collins, 1994, p. 181); cf. Sprenger, 1864, p. 95; Hartmann, 1910, p. 678.



## *Modern period*

### **EL-FELUSIYAT**

Ancient name: Ostrakine

#### **Topographical situation**

el-Felusiyat lies at the southeastern edge of modern Sabkhat Bardawil, although its exact distance towards the lake is quite different on every map and is probably dependent on the season. The place is situated a few kilometres south of the Mediterranean<sup>1583</sup>, some 6 km north of the present highway<sup>1584</sup>, and some 36 km west of el-Arish<sup>1585</sup>, according to Ball at 31° 08' north latitude and 33° 27' eastern longitude<sup>1586</sup>.

#### **Archaeological finds**

In 1910 Jean Clédat visited el-Felusiyat and in 1914 he did some excavations in the fortress and in two churches. In 1976-1977 a team from the Israeli northern Sinai expedition directed by Eliezer Oren did a survey in the area and excavated a third church<sup>1587</sup>. A detailed map of all the archaeological remains involved is lacking and it is difficult to get a general view of the extension of the city, including its hamlets and cemeteries, mainly due to the fact that most of the area is flooded now<sup>1588</sup>. In the northern part of the inland town most attention went to the fortified

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<sup>1583</sup> Clédat, 1916a, p. 6 ('2 km', probably referring to the northern part of the town); Oren, 1993b, p. 305 ('some 3 km').

<sup>1584</sup> Figueras, 2000, p. 14.

<sup>1585</sup> The distances differ: about 30 km (Ovadiah, 1978, p. 140, n. 25; Oren, 1993a, p. 1171; Oren, 1993b, p. 305); 34 km (Abel, 1940, p. 231); 36 km (Ball, 1942, p. 154).

<sup>1586</sup> Ball, 1942, p. 105. TAVO Register, 1994, p. 512.1211 gives the approximate coordinates 31° 00' / 33° 20' and 31° 00' / 33° 25'.

<sup>1587</sup> Cf. Clédat, 1910a, p. 220-224.232 and the map p. 221, fig. 5; Clédat, 1916a, p. 6-32 and the map p. 7, fig. 1; Vincent, 1922, p. 583-589; Oren, 1977c, p. 72-75 (Hebrew); Oren, 1978a, p. 81-87 (Hebrew); Oren, 1980b, p. 146-151 (Hebrew); Oren, 1981c, p. 76-77.90; Oren, 1982a, p. 25-26.36-44; Clédat, 1991, p. 6; Oren, 1993a, p. 1171-1173.1394-1396; Oren, 1993b, p. 305-314; Valbelle, 1999a, p. 76 (referring to some unpublished inscriptions in the archives of Clédat).

<sup>1588</sup> The Israeli geological report of David Neev, mentioned in Oren, 1982a, p. 25, states that el-Felusiyat was flooded 'at the end of the Byzantine period' because of tectonic movements, while Oren, 1981b, p. 53 dates the event 'in the early Islamic period'; it is a pity that more details about this report

## 5. Ostrakine

monastery (A150/A) and the two churches (A151 and A152/A) immediately northeast of it. North and northeast of them (A150/B, A154 and A153) were other important buildings, an industrial quarter and an agora, while the habitation was probably extending for more than 2 km to the southwest. Some 2 km north of the monastery are another church and some buildings; according to Clédat this was the harbour area of the site, but - except for its position closer to the sea - he did not provide any positive evidence that the place indeed was a harbour<sup>1589</sup>. Clédat thinks that most monuments in el-Felusiyyat were built from Iustinianus (527-565) on, whereas Vincent dates them to the late 5th and the early 6th century AD and Oren prefers a date in the 5th century AD.

The fortress (A150/A)<sup>1590</sup>, built in nummulite limestone, has a maximum diameter of some 275 m. It was surrounded by a pentagonal wall, flanked with towers. Under the Byzantine building remains were found of an older Roman construction, built on a different plan. Only a small part near the western wall was excavated, which brought to light a series of nineteen rectangular chambers, whose purpose is not clear. Some of them have niches or wall closets, often decorated with pillars or crosses. Some walls are embellished, and so room no. 2 contains a painted decoration showing a cross, encircled by a medallion, with Α - Ω. [Ι](ησοῦ)ς [Χ](ριστό)ς, 'Alpha (and) omega - Jesus Christ', written between the arms of the cross (1)<sup>1591</sup>. In that same room a fragmentary inscription on a fragment of red porphyry is found, consisting of three symbols or letters (2)<sup>1592</sup>. Among the smaller finds in those chambers was also a plaster amphora stopper with the word NH[K]A written

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are lacking, since I am inclined to link this flooding with the creation of lake Bardawil in 1169 AD. See s.v. Sabkhat Bardawil.

<sup>1589</sup> Clédat, 1916a, p. 8 states that his excavations showed a Byzantine or maybe even a Roman harbour, but since he does not mention anything further in his report, he probably refers to his alleged harbour area.

<sup>1590</sup> Clédat, 1910a, p. 222; Clédat, 1916a, p. 12-20, including fig. 2-12, and pl. 1; Leclercq, Henri, s.v. Ostracine, in *DACL*, 1937, XIII 1, col. 56-59; Abel, 1940, p. 231; Oren, 1981c, p. 76.90; Oren, 1982a, p. 38; Oren, 1993a, p. 1171. Clédat, 1916a, p. 11.15 states that Iustinianus built many monasteries combined with fortresses in the Sinai and at the entrance of Egypt, and he identifies this building with one of them; Clédat refers to a passage in Eutybios (translated in Breydy, 1985, II, p. 88-89 and Pirone, 1987, p. 293-295) where in fact only a fortified monastery at Mount Sinai and in Raya (Raithou) and a church in Qolzum (Klyasma - Suez) are mentioned (cf. Mayerson, 1978, p. 33-38), and no link has to be made with the northern Sinai.

<sup>1591</sup> Clédat, 1916a, p. 17 and fig. 5; Leclercq, Henri, s.v. Ostracine, in *DACL*, 1937, XIII 1, col. 57; Oren, 1982a, p. 38; Verreth, 1997, p. 113. For a similar inscription, cf. *SEG*, XXXVII, 1987 [= 1990], no. 1502 (see Patrick, 1987, p. 274 and fig. 4).

<sup>1592</sup> Clédat, 1916a, p. 20 and fig. 10; Leclercq, Henri, s.v. Ostracine, in *DACL*, 1937, XIII 1, col. 59, who tentatively identifies one of the signs with a chrismon or chi-rho; Verreth, 1997, p. 113.

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between the arms of a cross (3)<sup>1593</sup>. Clédat identified the building as a fortified monastery, but the ivory pin, the glass bracelet and the bone statue of a woman dancer found in rooms no. 2, 6 and 9 are clear indications that - despite the Christian decoration - the place was probably not or at least not entirely inhabited by monks<sup>1594</sup>.

Oren mentions the remains of possibly another monastery in el-Felusiyyat, not far from the smaller basilica, but since he did not excavate it, more details are lacking<sup>1595</sup>.

The so-called large south church (A151)<sup>1596</sup> is 62 m long and 22 m broad. It consists of a basilica with three naves and a narthex, an atrium and some chambers west of the atrium, among which a cistern (also incorrectly considered a baptistery). In a small room under the stairs going to the cistern some coins have been found of the emperors Anastasius (491-518) and Iustinianus (527-565). The church has been decorated with Prokonnesian marble and with Corinthian capitals dated by Clédat to the time of Iustinianus. One of them has on top the stonemason's mark ΑΗ (4)<sup>1597</sup>. Under the floor of the side naves some graves have been found.

In a collapsed wall immediately southwest of the church some fifty Greek ostraka turned up, all written by the same person and often mentioning the place name Ὀστρακίνη. They were brought to the Museum of Cairo, but - as far as I know - have never been published<sup>1598</sup>.

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<sup>1593</sup> Clédat, 1916a, p. 20 and fig. 11; Leclercq, Henri, s.v. Ostracine, in *DACL*, 1937, XIII 1, col. 59; Verreth, 1997, p. 113. It is not clear whether Clédat wanted to restore the formula  $\nu\kappa\tilde{\alpha}$ , 'he overcomes' (cf. Kaufmann, 1917, p. 142 and n. 4; Heinen, 1982, p. 675-701 and especially p. 682), or if he had something else in mind.

<sup>1594</sup> Cf. Nesbitt, 1999, p. 5-6 (unpublished), who tentatively identifies the constructions as a xenodocheion or guesthouse for merchants and looks for a parallel in Nessana. Grossmann, Peter, s.v. Khirbat al-Filusiyyah, in Atiya, 1991, p. 1414, on the other hand, considers the place a late Roman camp or strong fortress, which he dates to the early 6th century AD.

<sup>1595</sup> Oren, 1982a, p. 38; Figueras, 2000, p. 212.

<sup>1596</sup> Clédat, 1916a, p. 12.21-27, including fig. 13-17, and pl. 2; Vincent, 1922, p. 584; Leclercq, Henri, s.v. Ostracine, in *DACL*, 1937, XIII 1, col. 59-64; Abel, 1940, p. 231; Katchatrian, 1962, p. 85 and p. 2, fig. 9; Nussbaum, 1965, I, p. 92.116.411.425 and II, p. 36, fig. III, 3; Oren, 1982a, p. 39.41; Grossmann, Peter, s.v. Khirbat al-Filusiyyah, in Atiya, 1991, p. 1414 (dated ca. 500-550 AD); Oren, 1993a, p. 1171; Bonnet, 1998, p. 53-54, with fig.; Sodini, 1998, p. 122.

<sup>1597</sup> Clédat, 1916a, p. 26; Leclercq, Henri, s.v. Ostracine, in *DACL*, 1937, XIII 1, col. 63 (who reads AF, which is less likely); Verreth, 1997, p. 113-114.

<sup>1598</sup> Clédat, 1916a, p. 27; cf. Vincent, 1922, p. 583; Preisendanz, 1933, p. 263; Leclercq, Henri, s.v. Ostracine, in *DACL*, 1937, XIII 1, col. 63; Abel, 1940, p. 231; Figueras, 1988, p. 60; Oren, 1993a, p. 1171 and 1993b, p. 307; Verreth, 1997, p. 114; Figueras, 2000, p. 53.62.211. el-Felusiyyat is not listed in the index made by Engelbach, 1931 of the Egyptian sites from which the Museum of Cairo contains antiquities.

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Some 70 m north of that church Oren found a smaller basilica (site A152/A)<sup>1599</sup>, probably built in the 5th century AD and possibly before 427 AD. It was 33 m long and 20 m broad and was preceded by an atrium, but did not have a narthex. The church was decorated with Corinthian capitals and the area around the altar was paved with carved marble slabs. The marble seems to be imported from Asia Minor, Greece and Italy, giving a clear indication of the wealth of the inhabitants. In the rectangular room in the continuation of the southern nave lay the reliquary of a saint or a martyr, while the chamber behind the central apsis was probably a baptistery. In a later phase the atrium underwent numerous changes and then may have served as barracks or as a place of refuge for the local population. Two gold coins of the emperors Heraclius (613-641) and Constantinus IV (668-685) were found together on the spot and the latter coin is an indication that the change took place only after the Arab invasion of 640 AD. This implies that the building was respected as a place of worship for more than thirty years under Arab rule. The church was destroyed by fire possibly only in the course of the campaign of the Umayyad caliph Marwan I in 684 AD<sup>1600</sup>.

Northeast of the monastery are three elevations in the marshes, visited by Clédat in 1910. The first one (site A154 and / or site A153?)<sup>1601</sup> contains two rectangular buildings, of which the first is gratuitously called a small fortress by Clédat. The second building, which is quite large, is built in brick, but parts of the floor are in marble and Clédat found there two fragments of marble sculptures apparently from the Imperial period, afterwards brought to the Ismailia Museum. Among marble architectural elements also fragments of black granite appear, including parts of a statue, and the whole looks an important building. Locals told that there were also graves, but Clédat did not find any trace of them. The second elevation (site A152/A, sc. the small south church?)<sup>1602</sup> contains constructions in stone and brick, with a lot of fragments of white, green and red marble scattered

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<sup>1599</sup> Oren, 1978a, p. 81-87 (Hebrew); Oren, 1980b, p. 146-151, including fig. 15.28-29 (Hebrew); Oren, 1981c, p. 76-77.90; Oren, 1982a, p. 41-44; BIA, 1991, II, p. 30; Oren, 1993a, p. 1172-1173; Oren, 1993b, p. 308-314, with fig.; Oked, 1996, p. 165-175, with fig. (on the amphorae and bowls found at the site); Arthur, 1998, p. 193-212, including fig. 3-9 (on the amphorae found at the site); Bonnet, 1998, p. 53-54, with fig.; Sodini, 1998, p. 122; Figueras, 2000, p. 145; Cytryn-Silverman, 2001, p. 21. The church has been examined again in November 1992 by J.-P. Sodini and Mohamed Abd el-Samie, but their findings have not yet been published; cf. Leclant, 1994, p. 371.

<sup>1600</sup> For this campaign, cf. Mouton, 2000, p. 59.66-67.

<sup>1601</sup> Clédat, 1910a, p. 222-223 and 1916a, p. 12.

<sup>1602</sup> Clédat, 1910a, p. 223.

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around. On the third elevation (site A151, sc. the large south church?)<sup>1603</sup> Clédat noticed the remains of a building some 30 to 40 m long, preceded by a portico; he identified it as a temple. He found some blocs in pink granite and a lot of fragments of marble columns, while similar ones are said to have been transported to el-Arish. Behind the sanctuary lies a limestone well with a 2 m diameter.

Around the fortified monastery and extending to the southwest Clédat saw a lot of traces of habitation, which he considered - with all reservation - the place of the Arab city<sup>1604</sup>. The survey of Oren, though, does not mention any Arab remains, but shows that the Roman-Byzantine settlement extended over an area of some 2 km<sup>2</sup>. Northeast of the fortress an industrial site of the 3rd and 4th century AD was found (A150/B), in which metal and glass objects were produced. On top of it probably a residential quarter was built, inhabited from the 4th to the early 7th century AD. Among the numerous Late Roman finds is a fragment of a bone pyxis decorated with the figure of Aphrodite. Trial excavations revealed that the earliest occupational strata are from the 1st to 2nd centuries AD<sup>1605</sup>.

Some 2 km north of the fortified monastery and at about the same distance south of the Mediterranean, Clédat saw the remains of another part of the same city, which he called the harbour area. This place is apparently identical with the nameless 'city in ruins' that Clédat noticed already in 1910, some 20 minutes (i.e. ca. 1 km) south of the village of el-Zaraniq and about 2 km east of el-Felusiyat. These extensive ruins were partly built in nummulite limestone of bad quality, whose quarries were mainly situated more to the south and especially between el-Khuinat and Bir el-Abd. The stones were being removed at the time for reuse in Port-Said. In a large construction he saw a column of white limestone and another of pink granite. A lot of constructions were in bricks or in a combination of stone and brick, while the walls in general were not very well built. Clédat ascribes the whole to 'une bonne époque', which probably implies a Roman or Byzantine date<sup>1606</sup>.

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<sup>1603</sup> Clédat, 1910a, p. 223-224.

<sup>1604</sup> Clédat, 1910a, p. 222 and 1916a, p. 12.

<sup>1605</sup> Oren, 1982a, p. 25; Oren, 1993a, p. 1172; Oren, 1993b, p. 308 (who locates the site incorrectly west of the monastery); Oked, 1996, p. 165-175 (on the amphorae and bowls found on the spot).

<sup>1606</sup> Clédat, 1910a, p. 220.

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The most important building there excavated in 1914 is the so-called north church<sup>1607</sup>, some 35 m long and 11 m broad. It consists of a basilica with three naves, a narthex and an atrium, while the constructions west of the atrium are lost. It has a fine Prokonnesian marble decoration and some parts of geometric mosaics have been preserved. Vincent considers the three-lobed room in the continuation of the central apsis the baptistery, knowing some Syrian parallels for its form, but Sodini suggests an identification as a synthronon, where a holy source or a relic could be visited.

West of this church Clédat examined a large construction containing a geometric mosaic<sup>1608</sup>, but the place had been used some years before as a stone quarry and there was not much left of it.

North of the church, on site A153, which is called *Taba Felusiyat*<sup>1609</sup>, excavations revealed a commercial centre or agora from the Late Roman period including a street paved with stone slabs and probably flanked by shops. The area was destroyed by fire in the 4th century AD. Possibly some residential houses were built on the spot from the 4th-5th century AD, but on top of them a huge building or a platform with a massive tower was built at an uncertain date<sup>1610</sup>.

Lifshitz published an inscription on a fragment of a marble fencing of a church, said to be found near lake Bardawil and then in the private collection Dayan (5)<sup>1611</sup>:

[ - ὑπὲρ σωτηρίας τῶν καρποφορησάντων ΑΠΙ  
'[ - for the] salvation of the people who bore fruit ... [ ]'

The editor notices that the verb καρποφορεῖν, 'to bear fruit', is very often used for dedications of churches. It is not impossible that the inscription comes from one of the churches of el-Felusiyat.

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<sup>1607</sup> Clédat, 1916a, p. 12.27-32, including fig. 18-21, and pl. 3-4; Vincent, 1920, p. 102-103, including fig. 16; Vincent, 1922, p. 584-589, including fig. 1-2; Leclercq, Henri, s.v. Ostracine, in *DACL*, 1937, XIII 1, col. 64-70; Abel, 1940, p. 231; Grabar, 1943, pl. 6, 4 and 1946, I, p. 119.385.445.497-498 and p. 602, fig. 51; Katchatrian, 1962, p. 84 and p. 6, fig. 48; Nussbaum, 1965, I, p. 93 and II, p. 36, fig. III, 4; Oren, 1982a, p. 39; Godlewski, W., s.v. Architectural elements of churches. Baptistery, in Atiya, 1991, p. 197; Grossmann, Peter, s.v. Khirbat al-Filusiyyah, in Atiya, 1991, p. 1414; Oren, 1993a, p. 1171; Bonnet, 1998, p. 53-54, with fig.; Sodini, 1998, p. 122.124.

<sup>1608</sup> Clédat, 1916a, p. 12.27.

<sup>1609</sup> Eliezer Oren does not know the origin of that name. Perhaps the element 'Taba' is to be linked with the Arabic word 'tabar', 'ruin' (cf. Wehr, 1979, p. 108), but this is a mere guess.

<sup>1610</sup> Oren, 1982a, p. 25-26; 1993a, p. 1172.1396; 1993b, p. 308; Oked, 1996, p. 165 and a personal communication by Sarit Oked.

<sup>1611</sup> Lifshitz, 1971a, p. 154.160, no. 17 and 1971c, p. 160; Robert, BE, 1971, p. 528, no. 698 and 1972, p. 510, no. 573; Verreth, 1997, p. 114.

## Identifications

Since the discovery of el-Felusiyat by Clédat in 1910 the place has almost unanimously been identified with the Roman and Byzantine city of Ostrakine. Only Lesquier apparently preferred the old identification with Straki<sup>1612</sup> and Maspero rejected the identification with el-Felusiyat, because he located Ostrakine in el-Zaraniq<sup>1613</sup>, but his arguments are not acceptable and anyway he fails to offer an alternative explanation for the extensive ruins at el-Felusiyat. Indeed, the distance of some 36 km between Rinokoloura and Ostrakine in the Roman and Byzantine itineraries matches quite well the distance between el-Arish and el-Felusiyat. Also the probable foundation of Ostrakine in the late 1st century BC corresponds with the absence of any Hellenistic remains at the site<sup>1614</sup> and there are no reasons to reject the identification.

No traces of any Arab occupation have thus far been recorded<sup>1615</sup>, which makes it quite difficult to locate the station el-Warrada of the Arab sources in el-Felusiyat, although it was certainly situated within a radius of some kilometres of the site. Because el-Warrada at least for some time in its history had a harbour, Abel identified the place with the northern part of el-Felusiyat, which Clédat called the harbour area, but the absence of an Arab occupational level also there enfeebls this suggestion<sup>1616</sup>.

Clédat's location in el-Felusiyat of one of the fortresses on the Karnak relief and in P.Anastasi is gratuitous<sup>1617</sup>.

## Etymology

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<sup>1612</sup> Lesquier, 1918, p. 401 and map; on his map, though, Lesquier also mentions el-Felusiyat, a reference probably due to the work of Clédat, while the mention of Ras Straki (Ostrakine) has not been corrected accordingly [a similar inaccuracy on the same map is the opposition Ras el-Burun (Kasion) versus el-Qels (Ekregma?)]. See also s.v. Ras Straki.

<sup>1613</sup> Maspero, 1919, p. 230, n. 1. See also s.v. el-Zaraniq.

<sup>1614</sup> Cf. Clédat, 1916a, p. 10 (cf. Abel, 1940, p. 232, n. 1). When Vincent, 1922, p. 583, Figueras, 1988, p. 59-60 and Évieux, 1995, p. 33 speak of a Hellenistic Ostrakine or of a military fortress around which the new settlement developed, this does not seem confirmed by any literary or archaeological evidence.

<sup>1615</sup> Cf. Clédat, 1916a, p. 13.

<sup>1616</sup> See s.v. el-Warrada.

<sup>1617</sup> Clédat, 1923b, p. 155-156 (cf. Gauthier, 1927, IV, p. 202-203 and 1928, V, p. 4). See s.v. Ostrakine.

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Clédat states that the name el-Felusiyat means 'shell' ('coquille') and is a translation of the Greek name *Ostrakine*<sup>1618</sup>. A name containing the element 'shell' is not surprising for a site near a lake and at a few kilometres from the sea, but it seems highly unlikely that both names are etymologically linked, since the name el-Felusiyat, which is mentioned only for the first time by Clédat's guides in 1910, is probably a local creation of the 19th century AD. The name *Ostrakine* - which refers to 'potsherds' rather than to 'shells' - seems to have disappeared after the 7th century AD in the regional onomastics, the city being replaced - at least for some centuries - by the nearby el-Warrada.

Wagner on the other hand translates the name el-Felusiyat as 'the coins' ('les pièces de monnaie')<sup>1619</sup>. It was probably given by locals because of the (Roman and Byzantine) coins one could find on the spot.

## **BARASA EL-M'KHEIZIN - BARASA AICHA**

### **Topographical situation**

At the northeastern end of Sabkhat Bardawil lies a low, marshy area, known under the names Barasa el-M'kheizin and - more to the north - Barasa Aicha, in which el-Khuinat is situated<sup>1620</sup>.

### **Identifications**

Sicard identifies 'Bereicat' (Barasa Aicha) with the island Elbo (Ἐλβώ) mentioned by Herodotos as the place in the Delta swamps where the blind king Anysis was hiding for the Ethiopians<sup>1621</sup>. Perhaps Sicard located Elbo in the northern Sinai because he saw a link between the names Anysis and Ienysos<sup>1622</sup>, but in fact Elbo has to be looked for in the northern Delta.

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<sup>1618</sup> Clédat, 1916a, p. 7; followed by Leclercq, Henri, s.v. *Ostracine*, in *DACL*, 1937, XIII 1, col. 54. See also s.v. *Ostrakine*.

<sup>1619</sup> Wagner, 1993a, p. 11.

<sup>1620</sup> Clédat, 1910a, p. 228.

<sup>1621</sup> Herodotos, 2, 140, 1; Sicard, 1982 [= 1722], III, p. 99.180; rightly rejected by d'Anville, 1766, p. 100; cf. Lloyd, 1988, III, p. 99.

<sup>1622</sup> See s.v. *Ienysos*.



## Etymology

According to Sicard the name 'Bereicat' is the diminutive of 'birket' (i.e. 'lake')<sup>1623</sup>, but this interpretation does not match the later spelling of the ending of the name. While the map of the Description (1822) has the name 'Berket Aich', the Beduin instead of 'birket' or 'baraka' more often use the word 'barasa' (i.e. 'dry, sandy ground')<sup>1624</sup>. Both indications fit well the marshy region full of sandy dunes. In the Description the name is rather incorrectly ascribed to some ruins, probably referring to the site of el-Khuinat<sup>1625</sup>.

## EL-KHUINAT

### Topographical situation

el-Khuinat lies some 2,5 km southwest of el-Felusiyat, at the end of present Sabkhat Bardawil, in the swampy area called Barasa Aicha<sup>1626</sup>. Although Paoletti locates the well el-Khuinat quite acceptably at some 35 km west of el-Arish, its relative position on his map towards Ras el-Qasrun and lake el-Zaraniq is not to be trusted<sup>1627</sup>.

In the area between Bir el-Abd in the west and el-Khuinat in the east lie some quarries of nummulite limestone of bad quality, used for some constructions in the el-Felusiyat region<sup>1628</sup>.

### Archaeological finds

About 1879 Salvator noticed some ruins named 'Berj el-Hashish - the grass tracts' immediately near Sabkhat Bardawil. Figueras tentatively suggests that these remains correspond with el-Khuinat or with the site of el-Warrada<sup>1629</sup>.

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<sup>1623</sup> Sicard, 1982 [= 1722], III, p. 99.

<sup>1624</sup> Cf. Wehr, 1979, p. 67, s.v. birka: 'pond, small lake; puddle, pool'; Clédat, 1910a, p. 229-230, n. 1: '[brša] - [brš(t)], 'terrain sabloneux, aride'.

<sup>1625</sup> Description, 1830, XVIII, p. 174; Clédat, 1910a, p. 228 and p. 228-230, n. 1; Fontaine, 1955, p. 95.

<sup>1626</sup> Cf. Clédat, 1910a, p. 228-230; Gardiner, 1920, pl. 13; Abel, 1939, p. 532; Oren, 1993b, p. 313; Figueras, 2000, p. 62, n. 104 gives the distance as 'about two miles', but p. 200 more correctly as 'some 2 km'.

<sup>1627</sup> Paoletti, 1903, pl.

<sup>1628</sup> Cf. Clédat, 1910a, p. 220.

## 5. *Ostrakine*

In 1910 Clédat saw on an elevation a square building, with sides some 65 m long and rounded corners, built in nummulite limestone, while also some fragments of marble were visible. Within the wall was a rectangular court with some adjoining constructions north and south of it. Clédat's identification as a fortress is not convincing. Southeast of this construction lies a small limestone construction containing a pink granite millstone, probably the remains of an oil mill. Some 100 m east of the so-called fortress Clédat found a rather enigmatic group of one square building and four circular constructions, lying two by two at each side of the building. North of the elevation are traces of a lot of other constructions, while further to the north an extended cemetery starts. It had mainly rectangular, stone graves, but some circular constructions are probably the remains of round mausoleums. Clédat dates the whole site to the Roman period<sup>1630</sup>. Some 65 years later also Oren examined the large necropolis (site A149), which yielded dozens of cist graves built of sandstone slabs and marked by inscribed tombstones, which are still unpublished<sup>1631</sup>.

The Israeli archaeological survey noticed the Islamic settlement C121 southwest of el-Felusiyat with pottery mainly from the 8th-13th centuries AD<sup>1632</sup>. Most likely this is the place in the neighbourhood of el-Khuinat where archaeologists of the Egyptian Antiquities Organisation did some excavations in 1992. It is not clear how this site relates to the findings of Clédat. The remains of a city of the Mameluke period (1250-1517 AD) were found, including a large rectangular, north-south oriented mosque with thick walls and arched ceilings, the southeast city wall and some houses and wells. One of the houses contained a kiblah, which indicates the direction of prayer, and a grain silo<sup>1633</sup>.

Some Christian funerary steles<sup>1634</sup> with similar forms and formulas are known in different collections and museums, probably originating from the northern Sinai

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<sup>1629</sup> Salvator, 1879 (in the English edition: 1881, p. 26-27) quoted in Figueras, 2000, p. 14.

<sup>1630</sup> Clédat, 1910a, p. 228-230.232 with a map p. 229, fig. 7 and a sketch of the millstone p. 230, fig. 8; cf. Clédat, 1920, p. 110-111; 1924, p. 60; Valbelle, 1999a, p. 76. el-Khuinat is probably the site of the ruins indicated on the map of the Description at the toponym 'Berket Aich' (cf. Clédat, 1910a, p. 228 and Fontaine, 1955, p. 95; see s.v. Barasa el-M'kheizin and Barasa Aicha).

<sup>1631</sup> Oren, 1981c, p. 90, 1982a, p. 45 and 1993a, p. 1173.

<sup>1632</sup> Cf. Cytryn-Silverman, 2001, p. 20.22.24; cf. p. 33-34, map 2-3.

<sup>1633</sup> BIA, 1992, VI, p. 32 (incorrectly dating the find to the Byzantine period) and p. 33; Abd al-Malik, 1998, p. 173.176 and the map p. 172.

<sup>1634</sup> Incorrectly called 'sarcophagi' in BIA, 1991, II, p. 30.

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area. They are all made in kurkar stone, a kind of sea sand stone rich with shells, and their most remarkable feature is that the upper portion of the tombstones is carved roughly in the shape of a human head and that facial features are engraved and emphasized with red paint, probably representing the deceased. None of the inscriptions contains an actual date, so they are only roughly dated to the late 4th and the early 5th century AD (Figueras), to the 5th century AD (Ovadia) or to the Byzantine period in general (Bingen in SEG). Before describing every stele separately, it is necessary to discuss the information about their provenance. Lifshitz published four funerary steles from the Moshe Dayan collection said to be found in the northern Sinai between lake Bardawil and el-Arish, and on a photo published by Ornan two other steles from that same collection are shown<sup>1635</sup>. Applebaum located them more specifically in 'Yamat. Bardewil, North Sinai', but the toponym Yamat is not known to me<sup>1636</sup>. Ovadia published six similar steles from the Pinkus collection in Jaffa; their provenance is not recorded, but comparing them with the steles of Lifshitz he thinks that they were found near Sabkhat Bardawil. Ovadia still knows seven other steles in the Rockefeller Museum in Jerusalem, which were purchased in Gaza<sup>1637</sup>. It is impossible to be sure whether all those steles in fact came from the same cemetery, but since Figueras and Oren know similar fragments from el-Khuinat, they suggest that all steles came from that necropolis<sup>1638</sup>.

The inscription usually contains three different elements: (1) the encouragement formulas  $\epsilon\upsilon\mu\omicron\iota\rho\epsilon\iota$  ('be blest with good share!') and  $\epsilon\upsilon\psi\upsilon\chi\epsilon\iota$  ('be of good courage!' or 'be of high spirit!'); (2) the name of the deceased; (3) the consolation formula  $\omicron\upsilon\delta\epsilon\iota\varsigma \acute{\alpha}\theta\acute{\alpha}\nu\alpha\tau\omicron\varsigma$  ('nobody is immortal'). In two instances the name of the deceased is omitted or placed after the consolation formula. The inscription is often accompanied by crosses or other symbols. I will give a brief survey of the twelve published steles, alphabetically ordered by the name of the deceased.

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<sup>1635</sup> Lifshitz, 1971a, p. 157-161 and 1971b, p. 24-26 (Hebrew); Ornan, 1986, pl. (non vidi); cf. Robert, BE, 1971, p. 528, no. 698. These steles apparently returned to Egypt in 1993-1994; cf. BIA, 1993, VIII, p. 34.

<sup>1636</sup> Applebaum, 1978, p. 144 (apparently translating Lifshitz, 1971b, p. 24 (Hebrew)); the place of origin is rendered in SEG, XXVIII, 1978 [= 1982], p. 405 as 'North Sinai, Yamat, Bardewil'. Is Yamat identical with the place Nahal Yam south of Sabkhat Bardawil and some 25 km west of el-Felusiyat (see s.v. Nahal Yam) or is there a confusion with the place Yamit southwest of Rafah (see s.v. Yamit)?

<sup>1637</sup> Ovadia, 1978, p. 127-141 and 1979, p. 429-430; cf. Robert, BE, 1980, p. 479, no. 561.

<sup>1638</sup> Figueras in Oren, 1982a, p. 44-45; cf. Carrez-Maratray, 1994, p. 166.

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(1) Alphyos (Alpheios) (SEG XXVIII, 1465). Except for the head the stele has no decoration<sup>1639</sup>:

1 εὐμύρου,  
εὐψίχου,  
Ἄλφουος.  
οὐδὶς ἀ-  
θάνα-

6 τον (sic)

'Be blest with good share! Be of good courage! Alphyos. Nobody is immortal'

(2) Epimachos (SEG XXVIII, 1464). Only the lower part of the head is preserved. Above the inscription three monogrammatic crosses and some other symbols are engraved<sup>1640</sup>:

1 εὐμίρου, εὐψ-  
ίχου, Ἐπιμά-  
χου. οὐδὶς  
ἀθάνα-

5 τος

'Be blest with good share! Be of good courage! Epimachos. Nobody is immortal'

(3) Euzoios (SEG XXVIII, 1460). Under the head a Maltese cross is engraved and the first line is preceded by a monogrammatic cross<sup>1641</sup>:

1 εὐμίρι, ε<ὐ>-  
ψίχη, Εὐ-  
ζόει. ο-  
ὐδὶς ἀ-  
θάνα-

6 τος

'Be blest with good share! Be of good courage! Euzoios. Nobody is immortal'

(4) Heron (SEG XXVIII, 1459). Under the head three monogrammatic crosses and other symbols are engraved. The inscription omits the usual formula εὐψύχει, but

<sup>1639</sup> Lifshitz, 1971a, p. 154-157, no. 11; Lifshitz, 1971b, p. 24-26, no. 1 (Hebrew); Applebaum, 1978, p. 144, no. 23a; Figueras in Oren, 1982a, p. 45; SEG XXVIII, 1978 [= 1982], p. 404-405, no. 1465; Verreth, 1997, p. 108; SEG, XLVII, 1997 [= 2000], p. 635, no. 2126. Photos: Lifshitz, 1971a, pl. 5c and 1971b, p. 25, no. 1; Ornan, 1986, pl. (non vidi). Bingen (in SEG XXVIII) wonders whether ἀθάνατον is a misprint for ἀθάνατος, but the photos clearly show a 'N'. The name Alpheios is probably Arabic (cf. Preisigke, 1922, col. 506 and Wuthnow, 1930, p. 18). In the 5th century AD a bishop and a priest Alpheios are known in the nearby Rinokoloura. There is no need to look for a link with the apostle Iakobos son of Alphaios, who according to some authors has been martyred in Ostrakine.

<sup>1640</sup> Ovadiah, 1978, p. 137-139, no. 6; Ovadiah, 1979, p. 429-430; Figueras in Oren, 1982a, p. 45; SEG XXVIII, 1978 [= 1982], p. 404, no. 1464; Verreth, 1997, p. 108-109. Photo: Ovadiah, 1978, pl. 23, 6. The name of the deceased is apparently by mistake not written in the vocative, but in the genitive case. For the name Epimachos, cf. the homonymous martyr of Pelousion, who died about 302/303 AD (Acta sanctorum Octobris, 1883, XIII, p. 704-725; Nilles, 1896, I, p. 311; Van Esbroeck, 1966, p. 399-442, 1967, p. 441-457 and 1982, p. 125-145; Baumeister, 1972, p. 142), Epimachos bishop of Rinokoloura about 520-534 AD (see s.v. Rinokoloura) and Epimachos bishop of el-Farama about 743-767 AD (Le Quien, 1740, II, col. 544 and Fedalto, 1988, II, p. 608, who both incorrectly locate the bishop in Rinokoloura).

<sup>1641</sup> Ovadiah, 1978, p. 130-132, no. 2; Ovadiah, 1979, p. 429-430; Figueras in Oren, 1982a, p. 45; SEG XXVIII, 1978 [= 1982], p. 404, no. 1460; Oren, 1993b, p. 314, fig.; Verreth, 1997, p. 109. Photo: Ovadiah, 1978, pl. 21, 2. Ovadiah (followed by Figueras) thinks that the face has the features of a woman and considers Εὐζόει a variant spelling of a women's name Εὐζώη, which is not known elsewhere; Bingen in SEG, on the other hand, probably correctly sees it as a variant of Εὐζώι, which is a late vocative of the name Euzoios; Oren, 1993b, p. 314 incorrectly reads the name as 'Zoe'.

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adds that the boy died at the age of twenty; such a biographic element is quite exceptional in this group of steles<sup>1642</sup>:

- 1 εὖομ-  
ίρι (sic), Ἡρω-  
ν. οὐδὶ-  
ς ἀθά-  
5 νατο-  
ς. ἔτῶ-  
7 ν κ'

'Be blest with good share! Heron. Nobody is immortal. 20 Years old'

(5) Maria (SEG XXVIII, 1466). The head is lost. Three crosses, of which the left one is eroded, are engraved above the inscription<sup>1643</sup>:

- 1 εὖμύρι,  
εὖψίχη,  
Μαρία.  
οὐδὶς  
ἀθάνα-  
6 τος

'Be blest with good share! Be of good courage! Maria. Nobody is immortal'

(6) Ob[.]Jechia (?) (SEG XXVIII, 1463). The head and mainly the face are more attentively designed than on the other tombstones. Above the inscription three Greek crosses are engraved<sup>1644</sup>:

- 1 εὖμίρυ, εὖ-  
ψίχη, Οβ[.]-  
ηχια. οὐδὶς  
[ἀθάνατος]  
5 [ - - - ]

'Be blest with good share! Be of good courage! Ob[.]Jechia (?). Nobody is immortal'

(7) Ouersenouphis (Orsenouphis) (SEG XXVIII, 1468). The head is lost. Above the inscription three crosses are engraved<sup>1645</sup>:

<sup>1642</sup> Ovadiah, 1978, p. 127-130, no. 1; Ovadiah, 1979, p. 429-430; Oren, 1981c, p. 90; Figueras in Oren, 1982a, p. 45; SEG XXVIII, 1978 [= 1982], p. 403, no. 1459; Oren, 1993b, p. 314, fig.; Verreth, 1997, p. 109. Photos: Ovadiah, 1978, pl. 21, 1; Oren, 1981c, p. 90 and 1982a, p. 45.

<sup>1643</sup> Lifshitz, 1971a, p. 154.157-158, no. 13; Lifshitz, 1971b, p. 24-26, no. 2 (Hebrew); Robert, BE, 1971, p. 528, no. 698; Applebaum, 1978, p. 144, no. 23b; Figueras in Oren, 1982a, p. 45; SEG XXVIII, 1978 [= 1982], p. 404-405, no. 1466; Oren, 1993a, p. 1394 (with the misleading indication 'Roman tombstone'); Verreth, 1997, p. 108. Photos: Lifshitz, 1971a, pl. 5d and 1971b, p. 25, no. 2; Oren, 1993a, p. 1394.

<sup>1644</sup> Ovadiah, 1978, p. 135-137, no. 5; Ovadiah, 1979, p. 429-430; Figueras in Oren, 1982a, p. 45; SEG XXVIII, 1978 [= 1982], p. 404, no. 1463; Verreth, 1997, p. 109-110. Photo: Ovadiah, 1978, pl. 23, 5. Ovadiah tentatively restores the unparalleled name Ὀβ[ε]ληχια, but Bingen in SEG rightly prefers to leave the matter open. Since all the usual elements of the inscription are written in l. 1-4, the following line(s) - against the suggestions of Ovadiah - probably contained only some crosses or other symbols.

<sup>1645</sup> Lifshitz, 1971a, p. 154.157-159, no. 14; Lifshitz, 1971b, p. 24-26, no. 4 (Hebrew); Applebaum, 1978, p. 145, no. 23d; Figueras in Oren, 1982a, p. 45; SEG XXVIII, 1978 [= 1982], p. 404-405, no. 1468; Verreth, 1997, p. 110; BE, 2000, p. 575, no. 703; SEG, XLVII, 1997 [= 2000], p. 635, no. 2126. Photo: Lifshitz, 1971b, p. 26, no. 4. Lifshitz restored Οὐερσέ[ς] Ρλουφί[νου], 'Ouerses son of Rouphinos'; SEG only read Ὀυερσέ[ς] [λουφί vac]; I propose the supplement Οὐερσε[ν]λουφί[ς] or Οὐερσε[ν]λουφί[ος]; Bingen (in BE and SEG) suggests the vocative Οὐερσε[ν]λουφί, but this implies some blank space on l. 5, which not really matches with l. 1-4. For the Egyptian name O(ue)rsenouphi(o)s, demotic Wrš-nfr, cf. Ranke, 1935, I, p. 83, 7; Vergote, P.L.Bat. VII, 1954, p. 11, no. 41; Bernand, 1972a, p. 106-107; Quaegebeur, 1975, p. 140; DNB, I 2, 1981, p. 120; Thissen, 1992, p. 294; Bingen,

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1 εὐμήρι,  
εὐψίχῃ,  
Οὐερσε-  
[ν]ουφι-  
5 [ς. οὐδ]ι-  
[ς ἀθάνα-]  
7 [τος]

'Be blest with good share! Be of good courage! Ouersenouphis. Nobody is immortal'

(8) Phileas (Ornan, 1986, pl. [left]). Under the head three crosses are engraved<sup>1646</sup>:

1 εὐμίρ-  
υ, εὐψύ-  
χῃ, Φιλ-  
έα. οὐδ-  
5 ις ἀθάν-  
ατος

'Be blest with good share! Be of good courage! Phileas. Nobody is immortal'

(9) Thenbotas (SEG XXVIII, 1467). Under the head two crosses are engraved and under the inscription a larger cross stands in the middle of the stele<sup>1647</sup>:

1 [εὐ]μίρι, εὐ-  
[ψί]χι, Θεινβ-  
[ωτ]ας. οὐδ[ι]ς ἀ-  
4 [θά]νατος

'Be blest with good share! Be of good courage! Thenbotas. Nobody is immortal'

(10) Name not clear (SEG XXVIII, 1461). The face is completely worn away. The first line is preceded by a Greek cross, while the last line ends with a monogrammatic cross<sup>1648</sup>:

1 + εὐμύ-  
ρι, εὐψί-  
χι. οὐδ[ι]ς  
ἀθάνα-  
τος. ΟPH  
6 ΣΟΥ

'Be blest with good share! Be of good courage! Nobody is immortal. ...'

(11) Name omitted or lost (?) (SEG XXVIII, 1462). Probably a piece of jewellery or a decorative pin is depicted in the hair and maybe the deceased was a

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BE, 1992, p. 531, no. 557; Nachtergaele, 1996, p. 338.340-341. Two variants of the name occur on O.Tell el-Heir 2, 3 (Ὀρσουνουφι) and 12, 1 (Οὐερσινουφιος) (see s.v. Tell el-Heir). The same name is known for an Egyptian martyr originating from Dios Polis Parva in Upper Egypt; cf. Baumeister, 1972, p. 141.

<sup>1646</sup> Ornan, 1986, pl. (non vidi - I only saw a scan sent to me by Sarit Oked).

<sup>1647</sup> Lifshitz, 1971a, p. 154.157-158, no. 12; Lifshitz, 1971b, p. 24-26, no. 3 (Hebrew); Applebaum, 1978, p. 145, no. 23c; SEG XXVIII, 1978 [= 1982], p. 404-405, no. 1467; Verreth, 1997, p. 110; SEG, XLVII, 1997 [= 2000], p. 635, no. 2126. Photos: Lifshitz, 1971a, pl. 6b and 1971b, p. 26, no. 3. The readings and line divisions in Applebaum and SEG are not to be accepted. The sigma of Θεινβ[ωτ]ας does not resemble the other sigmas in the text and maybe [..]α.ι οὐδ[ι]ς ἀ- should be read in l. 3, but it is impossible to say anything for sure only on the basis of the photos. Thenbotas is known once as a women's name (gen. Θεινβωτατος: PSI I, 32, 2 - Herakleopolites, 208 AD).

<sup>1648</sup> Ovadiah, 1978, p. 132-133, no. 3; Ovadiah, 1979, p. 429-430; Figueras in Oren, 1982a, p. 45; SEG XXVIII, 1978 [= 1982], p. 404, no. 1461; Verreth, 1997, p. 110-111. Photo: Ovadiah, 1978, pl. 22, 3. The last word ΟPH|ΣΟΥ probably hides the name of the deceased (Bingen in SEG) [in the genitive instead of the vocative?; cf. Ὀριστας in Chrest.Mitt. 82, 22 (= P.Rein. I, 44; Hermou Polis Magna, 104 AD)?] rather than the unparalleled expression ὥρη σου, 'your time (has come)' (Ovadiah, Figueras).

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woman. Above the inscription a christogram surrounded by a circle is flanked by two Greek crosses. The inscription breaks off, possibly losing the name of the deceased<sup>1649</sup>:

1 εὐμί-  
ρυ, εὐψί-  
χη. οὐ-  
δὲς ἀθ-  
άνατος  
6 [ - - - ]

'Be blest with good share! Be of good courage! Nobody is immortal [ ]'

(12) Name unreadable on photo (Ornan, 1986, pl. [middle]). The head is well indicated<sup>1650</sup>:

1 + εὐμίρι,  
εὐψίχι  
[ ]  
οὐδὲς ἀθ-  
5 άνατος

'Be blest with good share! Be of good courage! [ ] Nobody is immortal'

While working in el-Felusiyat in 1914 Clédat bought five funerary steles from some Beduin said to have come from a necropolis in the Wadi el-Reheiba in Palestine; in the upper portion of the tombstones a round head is carved out<sup>1651</sup>. Notwithstanding Clédat's communication Figueras thought that these steles had a similar form as the ones from el-Khuinat and that they came from the same place<sup>1652</sup>. This suggestion is not to be accepted, for Figueras did not know the report of Schmidt, who had visited in 1905 the necropolis of the ancient city of Rehoboth, and saw there four of the five inscriptions later bought by Clédat<sup>1653</sup>. In fact, except for the round head on top, there are also not that many resemblances with the el-Khuinat steles and even in this respect Clédat does not mention any facial features, so characteristic for el-Khuinat. These steles are not made in kurkar stone, but in hard white limestone and none of the formulas used resembles those of el-Khuinat.

Since the editions of Schmidt and Clédat differ on a lot of points and since Figueras incorrectly made extensive use of these texts in his description of the el-Khuinat group, I here discuss briefly the five Rehoboth inscriptions. Schmidt in his publication did not indicate the division of the lines, and since no photos or drawings of the steles are published, we have to rely for this on the edition of Clédat. One of the

<sup>1649</sup> Ovadiah, 1978, p. 133-135, no. 4; Ovadiah, 1979, p. 429-430; SEG XXVIII, 1978 [= 1982], p. 404, no. 1462; Verreth, 1997, p. 111. Photo: Ovadiah, 1978, pl. 22, 4.

<sup>1650</sup> Ornan, 1986, pl. (non vidi - I only saw a scan sent to me by Sarit Oked).

<sup>1651</sup> Clédat, 1915b, p. 39-40; cf. Petrie, 1915, p. 185.

<sup>1652</sup> Figueras in Oren, 1982a, p. 45.

<sup>1653</sup> Schmidt, 1910, p. 60-65.

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texts can be dated in 600 AD and maybe also the other texts belong to the 6th or 7th century AD.

(1) Ioannes, son of Halaphir (SB III, 7020). The first line is preceded by a cross<sup>1654</sup>:

Ἰωάννου  
Ἀλαφίρ  
'Ioannes son of Halaphir'

(2) Maria (SB III, 7023). In the head, which is broken at the top, a cross was engraved and perhaps also the first line was preceded by a cross. Maria died on Artemisios 1 (21 April, according to the reckoning of Arabia) in the tenth year of an unidentified indiction<sup>1655</sup>:

1 ἐκυμ(ήθη) ἡ μακ(αρία)  
Μαρία  
3 μ(ηλι) Ἀρ(εμισίου) α' ἰν(δικτιῶνος) ι'  
'The blessed Maria died on the first of the month Artemisios, indiction 10.'

(3) Sergios (SB III, 7022). The inscription is written within the head. The first line is preceded by a cross<sup>1656</sup>:

ἀναπ(άη)  
Σεργίου  
'Sergios has died'

(4) Stephanos (SB III, 7021). The stele only contains the name of the deceased<sup>1657</sup>:

Στέφανος  
'Stephanos'

(5) Stephanos son of Pheloumene (Philoumene) (SB III, 7024). The head is broken. The first line and the dating formula in l. 4 are both preceded by a cross. Stephanos died in the year 495 according to the era of the province of Arabia, i.e. in 600/601

<sup>1654</sup> Schmidt, 1910, p. 64, no. 13; Clédat, 1915b, p. 39-40, no. 1 (Ἰωάν[ι]ης); Petrie, 1915, p. 185; Bilabel, SB III, 1926, p. 186, no. 7020; Figueras in Oren, 1982a, p. 45; Verreth, 1997, p. 112; SEG XLVII, 1997 [= 2000], p. 615, no. 2054. Schmidt translates 'Alaphir, son of John', but the order of the names makes this highly unlikely; perhaps the genitive indicates the owner of the grave or it is just a mistake instead of a nominative. The patronymic Halaphir is probably Nabataean.

<sup>1655</sup> Schmidt, 1910, p. 63, no. 7; Clédat, 1915b, p. 39-40, no. 4; Petrie, 1915, p. 185; Bilabel, SB III, 1926, p. 186, no. 7023; Figueras in Oren, 1982a, p. 45; Verreth, 1997, p. 112; SEG XLVII, 1997 [= 2000], p. 615-616, no. 2054. Schmidt in his edition was rather careless in the use of abbreviation brackets, while Clédat and Bilabel (confusing the Π and the Τ) in l. 3 apparently did not recognize the dating formula, so creating the 'ghost name' Μαρπαίτι.

<sup>1656</sup> Schmidt, 1910, p. 64, no. 12; Clédat, 1915b, p. 39-40, no. 3; Petrie, 1915, p. 185; Bilabel, SB III, 1926, p. 186, no. 7022; Figueras in Oren, 1982a, p. 45; Verreth, 1997, p. 112-113; SEG XLVII, 1997 [= 2000], p. 615, no. 2054. The genitive Σεργίου is puzzling and several solutions have been proposed, with ἀναπ( ) completed accordingly. Schmidt reads ἀναπ(άε) Σεργίου, 'The child of Sergios has died', which is not very convincing. Clédat instead gives ἀναπ(αυσον) Σεργίου, 'Give peace to Sergios', while Bilabel adds that one should read Σέργιον. If one wants to correct the text, though, it seems more plausible to restore the common ἀναπ(άη) and to translate 'Sergios has died', considering the genitive a mere mistake for of a nominative (for the surprising use of the genitive, cf. SB III, 7020; SEG VIII, 304; SEG XXVIII, 1464 and possibly SEG XXVIII, 1461 and Lifshitz, 1971a, p. 159, no. 16).

<sup>1657</sup> Clédat, 1915b, p. 39-40, no. 2; Petrie, 1915, p. 185; Bilabel, SB III, 1926, p. 186, no. 7021; Figueras in Oren, 1982a, p. 45; Verreth, 1997, p. 113.



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AD; the interpretation of 'Kalendae 29' is difficult, but it perhaps equals the Arabian month Xanthikos, so giving a date of 19 April 600 AD<sup>1658</sup>:

1 + ἀναπάε  
ὦ μακάριος  
Στέφ(ανος) Φελου-  
μήνης> + μη(νι)  
καλανδὸν κθ',  
6 ἔτους υφε'

'The blessed Stephanos son of Pheloumene has died + in the month Kalendae 29, year 495'

### Identifications

Oren considers el-Khuinat one of the cemeteries of the ancient Ostrakine<sup>1659</sup>, but he does not account for the other archaeological remains.

The remains of the Islamic city near el-Khuinat (C121?) well match the situation of el-Warrada<sup>1660</sup>.

## EL-RATAMA

### Topographical situation

One hour by camel (ca. 2,5 km?) west of el-Khuinat lies el-Ratama, at a little distance north of the main road. The major part of the site is situated on a small elevation, an 'island', with a diameter of some 80 m<sup>1661</sup>.

### Archaeological finds

In 1910 Clédat saw - on the elevation - a rather irregular construction that he tentatively identifies as a fortress. Immediately west of the building is a small cemetery, with graves of limestone plates. Northeast of the elevation (and not northwest as stated in the text) were the remains of a lot of houses and a well, situated

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<sup>1658</sup> Schmidt, 1910, p. 62, no. 4; Clédat, 1915b, p. 39-40, no. 5; Petrie, 1915, p. 185; Bilabel, SB III, 1926, p. 186, no. 7024; Figueras in Oren, 1982a, p. 45; Meimaris, 1992, p. 159.275, no. 429; Verreth, 1997, p. 113; SEG XLVII, 1997 [= 2000], p. 615-616, no. 2054. For the date, cf. Schmidt and Meimaris; the year (which Clédat by mistake read as '465') has also incorrectly been converted according to the era of Diocletianus (Clédat, Bilabel) or the era of Alexandria (Figueras).

<sup>1659</sup> Oren, 1981c, p. 90, 1982a, p. 45 and 1993a, p. 1173; cf. Figueras, 2000, p. 62.200.212.

<sup>1660</sup> Cf. Abd al-Malik, 1998, p. 176 and Cytryn-Silverman, 2001, p. 22. See s.v. el-Warrada.

<sup>1661</sup> Clédat, 1910a, p. 232 and map A.

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in a marshy area. Clédat considers the ruins Roman. Half way el-Ratama and el-Khuinat lie a well and the house of a guard, both in stone<sup>1662</sup>.

### **Identifications**

Clédat's location in el-Ratama of one of the fortresses and wells mentioned on the Karnak relief and in P.Anastasi is gratuitous<sup>1663</sup>.

Clédat also suggests to identify the place with the station el-Sawada of the Arab itineraries<sup>1664</sup>. Since el-Ratama probably lies closer to the Arab station el-Warrada than to el-Sawada and Clédat in his archaeological survey of el-Ratama only mentions Roman remains, I see no reason to identify both stations.

## **UMM EL-SHUQAF**

### **Topographical situation**

In 1916 Clédat heard of a place called Umm el-Shuqafa, west of el-Zaraniq, but he did not visit it, although he thought that the name could indicate some ruins; on his map, though, he situated Umm el-Shuqafa not west, but east of el-Zaraniq<sup>1665</sup>.

### **Identifications**

Clédat's suggestion to identify Umm el-Shuqafa with the Arab city of el-Warrada is a mere hypothesis<sup>1666</sup>.

### **Etymology**

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<sup>1662</sup> Clédat, 1910a, p. 232 and a sketch p. 231, fig. 9; cf. Clédat, 1924, p. 60; Valbelle, 1999a, p. 76.

<sup>1663</sup> Karnak, 1986, IV, pl. 5, 20-21 (K-L): Dmi qd.n ḥm.f m m3w.t ('Town which His Majesty built anew') - T3 ḥnm.t Ib-s-q-b ('The well (called) Ib-s-q-b'); P.Anastasi I, 27, 6 (9): Ib-s-q-b; cf. Clédat, 1923b, p. 155-156.

<sup>1664</sup> See s.v. el-Sawada.

<sup>1665</sup> Clédat, 1916a, p. 11 and the map p. 7, fig. 1.

<sup>1666</sup> Clédat, 1916a, p. 11; cf. Figueras, 2000, p. 213.

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It is not necessary to look for an etymological link between the names Ostrakine and Umm el-Shuqafa, 'Mother of the sherds'<sup>1667</sup>, since the element 'shaqf', 'potsherd', or one of its forms is quite frequently used in modern Arabic toponymy<sup>1668</sup>.

### EL-ZARANIQ

#### Topographical situation

The toponym el-Zaraniq seems to have had quite different meanings. For Chester about 1880 el-Zaraniq was the name of the boghaz or inlet of Sabkhat Bardawil at the eastern end of the lake; it had to be crossed first by boat till one reached a tiny island, and then one could wade to the other shore<sup>1669</sup>. For Paoletti some twenty years later it was not the name of the boghaz, but the name of the eastern part of lake Bardawil itself, which was let by the government to some fishermen; he locates 'lake el-Zaraniq' probably by mistake at some 10 to 20 km west of el-Arish, while the other maps indicate a distance of some 35 to 40 km<sup>1670</sup>. Clédat in 1910 made the distinction between the boghaz 'Foum el-Zaraniq'<sup>1671</sup>, which had to be crossed by boat, and the fishing settlement el-Zaraniq, situated more south, at some 3 km northeast of el-Felusiyat, which was named after the boghaz<sup>1672</sup>. This settlement existed already in 1887<sup>1673</sup>, but since it is not known to Paoletti and is missing in more recent maps, it did apparently not have a permanent nature. In another context, finally, Clédat considers el-Zaraniq not a lake or a settlement, but an area north of el-Felusiyat and extending along lake Bardawil<sup>1674</sup>.

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<sup>1667</sup> Cf. Wehr, 1979, p. 31, s.v. umm, 'mother, source, origin', and p. 562, s.v. šaqaf, '(pot)sherds'.

<sup>1668</sup> Cf. Fiema, 1990, p. 248. The eastern Delta map of Bietak, 1975, pl. 4 knows a Shaqafiya and a Tell el-Shaqafiya in the Wadi Tumilat and a Tell el-Shaqf north of Saft el-Henna. Kom el-Shuqafa near Alexandria is famous for its necropolis. The 14th century Arab author Ibn el-Dj'i'an (mentioned in Amélineau, 1893, p. 230 and Maspero, 1919, p. 230) discusses a Kom el-Shaqf in the province of Qus in Upper Egypt; Abel, 1940, p. 230 (cf. Figueras, 2000, p. 213), misinterpreting the passage in Maspero, incorrectly locates this village in the northern Sinai near Ostrakine. See also s.v. Ostrakine (§ Identifications) for the Tell el-Shuqafiya of Ibrahim, 1992, p. 748 and s.v. Ostrakine (§ Homonyms) for the Kom el-Shuqafa in the Panopolites.

<sup>1669</sup> Chester, 1880, p. 157-158 and the map p. 144.

<sup>1670</sup> Paoletti, 1903, p. 107 and pl.; cf. Clédat, 1923, p. 68.

<sup>1671</sup> For the Arabic word fumm, 'mouth, embouchure', cf. Wehr, 1979, p. 852.

<sup>1672</sup> Clédat, 1910a, p. 216-220, p. 221, fig. 5 and map A; for the settlement, cf. Gardiner, 1920, pl. 13, Kees, Herman, s.v. Σιρβωνίς λίμνη, in RE, III A 1, 1927, col. 287, Abel, 1939, p. 532 and the indication 'huttes de pêcheurs' on Clédat, 1916a, p. 7, fig. 1.

<sup>1673</sup> Ascherson, 1887, p. 180.183; cf. Maspero, 1919, p. 230 and n. 1.

<sup>1674</sup> Clédat, 1916a, p. 8 and the map p. 7, fig. 1.

## Identifications

Maspero locates Ostrakine in el-Zaraniq because of an alleged etymological link between the two names. He refers to the form 'Ostranike', which is said to occur 'often', 'for instance' in Hierokles, but in fact in all the sources I know, this spelling mistake occurs only in that passage. Also the 'indirect proof' about some related toponyms in the province of Qus is not really relevant<sup>1675</sup>. Since no archaeological evidence is known from the site, Maspero's identification is better discarded.

Since Abel identifies the Arab el-Warrada with the harbour of Ostrakine, he locates the place in the neighbourhood of el-Zaraniq<sup>1676</sup>, but this is merely a hypothesis.

## Etymology

According to Clédat the name el-Zaraniq means 'le ruisseau, la rivière'; since he incorrectly accepts the presence of a canal near Ostrakine coming from the Delta, he links this toponym with that canal<sup>1677</sup>. The name, though, matches quite well for the large boghaz between lake Bardawil and the Mediterranean and no other explanation has to be looked for.

## Homonyms

The 14th century Arab author Ibn el-Dji'an knows a place 'Zarnikh' in the province of Qus in Upper Egypt. Another 'Zarnikh' occurs in the province of Esna. According to Maspero the name is of the same type as el-Zaraniq<sup>1678</sup>.

## **KHIRBA (I)**

### Topographical situation

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<sup>1675</sup> Maspero, 1919, p. 230-231; cf. already Ascherson, 1887, p. 180 (cf. Clédat, 1910a, p. 219-220, n. 3), who made the identification without further arguments.

<sup>1676</sup> Abel, 1940, p. 230; cf. Figueras, 2000, p. 213.

<sup>1677</sup> Clédat, 1916a, p. 8 and 1920, p. 111; cf. Figueras, 2000, p. 23.

<sup>1678</sup> Cf. Amélineau, 1893, p. 230; Maspero, 1919, p. 230.

Clédat locates Khirba only vaguely southeast of el-Zaraniq. Between Khirba and Abu Hawidat there is a huge bed of nummulite limestone stretching west - east, which on some spots shows traces of extraction. Despite the name Khirba ('Ruin') Clédat did not see any ruins when he passed by in 1910<sup>1679</sup>.

### **Homonyms**

In the northern Sinai the common indication Khirba or 'Ruin' is also used for a place between Mahammediya and el-Farama and another one between Bir el-Abd and Qatia. The word also occurs in the toponym Khirbet el-Felusiyat, more to the west, near Sabkhat Bardawil<sup>1680</sup>.

### **RAS STRAKI**

Alternative names: Ras el-Abid (?), Cape Mahatib (?)

### **Topographical situation**

On the maps of d'Anville (1766) and of the *Description de l'Égypte* (1822) Ras Straki is a cape north of lake Bardawil; on the second map the cape is situated east of Ras el-Qasrun (i.e. the Kasion) and in its neighbourhood some ruins are found<sup>1681</sup>.

Some authors apparently refer to a place, and not a cape, called Straki<sup>1682</sup> and so Amélineau knows a village Straki near the coast, incorrectly situated, though, east of el-Arish<sup>1683</sup>.

### **Identifications**

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<sup>1679</sup> Clédat, 1910a, p. 227.

<sup>1680</sup> See s.v. Khirba (in the chapter on the coastal region between Kasion and Pelousion), s.v. Khirba (in the chapter on the region south of Sabkhat Bardawil) and s.v. el-Felusiyat.

<sup>1681</sup> d'Anville, 1766, p. 103 and the map p. 218 (cf. Maspero, 1919, p. 230); *Description*, Atlas, 1822, pl. 33 (as mentioned in Fontaine, 1955, p. 95); cf. *Description*, 1830, XVIII, p. 174; Ebers, 1868, p.121; Miller, 1916, col. 813; Lesquier, 1918, p. 401 and map; Hommel, 1926, p. 964, n. 3; Abel, 1940, p. 59-60; Rackham, 1942, p. 271.

<sup>1682</sup> Sepp, 1863, II, p. 534; Boettger, 1879, p. 196; Wilkinson in Chester, 1880, p. 156; von Starck in Jacoby, 1905, p. 47; Schlumberger, 1906, p. 76-77; Meinardus, 1963, p. 25.

<sup>1683</sup> Amélineau, 1893, p. 289.

## 5. Ostrakine

Ras (i.e. Cape) Straki or the village Straki has often been identified with Ostrakine and indeed, the etymology offered - if to be trusted -, the general location of the toponyms and the presence of the ruins on the map of 1822 point in that direction. Clédat, though, located Ostrakine without any doubt in el-Felusiyyat and one can wonder whether not the same ruins of the map are meant. It is odd that the name Straki only appears in 18th and 19th century sources and is apparently not used by locals<sup>1684</sup>, and on the whole one gets the impression that it is just a kind of scholarly 'ghost name' based upon the old name Ostrakine. Perhaps the cape referred to is identical with Ras el-Abid or Cape Mahatib in the immediate neighbourhood, known in the early 20th century<sup>1685</sup>.

Since the Arab el-Warrada apparently lay near Ostrakine, also Ras Straki is often linked with this place<sup>1686</sup>.

The index of Fontaine probably by mistake links Ras Straki with 'Calize', in fact referring to 'Calizere' on the map of Duval (1672), which Fontaine himself suggested to identify with Ras el-Qasrun<sup>1687</sup>.

The map of Robert de Vaugondy (1757) shows a 'G. de Staxi', but Fontaine, who considers it a mistake for 'Straki', does not realize that 'Staxi' stands for 'Stagnum' and that 'the gulf of the stagnum' in fact refers to the Sabkhat Bardawil<sup>1688</sup>. On the other hand it is possible that Marino Sanudo's 'Caput Staxi' between the gulf of el-Arish and Ras el-Qasrun is identical with this Ras Straki<sup>1689</sup>.

### Etymology

The toponym Straki is said to hide the ancient name (O)straki(ne)<sup>1690</sup>. The name, though, does not occur in earlier Arab sources and since it seems that most of the scarce references to Ras Straki in later works in fact are only based on some maps of the 18th and the early 19th century AD, it is not impossible that the toponym as

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<sup>1684</sup> Cf. Chester, 1880, p. 156: the name is not known to the local Beduin.

<sup>1685</sup> See s.v. Ras el-Abid and s.v. Cape Mahatib.

<sup>1686</sup> Cf. the map of Lapie (ca. 1830?) (as mentioned in Maspero, 1919, p. 230); Kohler, 1904, p. 432, n. 9; Abel, 1940, p. 60.230.

<sup>1687</sup> Cf. Fontaine, 1955, p. 67 with n. 1 and p. 230.237. See s.v. Ras el-Qasrun.

<sup>1688</sup> Robert de Vaugondy, 1757, pl. 96 in Clédat, 1910a, p. 233; Fontaine, 1955, p. 73-74.

<sup>1689</sup> Marino Sanudo, 2, 4, 25 (Röhricht, 1898, p. 120); cf. Rey, 1884, p. 347; Röhricht, 1898, p. 120, n. 2; Abel, 1940, p. 59-60; Figueras, 2000, p. 173. See also s.v. Sabkhat Bardawil.

<sup>1690</sup> Cf. Amélineau, 1893, p. 289; Maspero, 1919, p. 230; Hommel, 1926, p. 964, n. 3; Abel, 1940, p. 230; Figueras, 2000, p. 213.237-238.

## 5. *Ostrakine*

such was only in use at that time. The possibility can even not be ruled out that the name is made up by some learned traveller or scholar looking for a link with the ancient Ostrakine and creating the name Straki on the basis a name like 'Caput Staxi'.

Since this village Straki appears only in the 19th century AD, one gets the impression that it is named after the cape and not vice versa.

### **RAS EL-ABID**

Alternative names: Ras Straki (?), Cape Mahatib (?)

#### **Topographical situation**

Ras (or 'Cape') el-Abid is situated at the eastern end of the strip of land between Sabkhat Bardawil and the Mediterranean, immediately northwest of the inlet el-Zaraniq<sup>1691</sup>.

#### **Identifications**

Ras el-Abid and Cape Mahatib, both independently attested in 1910, seem to be located in a similar area and are possibly two names for the same cape. They may also be identical with the Ras Straki of the 18th and 19th century sources<sup>1692</sup>.

### **CAPE MAHATIB**

Alternative names: Ras Straki (?), Ras el-Abid (?)

#### **Topographical situation**

Cape Mahatib is situated on the eastern half of the strip of land between Sabkhat Bardawil and the Mediterranean<sup>1693</sup>.

#### **Identifications**

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<sup>1691</sup> Clédat, 1910a, p. 219; Sadek, 1926, map.

<sup>1692</sup> See s.v. Cape Mahatib and s.v. Ras Straki.

<sup>1693</sup> Fischer, 1910, pl. 7.

## 5. *Ostrakine*

Cape Mahatib and Ras el-Abid, both independently attested in 1910, seem to be located in a similar area and are possibly two names for the same cape. They may also be identical with the Ras Straki of the 18th and 19th century sources<sup>1694</sup>.

### **DJEZIRET EL-GHATTAFA - DJEZIRET EL-GLEIKHA**

Immediately north of the strip of land between el-Zaraniq and el-Qels, lies a group of islands in the Mediterranean, of which the most important ones are named Djeziret (or 'Island') el-Ghattafa and Djeziret el-Gleikha<sup>1695</sup>.

### **LIKLEYKHA**

In 1887 Ascherson noticed the small settlement Likleykha on the strip of land, some three hours west of the boghaz of el-Zaraniq. There was enough vegetation at the spot to pasture some camels<sup>1696</sup>. The place possibly corresponds with the nameless fisherman's huts indicated on the map of Fischer some 10 km east of el-Mataria end near another boghaz<sup>1697</sup>.

### **EL-MATARIA**

A few kilometres east of el-Qels lies the small village el-Mataria, consisting only of some fisherman's huts<sup>1698</sup>. The inhabitants, who originate from the lake Menzala area, get their water from the wells in el-Qels. They usually went fishing on Sabkhat Bardawil and only occasionally in the Mediterranean.

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<sup>1694</sup> See s.v. Ras el-Abid and s.v. Ras Straki.

<sup>1695</sup> Clédat, 1910a, p. 219 and the map in Abel, 1939, p. 532; cf. Wehr, 1979, p. 147, s.v. *jazīra*, 'island'. They are not to be confused with the nameless small island Chester, 1880, p. 156 noticed at some three hours walking from el-Qels or with the islands indicated on the maps of Clédat, 1910a, map A and Fischer, 1910, pl. 7, all south of the strip of land, in Sabkhat Bardawil itself.

<sup>1696</sup> Ascherson, 1887, p. 182-183.

<sup>1697</sup> Fischer, 1910, pl. 7.

<sup>1698</sup> Chester, 1880, p. 156-157 and the map p. 144; Fischer, 1910, pl. 7.



## 6. Kasion

### *Summary*

*Late and Graeco-Roman periods*

#### **Kasion**

*Arab period*

**el-Tha'ama - el-Qass - el-Qasr / Deir el-Nasara**

*Modern period*

**Ras el-Qasrun - Ras el-Burun - el-Qels - Haparsa - Mat Iblis - el-Zughah**

### *Summary*

At the latest in the 5th century BC a small hill of less than 100 m high, covered with dunes and situated on the shore of the Mediterranean somewhere in the middle of the northern Sinai, was called mount Kasion. This cape was probably named by sailors after the homonymous mount Kasion in Syria. There are no reasons to assume that it ever had the name mount Saphon or that the god Baal-Saphon was worshipped there under that name. The hill served as a landmark for travellers by sea and by land, but at least in the late 4th century BC it had no harbour and it was difficult to get ashore because of the shallow water. The mountain apparently gave its name to the surrounding Kasiotis region. This region was known for the so-called Kasiotikon boat, made with the remarkable technique of combining beams with beams by the use of mere knots of ropes.

Archaeological surveys at el-Qels show that the place was visited from the 6th century BC on, but - possibly because of the marshes of nearby lake Serbonis - there are no indications for a fixed settlement before the late Ptolemaic period. At the latest in the 1st century BC there was a temple dedicated to Zeus Kasios, a god already known in the Arsinoites from the 3rd century BC on and especially popular in the Pelousion region in the 2nd century AD. Pompeius Magnus was killed near Kasion in 48 BC; afterwards a tomb was built there, which eventually got covered with sand, but was restored by Hadrianus in 130 AD. Kasion flourished as a station on the road from Pelousion to Syria, and was known for its cloth. In 431 AD it had a bishop and from 578 to 622 AD a monastery is attested in the neighbourhood.

Early Arab pottery shows that the place remained inhabited after the invasion of 639 AD, probably under the name of el-Qass. At the latest in the 13th century AD the city lay in ruins. The exact relation between Kasion (el-Qass) and the road stations

el-Tha'ama and el-Udhaib (Umm el-Arab), mentioned by an Arab geographer in the 9th century AD, is not clear. In the 10th century AD the place was apparently also known as el-Qasr ('The fortress') and Deir el-Nasara ('Monastery of the Christians'). The name el-Qasr is perhaps at the basis of the toponym Ras el-Qasrun, which is used for the cape from the 14th century AD on. A later, possibly Turkish name for the same cape is Ras el-Burun, while local Beduin just called it el-Qels, 'The cape'.

### *Late and Graeco-Roman periods*

## **KASION**

Medieval names: el-Qass - el-Qasr / Deir el-Nasara (?)

Modern names: Ras el-Qasrun - Ras el-Burun - el-Qels

### **Topographical situation**

In all sources from Herodotos (1) on, mount Kasion is situated on the shore of the Mediterranean, which is even called the 'sea of (the) Kasion' by Kallimachos (5). It is described by Strabon (41) as a waterless sandy hill, which forms a promontory; the 'sandy' character probably refers to the dunes covering the stone nucleus. For Aristeides (81) the Kasion is part of what he calls the Arabian mountain chain, but whatever he might have meant, it is clear that the Kasion is just an isolated hill<sup>1699</sup>. Herodotos (2) and Pomponius Mela (52) consider it the northern end of the isthmus between the Mediterranean and the Red Sea, which is approximately correct<sup>1700</sup>, and according to Iuba (33) a road led from the Kasion towards Arsinoe at the Red Sea. The position of mount Kasion relative to lake Serbonis, which constantly changed in dimensions, is not always easy to determine<sup>1701</sup>. According to Herodotos (1, 3) the mountain extends next to the lake and apparently lies between the lake and the sea. Eratosthenes (6) and Stephanos (123) know marshes or Barathra near the mountain.

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<sup>1699</sup> Against Donne, William Bodham, s.v. Casius mons, in Smith, 1854, I, p. 558, who considers mount Kasion the summit of a lofty range of sandstone hills.

<sup>1700</sup> This situation cannot be used as an argument against a location of Kasion at el-Qels, as Clédât, 1909a, p. 767-768 wants (a statement partially based upon wrong calculations).

<sup>1701</sup> The 'Sabbathicus fluvius' which goes into lake Serbonis near the Kasion on the map of Sicard, 1982 [= 1722], III, p. 168 (cf. p. 180 and d'Anville, 1766, p. 101), is a mythical river, which is said to stop flowing on Sabbath (or according to other sources only flows on sabot); afterwards Sicard, 1982 [= 1723], I, p. 110 (cf. n. 3) realised that it did not belong in the northern Sinai.

## 6. Kasion

Also for Vitruvius (30), Strabon (42) and some other sources lake Serbonis lies near mount Kasion and according to Ptolemaios (84) the Ekregma of lake Serbonis was situated quite close to Kasion. The phrasing of Plinius (63), however, might imply that in the 1st century AD, with the lake being an insignificant swamp, this was no longer the case, and for Aristeides (81) the lake apparently lay between the Kasion and Ostrakine. So the mountain at first probably lay north of the lake, later more west of it<sup>1702</sup>.

The sources involving Kasion mention four different toponyms: mount Kasion, the tomb of Pompeius, the sanctuary of Zeus Kasios and the village or city Kasion. Strabon (41) explicitly states that the tomb and the sanctuary lie at mount Kasion and so does Ammianus Marcellinus (106) for the tomb. It is not certain whether the order in Plinius (63) - the mountain, the sanctuary and the tomb - implies a geographical order, situating sanctuary and tomb east of the mountain<sup>1703</sup>. The account of Appianos (82) about the statues of Pompeius' tomb hidden in the inner sanctuary of the temple might imply that both were situated in each other's neighbourhood<sup>1704</sup>. The fact that Titus on his way from Pelousion to Jerusalem camped near the sanctuary of Zeus Kasios in 70 AD (65), implies that it was situated on the main road to Palestine. Thus, mountain, sanctuary and tomb apparently lay close to each other, probably all near the sea, but it is impossible to give a more specific location for each of them<sup>1705</sup>.

In the ethnic of Horos son of Horos Kasiotes, priest on Delos in the early 1st century BC (11-14), we have probably the earliest reference to a place with the name Kasion near the mountain<sup>1706</sup>. The village or city of Kasion as such appears probably for the first time in Ptolemaios (84) in the 2nd century AD; later on, it is mentioned mainly in itineraries and bishop lists. Stephanos (125) is the only source to mention explicitly both mountain and city Kasion and there is no reason to assume that they were situated very far from each other. Some older maps and scholars, however,

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<sup>1702</sup> Against Pococke, 1743(?) in Tzachou-Alexandri, 1995, p. 16; Donne, William Bodham, s.v. Casius mons, in Smith, 1854, I, p. 558; Jones, 1971, p. 294, who place mount Kasion south of the lake.

<sup>1703</sup> Cf. Clédat, 1923a, p. 187.

<sup>1704</sup> Ascherson, 1887, p. 186 incorrectly thinks that the tomb itself was situated inside the temple of Zeus Kasios.

<sup>1705</sup> Donne, William Bodham, s.v. Casius mons, in Smith, 1854, I, p. 558 does place the temple of Zeus-Ammon (sic) near the summit of mount Kasion (cf. also Figueras, 1988a, p. 58) and the tomb on its western flank, but this is fantasy, just as the location of the three toponyms on the map of Ortelius, 1595 in Baines, 1981 [= 1980], p. 23 (for this map, cf. Fontaine, 1955, p. 61-63).

<sup>1706</sup> Against Clédat, 1923a, p. 157, who considers Kasion one of the oldest settlements in the northern Sinai.

## 6. Kasion

probably locating the city at the desert road used in their time, incorrectly situate the mountain and the city at different sides of lake Serbonis<sup>1707</sup>.

In the Roman itineraries Kasion lies between Ostrakine (in the east) and Pelousion (in the west). Iosephos (65) and P.Ryl. IV, 630\* (102) have a one day march between Kasion and Ostrakine, while the *Itinerarium Antonini* (99) and P.Ryl. IV, 627 (100) give a distance of 26 miles (ca. 39 km); the corresponding figure in the *Tabula* (109) is lost. Ptolemaios (84) mentions the Ekregma of lake Serbonis between the two places, at some 31 km west of Ostrakine and apparently very close to Kasion. With regard to its western neighbours, it is possible according to Iosephos to go in one day from Pelousion to Kasion. Also Theophanes covered this distance in one day, passing by Pentaschoinon (P.Ryl. IV, 630\*) (102), but on his first journey he needed two days for the same track and apparently made an extra stop in Gerra somewhere halfway between Pelousion and Pentaschoinon (P.Ryl. IV, 627-628) (100-101). There is less consistency in the sources about the absolute distances on this track, which are given towards Pentaschoinon, Gerra or Pelousion. The distance of 16 miles (ca. 24 km) between Kasion and Pentaschoinon in P.Ryl. IV, 627 (100) seems more trustworthy than the 20 miles (ca. 30 km) in the *Itinerarium Antonini* (99). Since Pentaschoinon probably lies 20 miles (ca. 30 km) east of Pelousion, the distance between Kasion and Pelousion amounts to some 36 miles (ca. 54 km), which well matches the 300 stadia (ca. 55,5 km) of Strabon (40). The 23 miles (ca. 34,5 km) in the *Tabula* (109) on the track between Kasion and Gerra are rather low in comparison with the (restored) figure of 26 miles (ca. 39 km) in P.Ryl. IV, 627 (100); the total distance here between Kasion and Pelousion is only 31 miles (ca. 46,5 km) and probably the figures given are not to be trusted. Ptolemaios gives the remarkably low

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<sup>1707</sup> Cf. Ortelius, 1595 in Baines, 1981 [= 1980], p. 23 (the city between Gerra and Pentaschoinon, all west of the lake; the mountain north / east of the lake); Sicard, 1982 [= 1722], III, p. 168.180 ('Cassius civitas / chateau de Quas' southwest of lake Serbonis and 'Cassius mons / cap d'el Quass' northwest of the lake); Robert de Vaugondy, 1757, pl. 96 in Clédat, 1910a, p. 233 [for this map, cf. Fontaine, 1955, p. 73-78] (the mountain between Pelousion and Pentaschoinon, all west of the lake; the city east of the lake); d'Anville, 1766, p. 1 (the mountain west of the lake, the city more to the south); d'Anville, 1769, p. 193 in Clédat, 1909a, p. 765 and 1910a, p. 212 (the mountain north of the lake, the temple southwest of the lake near Qatia) [this point of view has been followed by Hazlitt, 1851, p. 96; Donne, William Bodham, s.v. Casius mons, in Smith, 1854, I, p. 558; Sepp, 1863, II, p. 534; De-Vit, 1868, II, p. 153; Boettger, 1879, p. 81; Müller, 1901, I 2, p. 682; Pape, 1911, p. 631; Janin, R., s.v. Casium, in DHGE, XI, 1949, col. 1299]; Description, 1830, XVIII, map 1.2 [cf. p. 174] (the mountain north of the lake, the 'Cassio' of the *Itinerarium Antonini* south of the lake). A similar view has unfortunately been followed on the map TAVO B V 21, 1989, with mount Kasion at el-Qels and the city Kasion tentatively at Mahammediya (cf. also the confusing TAVO Register, 1994, p. 881). The distinction between mountain and temple or city has rightly been rejected by Clédat, 1909a, p. 765-767 and 1910a, p. 212.

## 6. Kasion

figure of 18,5 km towards Gerra, but too long a distance on the next track; it is therefore most likely that he just put Gerra halfway Kasion and Pelousion without regard to the actual distance; but even with this explanation the total distance of some 38,5 km between the two places in Ptolemaios is somewhat low.

Kasion and Pelousion are closely linked. According to Skylax (4) the eponym Pelousios first arrived at the Kasion; Zeus Kasios is worshipped at both places; the several accounts about the death of Pompeius mix them up<sup>1708</sup> and in a lot of sources their proximity is inferred<sup>1709</sup>. At first sight these ties seem to be contradicted by the rather long distance of some 54 km between the two places. Strabon's account (40), though, that 'the Kasion near Pelousion' is situated at 300 stadia from that same Pelousion, makes it clear that the previously mentioned expressions are more a way of speaking than geographical evidence, and that there is no reason to look for Kasion in the immediate neighbourhood of Pelousion<sup>1710</sup>. Also Diodoros' statement (18) that the Kasion is situated not far from the Nile, is too vague to counter the distances in the itineraries<sup>1711</sup>.

Detailed topographical information about the Kasion area is extremely scarce. In 306 (18) and in 48 BC there was certainly no harbour at the Kasion, but for the Roman period every information is lacking<sup>1712</sup>. Strabon (41) stresses that there was no water at the mountain, but the creation of the settlement probably implies that this problem was solved one way or another. The temple of Zeus Kasios - attested first by Strabon (41)<sup>1713</sup> - and the tomb of Pompeius probably stood in or near Kasion. At the latest in the 5th century AD there must have been a church, which is possibly shown on the Medaba mosaic (127), and at the latest in the late sixth century AD a

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<sup>1708</sup> See § Analysis of the sources (The death of Pompeius Magnus).

<sup>1709</sup> Cf. expressions as the Kasion πρὸς τῷ Πηλουσίῳ (Strabon (40), Stephanos (125), Eustathios (149)), πλῆσιον Πηλουσίου πόλεως (*Chrestomathiae Strabonis* (46)), ἐγγὺς τοῦ Πηλουσίου (scholion at Dionysios (75)); Pelousion παραὶ Κασιώτιδα πέτρην (Dionysios (71)), sub Casio (Priscianus (121)); οἱ ἐν Πηλουσίῳ Κασιώται (91).

<sup>1710</sup> Against Clédat, 1909a, p. 768.

<sup>1711</sup> Against Seibert, 1969, p. 224.

<sup>1712</sup> So the statements of Clédat (1919a, p. 194; 1923a, p. 91.95.99.159; 1923b, p. 159) that Kasion had a harbour at the Mediterranean, or of Dothan, 1967a, p. 280 that it was possibly a landing for vessels travelling between Phoenicia and Egypt, are a mere hypothesis. There are no arguments to suppose - as Figueras, 1988a, p. 59 does - that the town at lake Serbonis was linked with the Mediterranean through a nearby channel, the Ekregma being filled up from the time from Strabon onwards and the man-made inlet known in 1909 being ephemeral. It is certainly unacceptable to state - as Graf, 1998, p. 109 does - that Diodoros (18) is mistaken stating that there was no harbour at Kasion, just because Zeus Kasios is supposed to be a god for sailors.

<sup>1713</sup> According to Figueras, 1999, p. 212 the temple existed 'since time immemorial', but this cannot be confirmed by the sources.

monastery, which probably continued to exist in the Arab period<sup>1714</sup>. There are no indications that the place was fortified<sup>1715</sup> or that there was a garrison.

### **Administrative situation**

For Herodotos (2) mount Kasion was the border between Egypt and Syria. In the late 4th century BC the political situation in the area had changed and at the latest by 306 BC the mountain was considered Ptolemaic territory (18), a situation that probably continued throughout the whole 3rd century BC. If the borderline in 170/169 BC lay near Rinokoloura, the battle fought between Pelousion and the Kasion took place on Egyptian soil (98). In 48 BC mount Kasion apparently again formed the borderline, with the camp of Kleopatra VII located at the Syrian side (54, 82). For Strabon and Plinius the Kasion lies outside of Egypt, although their evidence is contradictory. Strabon mentions the Kasion in his chapter on Phoenicia (41), but in his following description of Judaea (42), which is probably based upon another source, the mountain is considered the western border for the Idumaeans. For Plinius (63), however, Idumaea only starts in Ostrakine and the Kasion is part of Arabia (sc. Petraea). From the late 1st century AD on the Kasion belongs again to Egypt. Since the Kasiotis is apparently a region, not an administrative unit, it is not correct to consider Kasion the capital of the Kasiotis<sup>1716</sup>. Ammianus Marcellinus (106) places Kasion in the late 4th century AD in the Egyptian province Augustamnica and in the 6th century AD Hierokles (122) and Georgios of Cyprus (130) - followed by the late *Notitia Alexandrina* (156-158) - situate the city in the province Augustamnica I.

Mount Kasion was a point of reference for travellers across the northern Sinai and was therefore often visited, but a permanent settlement was probably very difficult because of the neighbouring marshes and the lack of drinking water. Stephanos (125) is the only one who explicitly calls Kasion a city (πόλις), and because the place was a see in the 5th century AD (113-117), this designation might

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<sup>1714</sup> Kasion should be added to Tsafir, 1994, map 5 ('Churches in Byzantine Palestine'). The imagination of Figueras, 1988a, p. 59 is unlimited: 'During the entire Byzantine period the episcopal city of Casium, with its fine-quality products, well-equipped inns and handsome churches and monasteries, was an important point in the region for both traders and pilgrims'.

<sup>1715</sup> Against Oren, 1993a, p. 1393; Évieux, 1995, p. 33.

<sup>1716</sup> Against De-Vit, 1868, II, p. 153; Clédat, 1923a, p. 162 and 1923b, p. 166. See s.v. Kasiotis.

be correct<sup>1717</sup>. Wagner, who stresses that the status of the place is not clear, sees Kasion as a village<sup>1718</sup>, but certainly for the Byzantine period I am inclined to consider it a city.

There is little information about the ethnic composition of Kasion. Onomastics do not help much, because only three people can be linked with that city. Horos son of Horos (**11-14**) seems to be an Egyptian, but the origin of Kasis son of Kasios (**80**) and (bishop) Lampetios (**110-114**) is not clear. So it is difficult to check Hieronymus' statement (**111**) that the people in the neighbourhood of Kasion spoke Syrian in the early 5th century AD.

### Identifications<sup>1719</sup>

Since the position of el-Qels well matches the distances of the ancient itineraries, and the archaeological remains testify to a fixed settlement there from the Hellenistic period on, there is little doubt that Kasion has to be located at cape el-Qels<sup>1720</sup>.

The unacceptable distinction between mount Kasion, which is situated at el-Qels, and the city and the temple of Kasion, which is often placed near Qatia, has already been discussed. Hartmann even supposes that the names Kasion and Qatia are etymologically linked<sup>1721</sup>, but the name Kasion probably became el-Qass in Arab sources<sup>1722</sup>, while Qatia only occurs from the 11th century AD on, so there are no arguments for any onomastic continuity.

Although most scholars accept the identification with el-Qels, sometimes a location at Mahammediya, at the western end of Sabkhat Bardawil and some 15 km east of Tell el-Farama, has been suggested<sup>1723</sup>. Most of Clédat's arguments have

<sup>1717</sup> Jones, 1971, p. 342-343 (cf. Lallemand, 1964, p. 101.106; Martin, 1996, p. 28, n. 47, p. 65, n. 149 and p. 82-83) thinks that the station Kasion became a city in the late 3rd century AD due to a reorganization of the region, but he gives no arguments for this statement, nor does he explain why he considers the place described in Ammianus Marcellinus, 22, 16, 3 (**106**) a 'municipium'.

<sup>1718</sup> Wagner, 1993b, p. 104, n. 12; for this issue, cf. also Worp, 1994, p. 316-317.

<sup>1719</sup> Fontaine, 1955, p. 67, n. 1 (cf. p. 230) is in doubt whether the toponym 'Cassis' (or 'Cassia?') between el-Salhiya and el-Farama on the map of Duval of 1672 (cf. Munier, 1929, p. 216, no. 2416), refers to Qatia or to Kasion, but the former suggestion seems to be more likely. I do not understand the expression 'Casius (Lougâ)' in Description, Andréossy, 1822, XI, p. 538.

<sup>1720</sup> See s.v. el-Qels.

<sup>1721</sup> Hartmann, 1899, p. 341; cf. Hartmann, 1916b, p. 375, n. 1; Wiegand, 1920a, col. 88. See s.v. Qatia.

<sup>1722</sup> See s.v. el-Qass.

<sup>1723</sup> Description, Rozière, 1822, VI, p. 287-288 (without mentioning a toponym, though, and later on abandoning his view [Description, Rozière, 1824, XX, p. 515-516]); Clédat, 1905c, p. 606-607 (in

## 6. Kasion

already been countered and Clédat himself came to accept the traditional identification of Kasion and el-Qels<sup>1724</sup>. His first view, though, is unfortunately still often being followed<sup>1725</sup>. Since Clédat saw that the situation of Mahammediya also matched that of Gerra in the ancient sources, he suggested an identification of Gerra and Kasion<sup>1726</sup>, which is also unacceptable.

Baal-Saphon, one of the stations on the Israelite exodus, has often been identified with Kasion<sup>1727</sup>, although a lot of other locations have also been suggested<sup>1728</sup>. It is not likely that the original itinerary of the exodus went through the northern Sinai<sup>1729</sup>. The possibility cannot be ruled out, however, that the geographical data mentioned in the bible in fact reflect a 6th or 5th century reconstruction of the geographical framework of the exodus, since they are mostly considered part of the

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contradiction with his own map on p. 603); Clédat, 1909a, p. 614.764-770.774; Clédat, 1910a, p. 209 with n. 1 and p. 214; Clédat, 1911, p. 433; Clédat, 1912, p. 159, n. 1; Clédat, 1913, p. 85; cf. Nau, 1911, p. 423; Roussel, 1916, p. 97; Lesquier, 1918, p. 401, n. 7; Steuernagel, Karl - Kees, Hermann, s.v. Kasion 2, in RE, X 2, 1919, col. 2264; cf. Gardiner, 1920, pl. 13; Wiegand, 1920a, col. 87; Salač, 1922, p. 166-167; Cook, 1925, II 2, p. 985; Hommel, 1926, p. 964, n. 2; Kees, Hermann, s.v. Συρβωνίς λίμνη, in RE, III A 1, 1927, col. 287 (tentatively). Paoletti, 1903, p. 104 identifies Kasion and el-Qels (where he knows a well and ruins of a building), but locates el-Qels on his map at the spot of Mahammediya, clearly distinguishing it from Ras el-Qasrun; it is not clear therefore whether he actually wants to locate Kasion in Mahammediya or just makes a mistake.

<sup>1724</sup> Cf. Clédat, 1920, p. 116; 1923a, p. 68 and p. 77, n. 3, where he explicitly mentions his change of mind.

<sup>1725</sup> Eissfeldt, 1932, p. 39 and p. 40, n. 4 and the map p. 72; Noth, 1947, p. 181; cf. Fontaine, 1956b, map 2; Walbank, 1957, I, p. 610; Damsté, 1968, p. 540; Colpe, Carsten, s.v. Kasion, in KP, III, 1969, col. 141; Seibert, 1969, p. 224 and the map p. 223; Gese, 1970, p. 127; Helck, 1971, p. 450, n. 30; Schwabl, Hans, s.v. Zeus. I. Epiklesen, in RE, X A, 1972, col. 321; Donner, 1974, p. 89; Norin, 1977, p. 27.33; Perneti, 1979, p. 288 and n. 319 (in contradiction with his map p. 282); Ebach, Jürgen, s.v. Kasion, in LÄ, III, 1980, col. 354; Sage, 1987, p. 163; Gaillard, 1988, p. 199 (in contradiction with his own map); TAVO B V 21, 1989; Donner, 1992, p. 78; Orth, 1993, p. 103 (in doubt); Wagner, 1993b, p. 104 (in contradiction with his own map 1993a, p. 1). The confusion that arose from this double identification, is clearly shown in the account of Janin, R., s.v. Casium, in DHGE, XI, 1949, col. 1299, in Littmann, 1954, p. 214.243, where even the archaeological data about el-Qels and Mahammediya are mixed up, in Lloyd, 1976, II, p. 42, where el-Qels is situated near Mahammediya, in Fedalto, 1988, p. 605, in Fauth, 1990, p. 111 and recently still on LÄ, VII, 1992, map 1, where Mahammediya is located at el-Qels next to Kasion.

<sup>1726</sup> Cf. Clédat, 1909a, p. 770.

<sup>1727</sup> Schleiden, 1858, p. 193 in Eissfeldt, 1932, p. 45; Brugsch, 1875, p. 30-34 and map; cf. also e.g. the maps of Eissfeldt, 1932, p. 72; Fontaine, 1956b, map 2; Rothenberg, 1961, p. 8; Aharoni, 1979, p. 197; Lipiński, Édouard, s.v. Baal-Çephôn, in Bogaert, 1987, map 3; Aharoni, 1993, map 48. Rutherford, 2000, p. 115 (cf. p. 107) on the other hand links Baal-Saphon with the sanctuary of Zeus Kasios at Pelousion (and not at mount Kasion), which lacks every ground.

<sup>1728</sup> The table of Fontaine, 1956b, p. 169 shows most of the different identifications made for Baal-Saphon of the exodus.

<sup>1729</sup> Cf. the views of Bietak, Manfred, s.v. Schilfmeer, in LÄ, 1984, V, col. 629-634 and Hoffmeier, 1997.



Priestly Code<sup>1730</sup>. Whether the toponym Baal-Saphon reflects the situation of the 16th or the 6th century BC, it is in both cases impossible, though, to prove that mount Kasion is actually referred to<sup>1731</sup> and I prefer to exclude the exodus dossier from my discussion of Kasion.

Brugsch identifies Kasion with the toponym Ḥṭyn, one of the New Kingdom stations on the road from Egypt to Syria mentioned in P.Anastasi I, and he even looks for an etymological link<sup>1732</sup>, but there is no reason for this identification. According to Gauthier Brugsch also identified both Ḥṭyn and Kasion with Qantara el-Khazna, which is well known as the older name of el-Qantara near the present-day Suez Canal<sup>1733</sup>; Gauthier apparently misinterpreted Brugsch phrasing, because the latter only seems to suggest an (unacceptable) etymological link between Ḥṭyn and the element el-Khazna, not an actual identification.

In a demotic topographical onomasticon of the 4th-2nd centuries BC Daressy reads T3-m[?]-n-p3-R<sup>c</sup> and Ḥ3siw, which he interprets respectively as 'the chapel of Ra', the Egyptian name of the temple of Zeus Kasios, and as mount Kasion. Chuvin and Zauzich, however, rightly locate the toponyms in the Delta, rejecting every link with Kasion<sup>1734</sup>.

In the same papyrus Chuvin reads the name Ḍpn, which he linked with Saphon and so with mount Kasion<sup>1735</sup>. The geographical context, however, is not clear: according to the interpretation of Zauzich the toponym belongs to an

<sup>1730</sup> Cf. Aimé-Giron, 1940, p. 457.460; Noth, 1947, p. 184-185; Lipiński, Édouard, s.v. ṣāpôn, in TWAT, 1989, VI, col. 1098; Koch, 1993, p. 213; Niehr, H., s.v. Baal-zaphon, in van der Toorn, DDD, 1995, col. 291.

<sup>1731</sup> Cf. Albright, 1950, p. 12-13; against (a.o.) Eissfeldt, 1932, p. 44-45 and Cazelles, 1987 [= 1955], p. 199-206.

<sup>1732</sup> P.Anastasi I, 27, 4 (4); cf. Brugsch, 1875, p. 31 and map; 1879, p. 592-594.915.1090 and 1880, p. 1090.1274; Gauthier, 1927, IV, p. 23 ('Hazi', 'Hazion', 'Ḥation', 'Ḥazîan' or 'Ḥazîna', translated as 'la terre de l'asyle'); rightly rejected by Wiedemann, 1890, p. 63. Cazelles, 1987 [= 1955], p. 202 (followed by Bonnet, 1987, p. 123, n. 121), who apparently did not know Brugsch's proposal, suggested the same identification without any new convincing arguments.

<sup>1733</sup> Cf. the map of the Description (1799) in Bietak, 1975, pl. 46 ('Pont du Trésor ou el Qanâtîr', which according to Gardiner, 1920, p. 105, n. 1 seems to be a translation of a local term 'Ḳanṯaret el-Ḥazneh'); Clédat, 1916b, p. 22 and 1924, p. 57 ('le "Pont du Trésor", el-Qantarah-el-Khazneh') and the map 1920, pl. 2. See s.v. el-Qantara.

<sup>1734</sup> P.Cairo dem. 31169, 2, 15.17; cf. Spiegelberg, 1908, p. 271-272; Daressy, 1911a, p. 162 and 1911b, p. 4; Clédat, 1923b, p. 157, n. 2; Gauthier, 1926, III, p. 154, 1927, IV, p. 154 and 1929, VI, p. 15; Abel, 1933, I, p. 385; O'Callaghan, R. T., s.v. Madaba, in DB, Suppl. V, 26, 1953, col. 695; Cazelles, 1987 [= 1955], p. 202 and n. 96; Chuvin, 1986, p. 48, n. 36; Zauzich, 1987a, p. 85-86.90; DBL, 2005, p. 134.

<sup>1735</sup> P.Cairo dem. 31169, 3, 16; cf. Spiegelberg, 1908, p. 273; Daressy, 1911a, p. 167 and 1911b, p. 6; Müller, 1911, col. 197; Cheshire, 1985, p. 21; Chuvin, 1986, p. 48 (followed by Lipiński, Édouard, s.v. ṣāpôn, in TWAT, 1989, VI, col. 1098; Fauth, 1990, p. 117; Koch, 1993, p. 213); Zauzich, 1987a, handout; Carrez-Maratray, 2001, p. 92-93; DBL, 2005, p. 135. See s.v. Itineraries.

unidentified group of four names, mentioned between the Pelousion region and more general geographical concepts. Therefore it is not certain whether this group continues the geographical list with a region east of Pelousion, or refers to something completely different. If, however, the reading is correct - other scholars did not manage to read the name - and if *Dpn* really stands for Saphon, it is not even sure that the Egyptian *Kasion* is referred to, because there is no reason to suppose that this place has ever been called Saphon, since it was most likely named after the Syrian mountain at a moment that this was called *Kasion* and no longer Saphon<sup>1736</sup>. Carrez-Maratray instead suggests a link with the cult of Baal-Saphon attested in Tahpanhes / Daphnai, but then one wonders why the name is not joined with the name T3-ih.t-p3-nḥs in 3, 10, which most likely refers to Tahpanhes.

In the same topographical list Chuvin also reads the name *Mktr b3k ḥmw*, 'Migdol du travail des charpentiers', which he locates in the northern Sinai and links with the 'Kasiotikos' technique<sup>1737</sup>. Carrez-Maratray, on the other hand, identifies this toponym with mount *Kasion* itself. There is no consensus, however, about the reading of the name or about its geographical context. So Zauzich reads *Mktr-'bnr-ḥm'*, while locating the four migdols at the four different borders of Egypt, and every possible link with the *Kasiotis* disappears.

In Arab sources the name *Kasion* has apparently been rendered as *el-Qass*, *Qasyun* or *el-Qais*<sup>1738</sup> and the ancient *Kasion* is perhaps identical with the 10th century road station *el-Qasr*, which is also called *Deir el-Nasara*<sup>1739</sup>. From the 14th century AD on the cape was called *Ras el-Qasrun*, which apparently became *Ras el-Burun* in Turkish and *el-Qels* in the language of the local Beduin<sup>1740</sup>.

In the Arabic 13th century *History of the patriarchs of Alexandria* the evangelist Marcus is said to die a martyr's death 'in the city of Qaisun, and this is Alexandria, which in the Hebrew language is called city of Amon'. The 'city of

<sup>1736</sup> See § Etymology and myths.

<sup>1737</sup> P.Cairo dem. 31169, 3, 23; cf. Spiegelberg, 1908, p. 278; Daressy, 1911a, p. 169 and 1911b, p. 6; Müller, 1911, col. 197; Offord, 1912, p. 204; Budge, 1920, p. 1002; Gardiner, 1920, p. 108; Gauthier, 1926, III, p. 22; De Meulenaere, 1951, p. 34; Cazelles, 1987 [= 1955], p. 212.214; Helck, 1971, p. 311 and s.v. Magdola 3, in *LÄ*, III, 1980, col. 1135; Thissen, *P.Köln ägypt.*, 1980, p. 63; Cheshire, 1985, p. 21; Chuvin, 1986, p. 50-51; Zauzich, 1987a, p. 88 and handout; Carrez-Maratray, 2001, p. 92; DBL, 2005, p. 135.

<sup>1738</sup> See s.v. *el-Qass*.

<sup>1739</sup> See s.v. *el-Qasr / Deir el-Nasara*.

<sup>1740</sup> See s.v. *Ras el-Qasrun*, s.v. *Ras el-Burun* and s.v. *el-Qels*.

Amon' is in fact Thebes, but already in the *Vulgata* (*Ezechiel*, 30, 14-16) this place is linked with Alexandria. The name Qaisun [qisun] is more puzzling. Evetts suggests several identifications (the Kaisareion in Alexandria [qisrun], Pelousion [flisun], the Pithom of the Exodus story [fisun]), and Nau adds Kasion [qsiun] as a fourth possibility, although he stresses that he prefers the identification with Pelousion<sup>1741</sup>. Personally, however, I see little arguments to accept the identification with Pelousion, Pithom or Kasion.

Clédat's identification of Kasion with the Arab road stations Umm el-Arab, el-Baqqara and el-Ghurabi is unacceptable<sup>1742</sup>.

On some maps of the 18th century AD the toponyms 'Mons Cassius' (taken from Strabon), 'Al Cas' (taken from the 'Tabula M. S. S. Patriarcha') and 'Tenere' (taken from the 'Tabula nautica') are linked<sup>1743</sup>. Fontaine is probably right identifying 'Tenere' with Tennis, the ancient Tenesos, but since this place has to be looked for in the eastern Delta, the link with Kasion is probably a mere mistake.

### Orthographic variants

According to the papyrological and epigraphic evidence and the metrics of Kallimachos (5), Dionysios (70-71), Lucanus (53-55), Avienus (107-108) and Priscianus (120-121) the common spelling is 'Kasio-' with one 's' (and a short 'a')<sup>1744</sup>, while the spelling with a double 's' occurs only occasionally in documentary sources<sup>1745</sup>. In a lot of literary texts, however, manuscripts yield both forms 'Kasio-'

<sup>1741</sup> *History of the patriarchs of Alexandria* (Evetts, 1907, p. 105-106); cf. Evetts, 1911, p. 416-421; Nau, 1911, p. 422-423 (who incorrectly identifies the Kasion mentioned by Peiresc, 1898 [= 1633], p. 857 with the Egyptian mountain).

<sup>1742</sup> Cf. Clédat, 1920, p. 118 and n. 1; 1923a, p. 63; 1923b, p. 161.189 (cf. Figueras, 2000, p. 160.174.195.258); also Wilkinson, 1977, p. 149.165 independently identified el-Warrada (read 'el-Baqqara') with Kasion. See the argumentation s.v. Umm el-Arab, s.v. el-Baqqara and s.v. el-Ghurabi.

<sup>1743</sup> Pococke, 1743(?) in Tzachou-Alexandri, 1995, p. 16; Robert de Vaugondy, 1757, pl. 96 in Clédat, 1910a, p. 233; cf. Fontaine, 1955, p. 74.238.

<sup>1744</sup> Cf. Adler, Ada, s.v. Kasios 2, in RE, X 2, 1919, col. 2265; Salač, 1922, p. 160, n. 5; Vilborg, 1962, p. 69. See also metrical examples with a single 's' for the Syrian mount Kasion or Zeus Kasios in Dionysios Periegetes, 880.901 (Brodersen, 1994, p. 98.100) [cf. Avienus, *Descriptio orbis terrae*, 1043.1059 (Van de Woestijne, 1961, p. 59.60); Priscianus, *Periegesis*, 822.840 (Van de Woestijne, 1953, p. 84.85)] and Hadrianus, *Anthologia Palatina*, 6, 332 (Beckby, 1965, I, p. 638) [cf. Arrianus, *Parthica*, F 36 (Roos, 1967 [= 1928], p. 236) = *Souda*, K 454, s.v. Κάσιον ὄρος (Adler, 1933, III, p. 39)]. The metrical Licentius, *Carmen ad Augustinum*, 65-66 (Shanzer, 1991, p. 114.120), however, has a double 's' for the Syrian Kasion.

<sup>1745</sup> Cf. e.g. the Kassiodoros in SB I, 599, 62 of the late 2nd century BC [see § Analysis of the sources (Zeus Kasios in Egypt)]; the Kassiodoros in IGLS III 1, 944, 4 (a metrical epitaph found in Antiocheia, date unknown). For the inscription διολασσῆο (IGLS III 2, 1226, a tile stamp found near the Syrian

and 'Kassio-' and for Cassius Dion (**93**) the names *Kasion* and *Cassius* were comparable. This writing with a double 's' has been explained by the parallel Akkadian forms *Ḫazi* and *Ḫazzi*; the first name would be rendered in Greek as *Kasion*, the second as *Kassion*<sup>1746</sup>. This independent evolution is rather odd, though, and since 's' and 'ss' are often interchangeable<sup>1747</sup>, 'Kassio-' is possibly just a phonetic variant, whose occurrence is perhaps due to its similarity with the name *Cassius*<sup>1748</sup>. The occasional form (Zeus) *Kassios* on the island *Korkyra* in some Roman documentary<sup>1749</sup> and numismatic sources<sup>1750</sup> might also be influenced by the name of the city of *Kassiope* there<sup>1751</sup>.

The only remarkable variant of the name *Kasion* is *Πικασπίσω* in the 5th century papyrus SB XXVI, 16607 (**118**); the beginning of the name (*Πι-*) possibly renders the Egyptian article 'p3' or to the element 'pr', 'house'; for the unexplained ending *πισω* no parallels are known<sup>1752</sup>.

'*Kasios*' at first seems to be used as an adjective (compare τὸ Κάσιον ὄρος and '*Casius mons*'; *Κασία ἄλς*; Zeus *Kasios*). Later on, the name of the mountain apparently became also the name of a village or city near that mountain. In some instances, though, it is not clear which of the two is referred to<sup>1753</sup> and the fact that the article is often still used (τὸ Κάσιον) even when obviously the city is meant, indicates that even in the Roman and Byzantine periods the name of the mountain and the settlement was interchangeable. The place is usually called *Kasion*, with a neuter form, as it is clear from Ptolemaios (**82**), Ammianus (**106**), Hierokles (**122**), the

mount *Kasion*, date unknown) the editor's suggestion *Διὸς* <*Κασσίω*> ('of Zeus *Kassios*') seems very hypothetical; cf. Schwabl, Hans, s.v. Zeus. II - Nachträge, in RE, Suppl. XV, 1978, col. 1178.

<sup>1746</sup> See § Etymology and myths.

<sup>1747</sup> Mayser, 1970, I 1, p. 189-194; Gignac, 1976, I, p. 158-160. See also the Latin nomen gentilicium *Cassius* rendered both as *Kassios* and *Kasios* in Greek.

<sup>1748</sup> This is perhaps the case for the name of the 6th century Latin author *Cassiodorus*, possibly originating from a Syrian family.

<sup>1749</sup> Cf. SEG XXIII, 477, 1 (in a metrical text, 1st-2nd centuries AD); SEG XXIII, 395, 1 (restored, 2nd century AD?).

<sup>1750</sup> Cf. Gardner, 1883, p. 154, no. 577 (ca. 48 BC - 138 AD) and p. 159, no. 638-639 (ca. 161-180 AD).

<sup>1751</sup> For this homophony, cf. Bonnet, 1987, p. 131. The first element of the personal name *Kassiopeia*, which can possibly be translated as 'eine sich durch ihr Geschicht, ihren Anblick Auszeichnende', is probably derived from the verb *καίνυμαι* (cf. Bubbe, Walter, s.v. *Kassiopeia*, in RE, X 2, 1919, col. 2315), and has nothing to do with *Kasios* (against Tümpel, Karl, s.v. *Kassiopeia*, in Roscher, 1890-1894, II 1, col. 995).

<sup>1752</sup> Noordegraaf, 1938, p. 282; cf. Thomsen, 1942, p. 124. For the element *Πι-* that corresponds with the Bohairic article 'pi-', cf. Till, 1961, p. 14, § 64; van Minnen, 1986, p. 88.

<sup>1753</sup> Cf. the discussion of *Vitruvius* (**30**) and *Chrestomathiae ex Strabonis Geographicorum*, 16, 32 (**45**), where probably mount *Kasion* is referred to. Ptolemaios (**84**) seems to be the first source for the city of *Kasion*.

Medaba mosaic (127) and Georgios (130). In the Coptic acts of the Ephesos council (113-114) and in the late *Notitia Alexandria* (156-158) the masculine form Kasios is perhaps only secondary.

It is difficult to determine whether the adjectives Kasiotes and Kasiotikos, which is apparently formed upon 'Kasiotes'<sup>1754</sup>, refer to mount Kasion, to the city Kasion or to the Kasiotis region. One expects an ethnic to be linked with a city rather than with a mountain, but the sources are silent on any fixed settlement near mount Kasion before the 1st century BC, while the adjective Kasiotikos is well-known from the 3rd century BC on. It seems best to suppose that the name of the mountain led to the name Kasiotis, which was used to indicate the region round mount Kasion, and that the adjective Kasiotikos refers to this region<sup>1755</sup>. The ethnic Kasiotes occurs possibly for the first time in the 1st century BC (11-14)<sup>1756</sup> and is probably linked with the city. At the latest from the 3rd century AD on this ethnic does no longer seem to indicate an inhabitant of Kasion, but became a professional qualification (169, 171)<sup>1757</sup>.

The adjective 'Kasianos' only occurs in the 12th century AD (149) and is apparently formed in analogy to Latin adjectives such as 'Pelusianus'.

### **Etymology, myths and religion**

According to Skylax (4) a certain Pelousios, apparently the eponym of the city of Pelousion, came to the Kasion, while for Epiphanius (201) a skipper Kasios, whose name probably refers to Zeus Kasios, became worshipped as a god in Pelousion, but further information about these persons is lacking. According to Stephanos (125) the

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<sup>1754</sup> Similar examples from the eastern Delta as Τανιτικός, Ἡρωπολιτικός and Ἀθριβιτικός seem to be based upon the name of the nome; cf. also Mendesicus and perhaps Ἀραβικός and Σεβεινυτικός. Adjectives as Τανικός, Πηλουσιακός, Βουβαστικός and Βουσιρικός, on the other hand, are apparently based upon the name of the city. There does not seem to be any difference, though, in the use of both groups of adjectives.

<sup>1755</sup> The possibility, however, cannot be excluded that the adjective Kasiotikos is simply derived from the ethnic Kasiotes, as a kind of secondary adjectival formation, like it is probably the case with the geographical adjectives Italiotikos, Korakesiotikos, Nesiotikos, Passaliotikos.

<sup>1756</sup> In P.Bingen, 45, 3 (Alexandria, 33 BC) the reading Πόλλι(ω)ι(?) Κασιώ(τ)ηι ('to Pollios(?) Kasiotes') is to be corrected in Πόπλι(ω)ι Κανιδί(ω)ι ('to Publius Canidius'); cf. van Minnen, 2000, p. 32-33 and 2001, p. 74-75.

<sup>1757</sup> See § Analysis of the sources (Kasiotikos).

## 6. *Kasion*

Kasion is named either after the Aegean island Kasos or after a certain Kasos son of Kleochos<sup>1758</sup>, who founded a sanctuary of Zeus Kasios at the Syrian Kasion.

Modern scholars have been looking for other etymologies. For Ebers the name Kasion has been derived from the Coptic ⲄⲁⲚϥ, Ⲅⲓϥⲓ, 'height, mountain', and he locates the biblical people of the Kasluhim, a name that he considers etymologically linked, in the neighbourhood<sup>1759</sup>. The etymological link, which Brugsch suggested between the New Kingdom northern Sinai toponym Ḥṯn and the name Kasion, has already been mentioned<sup>1760</sup>. Some scholars look for parallels with the Aramaic or Hebrew words for 'height' or 'summit' ('qāṣyu(n)')<sup>1761</sup>; for 'judge'<sup>1762</sup>; for the sound made when an aerolite drops down ('qâṣac, qâcah')<sup>1763</sup>; for 'extremity' or 'border' ('qaṣeh, qaṣou')<sup>1764</sup>. Grasberger links the name with the root 'ka-, can-', 'shine'<sup>1765</sup>. The suggested etymological link between Kasios and the Greek words καθσιος = καθάρσιος or κωδιοφόρος is not based on any argument, as already noticed by Salač<sup>1766</sup>. Hommel links the name with the Greek word κασία, 'cassia perfume'<sup>1767</sup>. Goetze's etymological explanation, however, is now generally accepted. The Syrian mount Kasion was called Ṣpn or Saphon in Ugaritic and Canaanite texts, Ḥaz(z)i in Akkadian and Hittite texts; the latter name was rendered as Kasion in Greek<sup>1768</sup>.

<sup>1758</sup> Cf. Stoll, H. W., s.v. Kasos, in Roscher, 1890-1894, II 1, col. 974.

<sup>1759</sup> Ebers, 1868, p.121 and n. 1, followed by Carrez-Maratray, 2001, p. 87.96; rejected in Wiedemann, 1890, p. 63-64. For the Kasluhim, cf. Odelain, 1978, p. 223, s.v. Kasluh.

<sup>1760</sup> See § Identifications.

<sup>1761</sup> de Vogüé, 1868-1877, p. 104 (cf. Baudissin, 1878, II, p. 238-239); followed by Wiedemann, 1890, p. 63; Eissfeldt, 1932, p. 38; Janin, R., s.v. Casium, in DHGE, XI, 1949, col. 1299; Colpe, Carsten, s.v. Kasion, in KP, III, 1969, col. 141; rejected by Albright, 1950, p. 2, n. 4 and Fauth, 1990, p. 108. The god (Zeus) Kasios has been looked for in some Nabataean inscriptions, but Qasiu is a tribal or a personal name and has nothing to do with the name Kasios; cf. de Vogüé, 1868-1877, p. 96 (Hauran, no. 5) and p. 103.107.112 (Nabataean, no. 4, 2; 6, 2; 7, 1.2); Baudissin, 1878, II, p. 238-239; Adler, Ada, s.v. Kasios 2, in RE, X 2, 1919, col. 2266; Sourdel, 1952, p. 21; Littmann, 1954, p. 231.242; Weber, 1974, p. 204, n. 7.

<sup>1762</sup> Baudissin, 1878, II, p. 239; rejected by Adler, Ada, s.v. Kasios 2, in RE, X 2, 1919, col. 2266.

<sup>1763</sup> Lenormant, François, s.v. Casius, in Daremberg, 1887, I 2, p. 935; still followed by Vulpe, 1977, p. 124.130; cf. Drexler, W., s.v. Kasios, in Roscher, 1890-1894, II 1, col. 970 (who also describes the three earlier suggestions and rejects another of Movers).

<sup>1764</sup> Bochart in Ebers, 1868, p. 121, n. 2; Abel, 1933, I, p. 337.386; rejected by O'Callaghan, R. T., s.v. Madaba, in DB, Suppl. V, 26, 1953, col. 695.

<sup>1765</sup> Grasberger, 1888, p. 175; cf. Pape, 1911, p. 631: 'der Leuchtende, der Hervorglänzende' (see also Steuding, H., s.v. Casius, in Roscher, 1884-1886, I 1, col. 855).

<sup>1766</sup> Baunack and Tümpel in Drexler, W., s.v. Kasios, in Roscher, 1890-1894, II 1, col. 974 and Salač, 1922, p. 181-182.

<sup>1767</sup> Hommel, 1926, p. 724, n. 1.

<sup>1768</sup> Cf. Goetze, 1940, p. 32-33; Friedrich, 1943, p. 4; Albright, 1950, p. 2; O'Callaghan, R. T., s.v. Madaba, in DB, Suppl. V, 26, 1953, col. 695; Lipiński, 1971, p. 63-64; Ebach, 1979, p. 142, n. 41 and p. 146-147 and s.v. Kasion, in LÄ, III, 1980, col. 354; Bonnet, 1987, p. 117.125; Lipiński, Édouard, s.v. ṣāpôn, in TWAT, 1989, VI, col. 1098; Görg, Manfred, s.v. Baal-Zefon, in Görg, 1991 [= 1989], I,

## 6. Kasion

If the etymology of the (Syrian) name Kasion is well established, it is not clear, though, why the small hill in the northern Sinai got that specific name. Most scholars suppose that both the Syrian and the Egyptian name Kasion have the same etymology, and indeed there are thus far no indications in favour of a separate etymology for the Egyptian Kasion, especially because the Egyptian name of that mountain is not known. It is therefore generally assumed that the name is derived from Syria, but it is not clear whether it was named after the Syrian Zeus Kasios, after the Syrian mount Kasion or after a combination of both elements.

The cult of Zeus Kasios on mount Kasion in the Sinai is attested only from the 1st century BC on, while the name Kasion is known already in the 5th century BC. Zeus Kasios, though, is apparently the Greek transposition of the Semitic god Baal-Saphon, who was worshipped as a weather god and as a protector of sailors on mount Kasion in Syria<sup>1769</sup>. The god is already attested in Egypt in the Second Intermediate period on a seal found in Tell el-Dab'a in the eastern Delta. In the New Kingdom he probably had a sanctuary in Memphis. The cult of Baal-Saphon is attested twice in Tyros in the 7th and 6th centuries BC<sup>1770</sup>. One can only speculate whether the Baal-Saphon known in Egypt in the Late period originates from mount Kasion or from Tyros<sup>1771</sup> or is a remnant of his New Kingdom cult. The god is mentioned in an Egyptian context on three occasions<sup>1772</sup>. In a Phoenician papyrus from Saqqara,

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col. 225; Fauth, 1990, p. 107-108; Koch, 1993, p. 214; Niehr, H., s.v. Baal-zaphon, in van der Toorn, DDD, 1995, col. 290. The meaning of the name Ḥaz(z)i itself is apparently not clear.

<sup>1769</sup> For the god Baal-Saphon, cf. Goodwin, 1873, p. 14; Eissfeldt, 1932; Aimé-Giron, 1940, p. 453-457; Albright, 1950, p. 1-14; Klauser, Theodor, s.v. Baal, in RAC, 1950, I, col. 1064.1066.1076-1077.1801; Eissfeldt, 1962, p. 338-340; Fauth, Wolfgang, s.v. Baal, in KP, I, 1964, col. 793; Helck, 1966, p. 1-4; Stadelmann, 1967, p. 27-47; de Moor, 1970, p. 306-309; Gese, 1970, p. 63-64.123-128; Helck, 1971, p. 445.447-450.471; Lipiński, 1971, p. 58-64; Benz, 1972, p. 401-402; van Zijl, 1972, p. 332-336; Helck, Wolfgang, s.v. Götter, fremde in Ägypten, in LÄ, II, 1977, col. 643; Norin, 1977, p. 46-51; Ebach, 1979, p. 144-148; Bordreuil, 1986, p. 82-86; Chuvin, 1986, p. 42-44.48; Bonnet, 1987, p. 101-143; Lipiński, Édouard, s.v. Baal-Çephôn, in Bogaert, 1987, p. 174; del Olmo Lete, 1988, p. 11-17; Görg, Manfred, s.v. Baal-Zefon, in Görg, 1991 [= 1989], I, col. 225-226; Lipiński, Édouard, s.v. šā pôn, in TWAT, 1989, VI, col. 1097-1098; Dijkstra, 1991, p. 127-140; Bonnet, Corinne, s.v. Baal Saphon, in Lipiński, 1992, p. 60-61; Koch, 1993, p. 171-223; Niehr, H., s.v. Baal-zaphon and s.v. Zaphon, in van der Toorn, DDD, 1995, col. 289-293.1746-1750; Carrez-Maratray, 2001, p. 87-100.

<sup>1770</sup> The names Zeus Kasios and Zeus Sarapis appear on two amulets, dated after 150 AD and found in Kaisareia Philippi near Tyros (cf. Weber, 1974, p. 201-207; Chuvin, 1986, p. 59 and n. 76); it is not very likely, however, that this Zeus Kasios is a remnant of the old Baal-Saphon known in Tyros.

<sup>1771</sup> Bordreuil, 1986, p. 84-86 suggests that the Baal-Saphon of Tyros is derived from the cult in the Egyptian eastern Delta and not from the Syrian mount Kasion, but his arguments are not convincing (cf. Bonnet, 1987, p. 116-118; Niehr, H., s.v. Baal-zaphon, in van der Toorn, DDD, 1995, col. 291).

<sup>1772</sup> Daressy's reading Mktr pf b'r-dpn in P.Cairo dem. 31169, 3, 22, which he linked with the biblical Baal-Saphon, has not been accepted; cf. Spiegelberg, 1908, p. 273; Daressy, 1911a, p. 169.170 and 1911b, p. 6; Müller, 1911, col. 197; Offord, 1912, p. 204; Budge, 1920, p. 1002; Gardiner, 1920, p. 108; Gauthier, 1926, III, p. 21; Cazelles, 1987 [= 1955], p. 203; Chuvin, 1986, p. 50; Zauzich, 1987a, p. 88 and handout; DBL, 2005, p. 135.

probably to be dated in the second half of the 6th century BC, a woman, possibly residing in Tahpanhes, greets another, who possibly stayed in the neighbourhood of Memphis: 'I bless you to Baal-Saphon and all the gods of Tahpanhes'<sup>1773</sup>. The toponym Tahpanhes is rendered in Greek sources as Daphnai and can be located in Tell Defenna, some 40 km southwest of el-Farama<sup>1774</sup>. Also in the eastern Delta a place Baal-Saphon occurs as one of the stations of the Israelites at the beginning of their exodus. It is not clear whether the name refers to the actual exodus and so can be linked with the seal of Tell el-Dab'a or if its mention is due to a redaction of the text that took place about the 6th-5th century BC, and therefore is related with the Baal-Saphon of Tahpanhes<sup>1775</sup>. The third occurrence is in a papyrus that possibly originates from Memphis and contains some Aramaic religious literary texts; it is written in demotic characters and probably belongs to the 5th century BC. Mount Saphon is mentioned three times, twice in connection with the god Baal. In a list of eight gods of Mesopotamia and Syria Baal pronounces his blessings while residing on mount Saphon: 'May Baal bless you from the Saphon'<sup>1776</sup>, a phrase which is paralleled in 'May Baal bless Yaho from the Saphon'<sup>1777</sup>. In another context it is the god 'Yaho' who sends his gifts 'from the entire Resh and from the Saphon'<sup>1778</sup>. Some scholars

<sup>1773</sup> KAI 50, 2-3 (Donner, 1966, I, p. 12 and 1968, II, p. 67-68). Cf. Aimé-Giron, 1940, p. 433-443 and pl. 40; Dupont-Sommer, 1949, p. 52-57; Albright, 1950, p. 9.13; Pardee, 1982, p. 165-168 (with further literature); Greenfield, 1984, p. 242-244; Oren, 1984a, p. 36; Bordreuil, 1986, p. 85; Chuvin, 1986, p. 42 and n. 4; Bonnet, 1987, p. 121-122; Görg, Manfred, s.v. Baal-Zefon, in Görg, 1991 [= 1989], I, col. 225-226; Lipiński, Édouard, s.v. šāpôn, in TWAT, 1989, VI, col. 1098; Koch, 1993, p. 213; Niehr, H., s.v. Baal-zaphon, in van der Toorn, DDD, 1995, col. 291; Carrez-Maratray, 2001, p. 92.

<sup>1774</sup> The location of Tahpanhes '55 km east of Pelousion', i.e. at Ras el-Qasrun (Kasion), in Bordreuil, 1986, p. 85 is a mistake, due to a wrong interpretation of Albright, 1950, p. 12-14. Aimé-Giron, 1940, p. 447-453 and pl. 42 (cf. Norin, 1977, p. 30; Bonnet, 1987, p. 122; Jones, 1988, p. 52) thinks that stele Cairo 25147, dated 7th or 6th century BC and said to be found at Tell Defenna, represents the god Baal-Saphon, but this identification has been rejected by Albright, 1950, p. 11, n. 1. Carrez-Maratray, 2001, p. 93-94 (cf. 1999b, p. 274.284-286) also points out a Greek situla, possibly originating from Rhodos ca. 550-525 BC and found in Tell Defenna, which depicts a winged Typhon with the tail of a serpent (cf. Touchefeu-Meynier, Odette, s.v. Typhon, in LIMC, 1997, VIII 1, p. 149 and VIII 2, p. 113, fig. 11); linking, however, this Typhon with the cult of Baal-Saphon attested in that same place is a mere hypothesis.

<sup>1775</sup> See § Identifications.

<sup>1776</sup> P.Amh.Eg. 63, 8, 3; cf. Vleeming, 1985, p. 55. For the provenance and date, cf. Bresciani, 1995, p. 98; DBL, 2005, p. ++. Chuvin, 1986, p. 42, n. 4 incorrectly links this papyrus with Daphnai and the eastern Delta.

<sup>1777</sup> P.Amh.Eg. 63, 13, 15-16; cf. Vleeming, 1985, p. 73; Wesselius, TUAT, 1991, II 6, p. 934. The alleged link with the god Horos (cf. Nims, 1983, p. 266.271; Bonnet, 1987, p. 124; Kottsieper, 1988a, p. 61.63.70 and 1988b, p. 224-226; Lipiński, Édouard, s.v. šāpôn, in TWAT, 1989, VI, col. 1098; Bonnet, Corinne, s.v. Baal Saphon, in Lipiński, 1992, p. 60; Koch, 1993, p. 213; Lipiński, 1995, p. 247-248) has been rejected by Vleeming, 1984, p. 112 and 1985, p. 52 and Zauzich, 1985, p. 89-90.

<sup>1778</sup> P.Amh.Eg. 63, 12, 13; cf. Vleeming, 1985, p. 51; Kottsieper, 1988a, p. 75 and 1988b, p. 223; Wesselius, TUAT, 1991, II 6, p. 933; see also Fauth, 1990, p. 112, n. 70, p. 117, n. 118 and p. 118, n.



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think that the Egyptian mount Saphon (or Kasion) is referred to<sup>1779</sup>, but since the people who composed the texts, probably originated from southern Phoenicia in the neighbourhood of Tyros, Vleeming rightly supposes that the Syrian Saphon is meant<sup>1780</sup>. Sometimes Baal-Saphon is said to be identical with Typhon, while it is pointed out that this god is closely linked with lake Serbonis next to mount Kasion<sup>1781</sup>. The classical authors, however, connect the Egyptian Typhon or Seth only with the lake, never with the mountain, and there is no reason to consider the Kasion the 'seat' of this monster or god. Fauth also rightly points out that Baal-Saphon / Zeus Kasios is the mythological opponent of Typhon and that they can therefore hardly be identical<sup>1782</sup>.

So, although Baal-Saphon was definitely known in the eastern Delta in the Second Intermediate period and about the 6th century BC, there are no indications that he was worshipped in the northern Sinai. This could be due to the deficiency of our documentation, but the fact that no cult is mentioned in the numerous descriptions of the northern Sinai ranging from the 7th till the 1st century BC, makes one wonder whether there was any actual sanctuary at mount Kasion dedicated to Baal-Saphon or Zeus Kasios before the 1st century BC. The latter god was worshipped elsewhere in Egypt already in the 3rd century BC, while also the first attested inhabitant of Kasion has the Egyptian name Horos son of Horos; it is therefore perhaps not unlikely that the temple at the Kasion was an Egyptian foundation and not a cult place of Phoenician sailors, as often has been maintained<sup>1783</sup>.

Even if the Egyptian mount Kasion is not named after an actual local cult of Baal-Saphon or Zeus Kasios, it is not unlikely, however, that the naming had some religious connotations. The small hill in the northern Sinai on the shore of the

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131. The reading 'Saphon' in 18, 13 (cf. Steiner, 1985, p. 63.70; followed by Bonnet, 1987, p. 125) is described as 'fantasy' by Vleeming, 1985, p. 31.33.

<sup>1779</sup> Nims, 1983, p. 266; Lipiński, Edouard, s.v. Baal-Çephôn, in Bogaert, 1987, p. 174 and s.v. šāpôn, in TWAT, 1989, VI, col. 1098; Bonnet, Corinne, s.v. Baal Saphon, in Lipiński, 1992, p. 60; Lipiński, 1995, p. 247-248 and n. 185.

<sup>1780</sup> Vleeming, 1982, p. 507 and 1985, p. 9.46.55; Kottsieper, 1988a, p. 67; Wesselius, TUAT, 1991, II 6, p. 933, n. b; Niehr, H., s.v. Zaphon, in van der Toorn, DDD, 1995, col. 1748; cf. also Bowman, 1944, p. 266 and Albright, 1950, p. 9-11.

<sup>1781</sup> Cf. Steuernagel, Karl - Kees, Hermann, s.v. Kasion 2, in RE, X 2, 1919, col. 2264; Bonnet, 1952, p. 370; Cazelles, 1987 [= 1955], p. 201; Gese, 1970, p. 64.127; Donner, 1974, p. 86-91; Bonnet, 1987, p. 132-143; Koch, 1993, p. 215-216.

<sup>1782</sup> Fauth, 1990, p. 114-115, who p. 108, n. 26 also denies any etymological link between the names Typhon and Saphon. A similar view had been expressed by Schwabl, Hans, s.v. Zeus. II - Nachträge, in RE, Suppl. XV, 1978, col. 1459-1460, who sees Zeus Kasios / Horos (Harpokrates) on the mountain as the opponent of Typhon / Seth in the lake.

<sup>1783</sup> See also Carrez-Maratray, 2001, p. 87-100.

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Mediterranean was probably a landmark for sailors, but at the same time formed a dangerous spot because of the shallow coast in front of it. The mountain so might have been dedicated to the Syrian Zeus Kasios, protector of seamen, and - despite the difference in height - been named after the Syrian mount Kasion, where the god was worshipped<sup>1784</sup>. Other aspects involved are perhaps the situation of both mountains at the northern and the southern end of the Phoenician coast and their common function as landmark. One can also not rule out the possibility that the unknown Egyptian name of mount Kasion in some way resembled the name Kasion and was reinterpreted as such<sup>1785</sup>.

The Syrian mount Kasion was called Saphon in an earlier period and so some scholars suppose that also the mountain in the northern Sinai was named Saphon at first. In Syria the change of name is related with the different languages in use in the area of mount Kasion, but in Egypt it is hard to explain why the name Saphon would have changed into Kasion<sup>1786</sup>. I am therefore inclined to think that the Egyptian mountain received its name only when the name Kasion was already in use for the Syrian mountain, and that it has never been called Saphon.

### **Homonyms**

The best-known homonym is the Syrian mount Kasion, some 40 km north of Ugarit, near Antiocheia and Apameia, at the mouth of the Orontes<sup>1787</sup>. The mountain is mentioned in several sources from the 2nd millennium on under the names Ḫaz(z)i and Saphon, while the Greek name Kasion occurs for the first time under Seleukos I Nikator about 300 BC<sup>1788</sup>. Unfortunately, it is not always evident whether the Egyptian or the Syrian mountain is referred to and both ancient authors and modern

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<sup>1784</sup> Cf. Eissfeldt, 1932, p. 43.

<sup>1785</sup> Cf. Carrez-Maratray, 2001, p. 87.96.

<sup>1786</sup> The explanation of Eissfeldt, 1932, p. 43 and Colpe, Carsten, s.v. Kasion, in KP, III, 1969, col. 141 that the two mountains constantly remained connected and that therefore also in Egypt the change of name occurred, is not very convincing.

<sup>1787</sup> The location of the Kasion near the Euphrates in *Souda*, K 454, s.v. Κάσιον ὄρος (Adler, 1933, III, p. 39) [Κάσιον ὄρος· πρὸς τῷ Εὐφράτῃ ('mount Kasion: near the Euphrates')] is probably a mere mistake; cf. Steuernagel, Karl - Kees, Hermann, s.v. Kasion 2c, in RE, X 2, 1919, col. 2264; there is no reason to follow Figueras, 2000, p. 177 that it is a third mountain with the name Kasion.

<sup>1788</sup> Cf. Malalas, *Chronographia*, 8, 12 (Dindorf, 1831, p. 199); Pausanias of Antiocheia, FGrHist no. 854, F 10.

scholars often mixed up the two<sup>1789</sup>. The name *Kasion* is also linked with other Syrian toponyms: mount *Antikasion*<sup>1790</sup>, the *Kasiotis* region<sup>1791</sup>, and perhaps also the city of *Kasiana* near *Apameia*<sup>1792</sup>.

In the early 3rd century AD a *Topos Kasionos* exists probably in the neighbourhood of *Philadelphieia* in the *Arsinoites*<sup>1793</sup>. *Chuvin* thinks that the name reflects a local cult of *Zeus Kasios*, but I cannot share this point of view. The name probably refers to the 'place of (a certain) *Kasion*', and even if this personal name would have a theophoric character, it has no implications about a local cult.

In the 4th century AD *Avienus* mentions a 'mons *Cassius*' at the southern coast of Portugal or in southwest Spain<sup>1794</sup>, but one can only guess whether this name has something to do with *Zeus Kasios* or with the Syrian or the Egyptian mount *Kasion*<sup>1795</sup>. In any case, an etymological link with the word *κασσίτερος* ('tin'), as implied by *Avienus*, seems just as plausible.

### Analysis of the sources<sup>1796</sup>

<sup>1789</sup> See § Analysis of the sources, with the discussion of *Strabon's* comment on *Eratosthenes* (38), of *Pomponius Mela* (51) and others about the sunrise visible from mount *Kasion*, of *Pseudo-Apollodoros* about *Typhon*, *Philon* about the *Dioskouroi*, and of a scholion at *Dionysios* (75). Similar complications occur in the study of *Zeus Kasios'* presence outside of *Egypt* and *Syria*, and in onomastics involving the names *Kasios* and *Kasiodoros*.

<sup>1790</sup> *Strabon*, 16, 2, 8 (C 751) [τὸ Κάσιον ὄρος καὶ τὸ Ἀντικάσιον ('mount *Kasion* and the *Antikasion*')]; cf. *Benzinger*, *Immanuel*, s.v. *Antikasios*, in *RE*, I 2, 1894, col. 2424; *Eissfeldt*, 1932, p. 13; *Dijkstra*, 1991, p. 131.

<sup>1791</sup> See s.v. *Kasiotis*.

<sup>1792</sup> *Strabon*, 16, 2, 10 (C 752) [ἐν Κασσιανῶσις - τῶν Κασσιανῶν]; cf. *Beer*, *Georg*, s.v. *Kasiana*, in *RE*, X 2, 1919, col. 2263.

<sup>1793</sup> *P.Ross.-Georg*, V, 58, 56 [τόπος Κασίωνος]; for the place and date, cf. *BL IX*, 1995, p. 227. For *Topos Kasionos*, cf. *Calderini*, 1978, III 1, p. 83; *Chuvin*, 1986, p. 58. For the personal name *Kasion*, see § Analysis of the sources (*Zeus Kasios* in *Egypt*).

<sup>1794</sup> *Avienus*, *Ora maritima*, 259-261 (*Murphy*, 1977, p. 18): *Cassius inde mons tumet. I et Graia ab ipso lingua cassiterum prius I stamnum vocavit* ('Next mount *Cassius* rises up. Because of this mountain, the Greek tongue formerly called tin "cassiterum"); cf. *Murphy*, 1977, p. 57 and the maps p. 78-79.

<sup>1795</sup> Against *Chuvin*, 1986, p. 61.

<sup>1796</sup> Some sources, considered references to the Egyptian *Kasion*, in fact refer to the Syrian mountain: *Euhemerios*, *FGrHist* no. 63, F 2 (= *Diodoros*, 6, 1, 10; = *Eusebios*, *Praeparatio evangelica*, 2, 2, 61 - *Des Places*, 1982, I, p. 77) in *Pape*, 1911, p. 631, s.v. *Kasion 1* and s.v. *Kasios 5*; *Dionysios Periegetes*, 880.901 (*Brodersen*, 1994, p. 98.100) in *Bernhardy* and *Hillius* (as mentioned in *Müller*, 1861, II, p. 158) and in *Tsafrir*, 1994, p. 101 (cf. also the doubt in *Baudissin*, 1878, II, p. 243, n. 6); *Pausanias* of *Antiocheia*, *FGrHist* no. 854, F 10 (= *Malalas*, *Chronographia*, 8, 12 - *Dindorf*, 1831, p. 199) in *Wiedemann*, 1890, p. 63 and *Steuernagel*, *Karl - Kees*, *Hermann*, s.v. *Kasion 2*, in *RE*, X 2, 1919, col. 2264; *Ammianus Marcellinus*, 22, 14, 4 in the same scholars and in *Miller*, 1916, col. 813 and *Brooks*, 1926, III, p. 266, n. 8; *Libanios*, *Orationes*, 11, 116 (*Foerster*, 1903, p. 474) and 18, 172 in *Figueras*, 2000, p. 123. The *Kasion* mentioned in *Strabon*, 1, 3, 4 (C 50) (35), 16, 1, 12 (C 741) (38), 16, 2, 26-34 (C 758-760) (39-42) is incorrectly situated in *Syria* in the *Strabon* index of *Jones*, 1949, p. 283. According to *Clédat*, 1923b, p. 161 the toponym *κῶις*, mentioned in the Coptic martyrion of *Piroou*, who was killed in *Pelousion* under *Diocletianus*, is a mistake for *Kasion*, but *Timm*, 1991, V, p. 2133

## 6. Kasion

*Mount Kasion in the 5th and 4th centuries BC*

*Kasiotikos*

*Mount Kasion in the Ptolemaic period*

*Zeus Kasios and Tachnepsis on Delos*

*The death of Pompeius Magnus*

*Mount Kasion in Syria and in Egypt*

*Kasion in the Roman period*

*Kasion in the Byzantine period*

*Zeus Kasios in Egypt*

*Zeus Kasios in Egyptian onomastics*

### *Mount Kasion in the 5th and 4th centuries BC*

For Herodotos (1) Egypt lies along the Mediterranean, from the Gulf of Plinthine in the west to lake Serbonis in the east, and this lake lies next to mount Kasion<sup>1797</sup>:

αὐτὶς δὲ αὐτῆς ἐστὶ Αἰγύπτου μῆκος τὸ παρὰ θάλασσαν ἐξήκοντα σχοῖνοι, κατὰ ἡμεῖς διαιρέομεν εἶναι Αἴγυπτον ἀπὸ τοῦ Πλινθινήτεω κόλπου μέχρι Σερβωνίδος λίμνης, παρ' ἣν τὸ Κάσιον ὄρος τεῖνει· ταύτης ὦν ἅπο οἱ ἐξήκοντα σχοῖνοί εἰσι.

'Further, the length of the seacoast of Egypt itself is sixty schoinoi, that is of Egypt, as we judge it to be, reaching from the Gulf of Plinthine to lake Serbonis, which is next to mount Kasion; between these there is this length of sixty schoinoi.'

Mount Kasion itself apparently formed the border between Egypt and Syria and was for Herodotos (2) at the same time the northern end of the isthmus between the Mediterranean and the Red Sea<sup>1798</sup>:

τῇ δὲ ἐλάχιστόν ἐστι καὶ συντομώτατον ἐκ τῆς βορρῆνης θαλάσσης ὑπερβῆναι ἐς τὴν νοτίην καὶ Ἐρυθρὴν τὴν αὐτὴν ταύτην καλεομένην ἀπὸ τοῦ Κασίου ὄρους τοῦ οὐρίζοντος Αἴγυπτον τε καὶ Συρίην, ἀπὸ τούτου ἐστὶ στάδιοι χίλιοι ἀπαρτὶ ἐς τὸν Ἀράβιον κόλπον.

'Now the shortest and most direct passage from the northern to the southern or Red Sea is from mount Kasion, which is the boundary between Egypt and Syria, to the Arabian Gulf, and this is a distance of one thousand stadia, neither more nor less.'

In Herodotos' description of the northern Sinai (3) lake Serbonis and mount Kasion are again closely linked, with the Kasion apparently situated between the lake and the Mediterranean<sup>1799</sup>:

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rightly identifies the place with Kynon Polis in Middle Egypt. There is no reason to make the distinction between the Kasion in Herodotos (1-3), Plinius (63) and the anonymous geographer (160) on the one hand and the Egyptian mountain in Strabon (41) on the other, as O'Callaghan, R. T., s.v. Madaba, in DB, Suppl. V, 26, 1953, col. 695 does.

<sup>1797</sup> Herodotos, 2, 6, 1; cf. Plinius, *Naturalis historia*, 5, 14, 68 (63): ... ab emersu Sirbonis lacus ... Herodotus Casio monti adplicuit ('... starting from the outlet of lake Sirbonis ... Herodotus approaches it to mount Casium').

<sup>1798</sup> Herodotos, 2, 158, 4; cf. Eustathios, *Commentarii in Dionysium*, 260 (Müller, 1861, II, p. 263) (149): ἰστέον δὲ ὅτι τὸ Κάσιον Ἡρόδοτος ὀρίζειν φησὶ τὴν Αἴγυπτον καὶ τὴν Συρίαν ('one has to know that according to Herodotos the Kasion is the boundary between Egypt and Syria').

<sup>1799</sup> Herodotos, 3, 5, 2-3; cf. Stephanos of Byzantion, *Ethnica*, s.v. Ἰνυσσός (Meineke, 1849, p. 332) (124) rather inaccurately: Ἰνυσσός, πόλις Αἰγύπτου προσεχῆς τῷ Κασίῳ ὄρει. Ἡρόδοτος ('Inyssos, a city of Egypt near mount Kasion. Herodotos'), possibly via Herodianos, *De prosodia catholica*, 8 (Lentz, 1867, I, p. 213, 17-18) (87). For Mittmann, 1983, p. 132-133 and the map p. 131

## 6. Kasion

ἀπὸ δὲ Ἰηνύσου αὐτὶς Συρίων μέχρι Σερβωνίδος λίμνης, παρ' ἣν δὴ τὸ Κάσιον ὄρος τείνει ἐς θάλασσαν, ἀπὸ δὲ Σερβωνίδος λίμνης (ἐν τῇ δὴ λόγος τὸν Τυφῶ κεκρύφθαι), ἀπὸ ταύτης ἤδη Αἴγυπτος. τὸ δὲ μεταξὺ Ἰηνύσου πόλιος καὶ Κασίου τε ὄρεος καὶ τῆς Σερβωνίδος λίμνης, ἐὼν τοῦτο οὐκ ὀλίγον χωρίον, ἀλλὰ ὅσον τε ἐπὶ τρεῖς ἡμέρας [ὁδόν], ἀνυδρόν ἐστι δεινῶς.

'Then they are Syrian again from Ienysos as far as lake Serbonis, beside which mount Kasion stretches seawards; from this lake Serbonis (where Typhon, it is said, was hidden), the country is Egypt. Now between the city of Ienysos and mount Kasion and lake Serbonis there lies a wide territory for as much as three days' journey, wondrous waterless.'

Skylax (4) tells about the mythical steersman Kanopos who was buried on the homonymous island in the western Delta, and in this respect briefly refers to a certain Pelousios who came to the Kasion. The relation between the two events is not clear, but Pelousios was perhaps also linked with one of the stories around the Trojan war, and seems to have given his name to the nearby city of Pelousion<sup>1800</sup>:

ἐπὶ δὲ τῷ στόματι τῷ Κανωπικῷ ἐστὶ νῆσος ἐρήμη, ἣ ὄνομα Κάνωπος· καὶ σημεία ἐστὶν ἐν αὐτῇ τοῦ Μενέλεω, τοῦ κυβερνήτου τοῦ ἀπὸ Τροίας, ᾧ ὄνομα Κάνωπος, τὸ μνήμα. λέγουσι δὲ Αἰγύπτιοι τε καὶ οἱ προσχώριοι οἱ τοῖς τόποις Πηλούσιον ἦκειν ἐπὶ τὸ Κάσιον, καὶ Κάνωπον ἦκειν ἐπὶ τὴν νῆσον, οὗ τὸ μνήμα τοῦ κυβερνήτου.

'At the Kanopic mouth lies a deserted island that is named Kanopos; and on that island stands a monument of Menelaos, sc. the tomb of his skipper since Troia, who is named Kanopos. The Egyptians and the people in the neighbourhood say that Pelousios came to the Kasion and that Kanopos came to the island where the tomb of the skipper is.'

In October - November 306 BC Antigonos Monophthalmos and Demetrios Poliorketes attacked Egypt (18). They both left Gaza, Antigonos with the overland army, Demetrios by sea with a fleet of 150 warships and 100 transports. The weather was calm for some days, but at the setting of the Pleiades a storm rose; some ships were driven to Raphia or got destroyed, while others had to return to Gaza. With the strongest ships Demetrios continued as far as the Kasion<sup>1801</sup>. This place, situated not very far from the Nile, has no harbour, while it is impossible to make a landing there during a storm. They cast their anchors at some two stadia (ca. 370 m) from the land. The surf was heavy and three quinqueremes were wrecked. Since the coastline was in enemy hands, the men could not safely swim ashore, although some crewmembers of the lost ships had to do so. Trapped on their ships, they ran short of water and were only rescued when the storm fell and Antigonos arrived with his army. The crew

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the name Kasion in this passage refers to the entire narrow strip of land between Sabkhat Bardawil and Mediterranean, but this meaning is unparalleled and not very likely.

<sup>1800</sup> Skylax, 106 (Müller, 1855, I, p. 81). There is no reason to follow Ball, 1942, p. 32 that Pelousios stands for the Pelousiac Nile branch, which perhaps once flowed into the sea near mount Kasion. For Chuvin, 1986, p. 42 Pelousios was buried at Kasion, but this is not what the text says. Also the interpretation of Figueras, 1988a, p. 63, n. 20 (cf. 2000, p. 28.37.175) ('Pelousion (Peleus) extending to the Kasion') is unacceptable. Because of the use of the article Skylax apparently refers to mount Kasion, not to a settlement Kasion, as Graf, 1998, p. 109 suggests.

<sup>1801</sup> Seibert, 1969, p. 213 thinks that the Kasion was the meeting point agreed upon for both armies, but it is more likely that they agreed to join near Pelousion.

## 6. *Kasion*

could finally leave the ships and recovered in the camp till the whole fleet had gathered again<sup>1802</sup>:

(1) οἱ δὲ περὶ τὸν Δημήτριον ἐκ τῆς Γάζης ἐκπλεύσαντες περὶ μέσας νύκτας τὸ μὲν πρῶτον εὐδίας οὔσης ἐφ' ἡμέρας τινας ταῖς ταχυναντούσαις ναυσὶν εὐμούλκουν τὰ στρατιωτικὰ πόρια· ἔπειτα τῆς Πλειάδος περικαταλαμβανούσης αὐτοὺς καὶ πνεύματος ἐπιγενομένου βορίου συνέβη πολλά τῶν τετραρικῶν σκαφῶν ὑπὸ τοῦ χειμῶνος κατενεχθῆναι παραβόλως ἐπὶ πόλιν Ῥαφίαν, οὖσαν δυσπροσόρμιστον καὶ τεναγώδη. (2) τῶν δὲ πλοίων τῶν κομιζόντων τὰ βέλη τὰ μὲν ὑπὸ τοῦ χειμῶνος συγκλυσθέντα διεφθάρη, τὰ δ' ἐπαλινδρόμησεν εἰς τὴν Γάζαν· τοῖς δὲ κρατίστοις τῶν σκαφῶν βιασάμενοι διέτειναν μέχρι τοῦ Κασίου. (3) τοῦτο δὲ τοῦ μὲν Νείλου διέστηκεν οὐ μακράν, ἀλίμενον δέ ἐστι καὶ κατὰ τὰς χειμερίους περιστάσεις ἀπροσόρμιστον. διόπερ ἠναγκάζοντο τὰς ἀγκύρας ἀφέντες ὡς ἂν ἐν δυοῖν σταδίοις ἀπὸ τῆς γῆς ἀποσαλεύειν, ἅμα πολλοῖς περιεχόμενοι δεινοῖς· τοῦ μὲν γὰρ κλύδωνος ῥήγνυμένου τραχύτερον ἐκινδύνευον αὐταῖς τὰ σκάφη συγκλυσθῆναι, τῆς δὲ γῆς οὔσης ἀπροσόρμιστου καὶ πολεμίας οὔτε ναῦς ἀκινδύνως ἦν προσπλεῖν οὔτε τοὺς ἀνδρας προσνήξασθαι, τὸ δὲ μέγιστον ἐλελοίπει τὸ εἰς πότον αὐτοῖς ὕδωρ, εἰς τοιαύτην τε σπάνιῳ κατεκλείσθησαν ὥστε εἰ μίαν ἡμέραν ὁ χειμῶν ἐπέμεινε, πάντες ἂν τῷ δίψει διεφθάρησαν. (4) ἐν ἀθυμίᾳ δ' ὄντων ἀπάντων καὶ προσδοκωμένης ἤδη τῆς ἀπωλείας τὸ μὲν πνεῦμα κατέπαυσεν, ἡ δὲ μετ' Ἀντιγόνου δύναμις καταστήσασα πλησίον τοῦ στόλου κατεστρατοπέδευσεν. (5) ἐκβάντες οὖν ἐκ τῶν σκαφῶν καὶ προσαναλαβόντες ἑαυτοὺς ἐν τῇ στρατοπεδείᾳ προσέμενον τῶν νεῶν τὰς ἀποσπασθείσας. διεφθάρη δ' ἐν τούτῳ σάλω τρία σκάφη τῶν πεντηρικῶν, ἐξ ὧν ἔνιοι τῶν ἀνδρῶν διενήξαντο πρὸς τὴν γῆν. ἔπειτα Ἀντίγονος μὲν προαγαγὼν τὴν δύναμιν πλησίον τοῦ Νείλου κατεστρατοπέδευσεν, ἀπέχων δύο σταδίους τοῦ ποταμοῦ.

'(1) As for Demetrios, after setting sail from Gaza about midnight, since the weather at first was calm for several days, he had his transports towed by the swifter ships; then the setting of the Pleiades overtook them and a north wind arose, so that many of the quadriremes were driven dangerously by the storm to Raphia, a city which affords no anchorage and is surrounded by shoals. (2) Of the ships that were carrying his ordnance, some were overwhelmed by the storm and destroyed, and others ran back to Gaza; but pressing on with the strongest of the ships he held his course as far as the Kasion. (3) This place is not very distant from the Nile, but it has no harbour and in the stormy season it is impossible to make a landing here. They were therefore compelled to cast their anchors and ride the waves at a distance of about two stadia from the land, where they were at once encompassed by many dangers; for since the surf was breaking rather heavily, there was danger that the ships would founder with their crews, and since the shore was harbourless and in enemy hands, the ships could neither approach without danger, nor could the men swim ashore, and what was worst of all, the water for drinking had given out and they were reduced to such straits that, if the storm had continued for a single day more, all would have perished of thirst. (4) When all were in despair and already expecting death, the wind fell, and the army of Antigonos came up and camped near the fleet. (5) They therefore left the ships and recuperated in the camp while waiting for those vessels that had become separated. In this exposure to the waves three of the quinqueremes were lost, but some of the men from these swam to the shore. Then Antigonos led his army nearer to the Nile and camped at a distance of two stadia from the river.'

### *Kasiotikos*

From the 3rd century BC till the Byzantine period the adjective *Kasiotikos*, probably referring to the *Kasiotis* region in the northern Sinai, has been used to qualify boats, mirrors, construction activities, clothes and knots. Before discussing the exact meaning of this qualification, the passages involved will be examined.

<sup>1802</sup> Diodoros, 20, 74, 1-5.

## 6. *Kasion*

In the 3rd century BC archive of Zenon from Philadelphieia in the Arsinoites a kind of boat is called the Kasiotikon (τὸ Κασιωτικόν). Since all references about these boats seem to involve Nile transport, there is no reason to consider it a particular type of seagoing vessel<sup>1803</sup>. In a letter to Zenon of 5 July 257 BC (**162**) somebody whose name is lost, announces that three awnings will be transported - possibly from Memphis to Alexandria - 'in our Kasiotikon'<sup>1804</sup>. In a very fragmentary letter to Zenon of 6 March 255 BC (**163**) another Kasiotikon is mentioned<sup>1805</sup>. In May / June 250 BC (**164-165**) Metchopsis son of Pherenouthis of Boubastis, skipper of a Kasiotikon belonging to Apollonios the dioiketes, swears that he will not load anything in the Kasiotikon until its taxes have been paid<sup>1806</sup>. Finally in an account of June / July 247 BC (**166**) 119 silver drachmas, the remainder of the tax on the Kasiotikon, is paid to Dorion for the account of Diotimos the hypodioiketes<sup>1807</sup>. This type of boat is also attested in a document from the Herakleopolites, possibly dated 28 May 238 BC (**167**); Stotoetis reports to Ptolemaios that he has loaded in the village Bousiris 725 artabai of wheat in a Kasiotikon, possibly owned by a certain [ ]ythios(?); naukleros and skipper Haryotes son of Haryotes is in charge of the vessel, which has a loading capacity of 900 artabai<sup>1808</sup>.

The adjective Kasiotikos reappears in a marriage contract of 157/158 AD (**168**), where 'a Kasio[ti]c mirror of two leaves' is mentioned among paraphernalia of a woman's dowry. The editor, though, hesitates about the reading and the supplement of the word Κασιω[τικόν]<sup>1809</sup>.

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<sup>1803</sup> Against Oren, 1993a, p. 1393.

<sup>1804</sup> P.Mich.Zen. 17, 4: ἐν τῷ ἡμετέρῳ Κασιωτικῷ ('in our Kasiotikon').

<sup>1805</sup> P.Cair.Zen. II, 59163, 4: [ ]... Κασιωτικῷ [ ].

<sup>1806</sup> P.Cair.Zen. II, 59289, 7-8, repeated in l. 18-19: Μετχῶψις Φερενούθιος Βουβαστίτης | κυβερνήτης Κασιωτικῷ [Ἀ]πολλωνίου τοῦ διοικητοῦ μη[θ]έν ἐμβαλεῖσθαι εἰς τὸ Κασιω[τ]ικὸν τελωνίσμιον ('Metchopsis son of Pherenouthis of Boubastis, skipper of a Kasiotikon of Apollonios the dioiketes, will not take any dutiable cargo on board of his Kasiotikon').

<sup>1807</sup> P.Cair.Zen. III, 59326, 100-102: Δωρίῳν τὸ λοιπὸν τοῦ | τέλους τοῦ Κασιωτικῷ | ἀργυρίου ριθ (in marg.) πρὸς Διότιμον ('to Dorion the remainder of the tax for the Kasiotikon, 119 in silver - to the account of Diotimos').

<sup>1808</sup> P.Rainer Cent. 44, 2.7-10: ἐμβέβλημαι ... | καὶ εἰς .....η...ο.υθίου | Κασιωτικόν, ἐφ' οὗ να(ύκληρος) καὶ κυβερνήτης | Ἀρωάτης Ἀρωά(του) ἀγ(ωγῆς) ἃ ἐγ Βουσίρεως πυροῦ) ψκε ('I loaded ... and from Bousiris 725 artabai of wheat in the Kasiotikon of [ ]ythios(?), for which Haryotes son of Haryotes is the naukleros and skipper, with a capacity of 900 artabai'); cf. Poll, 1996, p. 128.133.136; Hauben, 1997b, p. 36-37.

<sup>1809</sup> P.Oxy. XLIX, 3491, 7: κάτοπτρον δίπτυχ(ον) Κασιω[τικόν]. Mitthof, 2005, p. 260 suggests to split the enumeration differently and to read κάτοπτρον δίπτυχ(ον), Κασιω[τικόν], ... ('a mirror of two leaves, Kasio[ti]c (clothes), ...'); there is not enough space to supplement a noun after Kasio[ti]kon], which would make it the only occasion where Kasiotic clothes are simply referred to as Kasiotika, and since those clothes are not yet attested before the 6th century AD, I am not convinced by Mitthof's interpretation.

## 6. Kasion

In a letter of 7 April 283 AD (**169-170**) the brothers Aurelius Menestheus and Aurelius Nemesianos sons of Dionysios, originating from Oxyrynchos, but also called Kasiotai, ask to get paid for the Kasiotic work they have been doing at the city's expense on both sides of a street<sup>1810</sup>. Since the two men are from Oxyrynchos, one gets the impression that 'Kasiotai' is not a real ethnic here, but a kind of professional qualification. This is confirmed in a list of persons on an ostrakon from the 3rd century AD (**171**), whose provenance is unknown, where a certain 'Porieuthes, Kasiotēs' (l. 6) appears alongside a weaver (l. 2), two house-builders (l. 3.7), a mason (l. 4), a coppersmith (l. 5), a bee-master (l. 8), possibly a clothes-mender (l. 9) and a shipwright (l. 10)<sup>1811</sup>. Also here the indication 'Kasiotēs' perhaps refers to somebody working in the construction business. In a Coptic - Greek bilingual document of the Byzantine or Arab period (**172-173**), finally, a man called Mena son of Kyriakos from Antinoou Polis rents a house. He is characterized as ΜΗΝΑ ΠΚΑΣΙΩΤΙΚΑΡ.. ('Mena the Kasiotikar[ios?']) in Coptic and Μηνᾶ Κασιωτικο/ (sc. Κασιωτικό(ς) or also Κασιωτικ(ᾶρι)ο(ς)?) in Greek. It is most likely that both Kasiotikar[ ] and Kasiotiko( ) refer to his profession, rather than to his origin, and that the designation corresponds with the earlier Kasiotēs<sup>1812</sup>.

About 530 AD Stephanos of Byzantion (**125**) mentions - with reference to the Egyptian Kasion - the so-called Kasiotic clothes<sup>1813</sup>:

καὶ τὸ κτητικὸν Κασιωτικός, ἀφ' οὗ ἐν τῇ συνηθείᾳ τὰ Κασιωτικὰ ἱμάτια.  
'and the possessive adjective Kasiotikos, after which the Kasiotic clothes are named in ordinary language.'

In the 12th century AD Eustathios (**149**), explicitly referring to Stephanos (**125**), states that these Kasiotic clothes are woven robes called Kasiana in his time<sup>1814</sup>:

ἰστέον δὲ ... ὅτι τὰ νῦν ἰδιωτικῶς Κασιανὰ ὑφάσματα λεγόμενα ἐκ τῶν περὶ τὸ ῥηθὲν Κάσιον ὄρος τὴν ἀρχὴν τῆς κλήσεως εἰκόσκι λαβεῖν, ὡς ὑπεμφαίνει ὁ γράψας τὰ Ἐθνικά, ἐν λόγῳ τιθεὶς τὰ Κασιωτικὰ ἱμάτια.

<sup>1810</sup> P.Oxy. I, 55, 5-11: παρὰ Αὐρηλίων Μενεσθαίως καὶ Νεμαισιανοῦ ἀμφιπότερων Διονυσίου ἀπὸ τῆς αὐτῆς λαμπρᾶς Ὀξυρυγχιτῶν πόλεως Κασιωδῶν (in the duplicate copy: Κασιωτῶν) ... ὑπὲρ μισθῶν ὧν πεποιήμεθα Κασιωτικῶν ἔργων τῆς καθασκευασθείσης ὑπὸ σοῦ πλατίου ἀπὸ ἡκουμένου πυλῶνος | γυμνασίου ἐπὶ νότιον μέχρι ῥύμης Ἱερακίου ἐκατέρωθεν | τῶν μερῶν, ... ('from Aurelius Menestheus and Nemesianos, both sons of Dionysios, of the same illustrious city of Oxyrynchos, Kasiotai, ... on account of wages due for the Kasiotic works done by us on both sides of the street built by you from the gateway of the gymnasium leading southwards to the lane of Hierakios, ...').

<sup>1811</sup> O.Bodl. II, 1932, 6: Ποριεύθης Κασιώ(της).

<sup>1812</sup> BKU III, 426, 1.9; cf. van Minnen, 1991, p. 170, n. 12; Förster, 2002, p. 382; Richter, 2002, p. 120-121.139; Mitthof, 2005, p. 259 (who suggests that the man is a weaver of Kasiotic clothes).

<sup>1813</sup> Stephanos of Byzantion, *Ethnica*, s.v. Κάσιον (Meineke, 1849, p. 363). Lumbroso, 1870, p. 108 thinks that the cloth industry in Kasion already existed in the Ptolemaic period, but this is not confirmed in the sources.

<sup>1814</sup> Eustathios, *Commentarii in Dionysium*, 260 (Müller, 1861, II, p. 263).



## 6. Kasion

'One has to know ... that the woven robes that are now commonly called Kasiana apparently got their name from the mount Kasion mentioned, as implied by the writer of the *Ethnica* when he mentions the Kasiotic clothes.'

The 13th century writer Yaqut probably refers to the same clothes, when he states that in el-Qass the fine cloth used to be made that the prophet has forbidden to wear because it contained silk<sup>1815</sup>.

The proverb collections of Pseudo-Diogenianos (90) and Apostolios (153) discuss a saying about the Kasiotic knot, which is difficult to disentangle and therefore stands for some dishonest behaviour<sup>1816</sup>:

Κασιωτικὸν ἄμμα· ἐπὶ τῶν σκολιῶν τοὺς τρόπους. οἷτοι γὰρ ἄμματά τινα δύσλυτα ἐπιτεχνάζονται.

'Kasiotic knot: regarding people dishonest in manners; because they invented some knots that are difficult to disentangle.'

The proverb is further explained in the *Souda* (139): the people of Pelousion twined knots in a natural technique connecting beams to beams<sup>1817</sup>:

Ἄμματα· ἐπὶ τῶν σκολιῶν τοὺς τρόπους. ἀπὸ τῶν ἐν Κασίῳ Πηλουσιωτῶν, οἱ φυσικῆ τέχνῃ ἄμματα ἔπλεκον δοκοὺς ἐπὶ δοκοῖς συνάπτοντες. Κασιώτῃ ἴσον.

'Knots: regarding people dishonest in manners. After the people of Pelousion in Kasion; they twined knots in a natural technique, while connecting beams to beams. Also (called) in a Kasiate technique.'

While Pseudo-Diogenianos and Apostolios remain vague about the identity of the people who make knots that are hard to disentangle, the *Souda* more specifically refers to 'the people of Pelousion in Kasion', but also other variants occur: 'the people of Kasion in Pelousion' (ἀπὸ τῶν ἐν Πηλουσίῳ Κασιωτῶν) (91)<sup>1818</sup> - 'the Kasian people of Pelousion' (οἱ Κάσιοι Πηλουσιῶται) (140)<sup>1819</sup> - 'the Pelousian people of

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<sup>1815</sup> Yaqut, *Mu'qam al-buldan* (Wüstenfeld, 1869, IV, p. 94; translated in Toussoun, 1926, I, p. 123 [cf. also p. 62.124]); cf. Hartmann, 1916b, p. 374; Wüstenfeld, 1864, p. 466. See also s.v. el-Qass.

<sup>1816</sup> Pseudo-Diogenianos, 5, 44 (Leutsch, 1839, I, p. 260); Apostolios, 9, 46 (Leutsch, 1851, II, p. 472).

<sup>1817</sup> *Souda*, A 1510, s.v. Ἄμματα (Adler, 1928, I, p. 135); cf. *Souda*, A 1459, s.v. Ἄμμα (Adler, 1928, I, p. 131) (138): Ἄμμα· ἐπὶ τῶν σκολιῶν τοὺς τρόπους, ἀπὸ τῶν ἐν Κασίῳ Πηλουσιωτῶν, οἱ φυσικῆ τέχνῃ ἄμματα ἔπλεκον δοκοὺς ἐπὶ δοκοῖς συνάπτοντες ('Knot: regarding people dishonest in manners; after the people of Pelousion in Kasion; they twined knots in a natural technique, while connecting beams to beams'); cf. Pseudo-Zonaras, *Lexicon*, s.v. Ἄμματα (Tittman, 1808, col. 153) (152): Ἄμματα. δέσματα, σχοινία. λέγεται δὲ καὶ ἐπὶ τῶν σκολιῶν τοὺς τρόπους, ἀπὸ τῶν ἐν Ἀκασίῳ (sic) Πηλουσιωτῶν, οἱ φυσικῆ τέχνῃ ἄμματα ἔπλεκον, δοκοὺς ἐπὶ δοκοῖς συνάπτοντες ('Knots. Bonds, ropes. It also said regarding people dishonest in manners; after the people of Pelousion in Akasion (immo Kasion), who twined knots in a natural technique, while connecting beams to beams').

<sup>1818</sup> Prov. Bodl. 527 (Gaisford, 1836, p. 62 in Leutsch, 1839, I, p. 260, n.): Κασιωτικὸν ἄμμα· ἐπὶ τῶν σκολιῶν τοὺς τρόπους. ἀπὸ τῶν ἐν Πηλουσίῳ Κασιωτῶν τέχνῃ ἄμμάτων ἐπιτεχνάζομένων ('Kasiotic knot: regarding people dishonest in manners. After the people of Kasion in Pelousion who invented a technique for knots').

<sup>1819</sup> *Souda*, K 454, s.v. Κάσιον ὄρος (Adler, 1933, III, p. 39): ὅτι οἱ Κάσιοι Πηλουσιῶται φυσικῆ τέχνῃ ἄμματα ἔπλεκον δοκοὺς ἐπὶ δοκοῖς συνάπτοντες. καὶ Κασιώτῃ ἴσον ('the Kasian people of Pelousion twined knots in a natural technique, while connecting beams to beams. Also (called) in a Kasiate technique').

## 6. *Kasion*

*Kasion*' (οἱ Πηλουσιῶται Κάσιοι) (141)<sup>1820</sup>. The striking interchangeability of *Kasion* and *Pelousion* is no doubt due to their geographical proximity. One has the impression that the original phrasing was something such as 'the *Kasiotai* in *Pelousion*' and that 'the *Pelousiotai* in *Kasion*' is only the result of some confusion. It is also unclear whether '*Kasiotai*' in this expression is a real ethnic or indicates the profession of those knot-makers. The 'natural technique' in which the knots were twined, is also called the '*Kasiotic technique*' in some texts (139, 140), and again one has the impression that a profession is referred to rather than an ethnic. It has often been maintained that the characteristic element of this method of working is the way in which beams are connected with each other without the use of pins or nails, in a sort of mortised planking, an interpretation based on the clause 'while connecting beams to beams'<sup>1821</sup>, but this actually leaves the twining of the knots unexplained. The specific *Kasiotic* feature in fact seems to be the way ropes and knots were used to keep some woodwork together<sup>1822</sup>.

It is not unlikely that both the boats and the construction activities are called *Kasiotic* because they made use of the same kind of connections with ropes and knots. With regard to the *Kasiotika*, however, it has also been argued that they were named after the kind of boat used or made by the people living in the neighbourhood of mount *Kasion*<sup>1823</sup>. One cannot deny that there was probably some shipping in the *Kasiotis* region or on lake *Serbonis*, but if there was really such a flourishing shipbuilding industry as some scholars think, it is remarkable that the name of a boat would be the only remaining testimony for it<sup>1824</sup>. This 'geographical' interpretation would also leave the naming of the construction activities largely unexplained. They are often considered carpentry or joinery, but - if *Kasiotic* construction really involves

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<sup>1820</sup> *Souda*, Π 1516, s.v. Πηλούσιον (Adler, 1935, IV, p. 125): ὅτι οἱ Πηλουσιῶται Κάσιοι φυσικῆ τέχνη ἄμματα ἔπλεκον, δοκοῦς ἐπὶ δοκοῖς συνάπτοντες ('the *Pelousian* people of *Kasion* twined knots in a natural technique, while connecting beams to beams').

<sup>1821</sup> Cf. Grenfell - Hunt, *P.Oxy.* I, 1898, p. 114; Edgar, *P.Edgar*, 1920, p. 21 (comparing with the present day boats at lake *Menzala*, which are of a different type from the ordinary *Nile-boats*) and *P.Cair.Zen.* II, 1926, p. 19.131; van Minnen, 1991, p. 170, n. 12.

<sup>1822</sup> Cf. Chuvin, 1986, p. 50, with an illustration on p. 51.

<sup>1823</sup> Cf. Merzagora, 1929, p. 125 (tentatively); Edgar, *P.Mich.Zen.*, 1931, p. 78; Abel, 1939, p. 224 and 1940, p. 59.233; Casson, 1971, p. 343 (tentatively); *P.L.Bat XXI*, 1981, p. 488; Oren, 1982a, p. 24, 1993a, p. 1393 and 1998, p. 78; Orrieux, 1983, p. 73; Chuvin, 1986, p. 50-51 (with a very poetic image of the shipyards of the *Kasion*); Figueras, 1988a, p. 58-59 and 1999, p. 212 ('famous for its naval and textile industries').

<sup>1824</sup> According to Oren, 1987a, p. 114, n. 8 a New Kingdom clay model of a small boat was found by a fisherman near lake *Bardawil* in 1975, but further information is lacking.



## 6. Kasion

The 3rd century geographer Eratosthenes (6), quoted in Strabon (35), states that in ancient times Egypt was covered by the sea as far as the marshes near Pelousion, mount Kasion and lake Serbonis, so that the area of the Kasion and Gerra was covered with shoal water and that the Mediterranean was connected with the Red Sea<sup>1828</sup>:

... τὴν τε Αἴγυπτον τὸ παλαιὸν θαλάττη κλύεσθαι μέχρι τῶν ἐλῶν τῶν περὶ τὸ Πηλοῦσιον καὶ τὸ Κάσιον ὄρος καὶ τὴν Σιρβωνίδα λίμνην· ... ὡς ἂν τεθαλαττωμένης τῆς χώρας καὶ τοῦ τόπου παντὸς τοῦ περὶ τὸ Κάσιον καὶ τὰ Γέρρα καλούμενα τεναγίζοντος, ὥστε συνάπτειν τῷ τῆς Ἐρυθρᾶς κόλπῳ.

'... and that in ancient times Egypt was covered by the sea as far as the bogs about Pelousion, mount Kasion, and lake Sirbonis; ... and the whole region round mount Kasion and the so-called Gerra had once been covered with shoal water, so that it connected with the gulf of the Red Sea.'

When the level of the Mediterranean lowered, the land about the Kasion and Pelousion was exposed (7 / 34)<sup>1829</sup>:

... τοῦ δ' ἐκρήγματος γενομένου ταπεινωθῆναι καὶ ἀνακαλύψαι τὴν γῆν τὴν κατὰ τὸ Κάσιον καὶ τὸ Πηλοῦσιον μέχρι τῆς Ἐρυθρᾶς.

'... but after the breaking of the channel took place (sc. at the Pillars of Herakles), the sea was lowered and thus exposed the land about the Kasion and Pelousion, as far as the Red Sea.'

Eratosthenes (9 / 38) also thinks that the water of the Euphrates, which goes to lakes near Arabia, continues underground till Koile Syria, is pressed up in the region of Rinokoloura and mount Kasion and there forms the lakes and the 'barathra' or pits<sup>1830</sup>:

Ἐρατοσθένης δὲ τῶν λιμνῶν μνησθεὶς τῶν πρὸς τῇ Ἀραβίᾳ, φησὶ τὸ ὕδωρ ἀπορούμενον διεξόδων ἀνοίξει πόρους ὑπὸ γῆς καὶ δι' ἐκείνων ὑποφέρεσθαι μέχρι Κοιλοσύρων· ἀναθλίβεσθαι δὲ εἰς τοὺς περὶ Ρινοκόλουρα καὶ τὸ Κάσιον ὄρος τόπους καὶ ποιεῖν τὰς ἐκεῖ λίμνας καὶ τὰ βάραθρα.

'Eratosthenes, when he mentions the lakes near Arabia, says that when the water is deprived of exits it opens up underground passages and through these flows underground as far as the country of Koile Syria, and that it is pressed up into the region of Rinokoloura and mount Kasion and forms the lakes and the barathra there.'

<sup>1828</sup> Strabon, 1, 3, 4 (C 50); Eratosthenes, F I B 15 (Berger, 1880, p. 60-61). For the discussion whether the fragment comes from Eratosthenes himself or from Straton of Lampsakos (before 268 BC) quoted by Eratosthenes, see s.v. Lake Serbonis.

<sup>1829</sup> Strabon, 1, 2, 31 (C 38); Eratosthenes, F I B 18 (Berger, 1880, p. 68). See also the 'summary' of Eratosthenes' theory made by Strabon, 1, 3, 13 (C 55) (36) [= Eratosthenes, F I B 19 (Berger, 1880, p. 68-69) (8)]: ὅτι δοκοῖη καὶ τὸ Κάσιον ὄρος περικλύεσθαι θαλάττη καὶ πάντα τὸν τόπον, ὅπου νῦν τὰ καλούμενα Γέρρα, καθ' ἕκαστα τεναγίζειν συνάπτοντα τῷ τῆς Ἐρυθρᾶς κόλπῳ, συνελθούσης δὲ τῆς θαλάττης ἀποκαλυφθῆναι ('(he adds his opinion) that mount Kasion was once washed by the sea, and also that all the region where the so-called Gerra now is, was in every part covered with shoal-water since it was connected with the gulf of the Red Sea, and that it became uncovered when the seas came together'). De-Vit, 1868, II, p. 153 supposes that not mount Kasion, but the city Kasion is meant in 1, 2, 31, but from 1, 3, 13 it is clear that the mountain is referred to.

<sup>1830</sup> Strabon, 16, 1, 12 (C 741); Eratosthenes, F III B 36 (Berger, 1880, p. 264-265). This region is also referred to by the further unknown anonymous Greek geographer in Hudson, 1712, IV, quoted in Reland, 1714, p. 509 (160), who locates lake Serbonis between mount Kasion and Rinokoloura: μετὰ τὸ Πηλοῦσιακὸν στόμα τοῦ Νείλου Πηλοῦσιον πόλις ἐστὶ παρά τὴν θάλασσαν. ἐξῆς δὲ τὸ Κάσιον ὄρος· εἶτα τὰ Ρινοκόρουρα. μέσον δὲ τοῦ Κασίου ὄρους καὶ τῶν Ρινοκορούρων ἡ Σιρβωνίς λίμνη ('after the Pelousiac mouth of the Nile lies the city of Pelousion next to the sea; next mount Kasion; then Rinokoroura; lake Sirbonis between mount Kasion and Rinokoroura') (cf. Jacoby, 1905, p. 47; O'Callaghan, R. T., s.v. Madaba, in DB, Suppl. V, 26, 1953, col. 695).

## 6. Kasion

Strabon (38), commenting on this passage, doubts whether it can be true, since there are mountains in between, such as the Libanon, the Antilibanon and the Kasion<sup>1831</sup>:

... ταῦτα ὀρών ἐν μέσῳ κειμένων, τοῦ τε Λιβάνου καὶ τοῦ Ἀντιλιβάνου καὶ τοῦ Κασίου.

'... and that too when mountains intervene, I mean the Libanon and the Antilibanon and the Kasion.' The Libanon and the Antilibanon are well-known mountains in Koile Syria. One can wonder whether Strabon refers to the Syrian mount Kasion and therefore misinterpreted Eratosthenes' statement<sup>1832</sup>, but it seems more likely that he actually refers to the Egyptian Kasion from Eratosthenes' account.

In 217 BC Ptolemaios IV Philopator left Pelousion with his army for Raphia (10). Crossing the desert, he passed the Kasion and the so-called Barathra<sup>1833</sup>:

προῆγε ποιούμενος τὴν πορείαν παρὰ τὸ Κάσιον καὶ τὰ Βάραθρα καλούμενα διὰ τῆς ἀνύδρου.

'(Ptolemaios) moved on marching, skirting the Kasion and the so-called Barathra, through the desert.'

At the end of 170 or at the beginning of 169 BC Antiochos IV invaded Egypt and beat the Egyptian troops between the Kasion and Pelousion (98 / 110)<sup>1834</sup>:

ortum est inter avunculum et puerum Ptolomaeum proelium; cumque inter Pelusium et montem Casium proelium commisissent, victi sunt duces Ptolomaei.

'War broke out between the boy Ptolomaeus and his uncle; and when they joined battle between Pelusium and mount Casium, the generals of Ptolomaeus were defeated.'

### *Zeus Kasios and Tachnepsis on Delos*

Possibly in the early 1st century BC, but anyway between 166 and 88 BC, a priest Horos son of Horos Kasiotes is known on Delos. His name occurs in four inscriptions, all found in the Sarapieion A. In I.Delos 2116 (11), an offering to Sarapis, Isis and Anoubis, and in I.Delos 2117 (12), an offering to Sarapis, Isis, Anoubis and Harpokrates, Horos is mentioned in his function as priest in the sanctuary, where he assisted the people who consulted the gods<sup>1835</sup>. In the two other

<sup>1831</sup> Strabon, 16, 1, 12 (C 742).

<sup>1832</sup> Cf. Jones, 1930, p. 212-213, n. 1 and the index Jones, 1949, p. 283.

<sup>1833</sup> Polybios, 5, 80, 2.

<sup>1834</sup> Hieronymus, *Commentarii in Daniele*, 4, 11, 21 (Glorie, 1964b, p. 916); Porphyrios, *Adversum Christianos*, FGrHist no. 260, F 49a.

<sup>1835</sup> I.Delos 2116, 4-5: ἐπιμελομένου δὲ τοῦ ἱεροῦ καὶ | τὰς θεραπείας αἰτοῦντος Ὁρου τοῦ Ὁρου Κασιώτου ('while Horos son of Horos Kasiotes takes care of the sanctuary and asks for the cures') (cf. Bricault, 2005, I, p. 229, no. 202/0197); I.Delos 2117, 4-5: ἐπιμελομένου τοῦ ἱεροῦ Ὁρου τοῦ Ὁρου | Κασιώτου ('while Horos son of Horos Kasiotes takes care of the sanctuary') (cf. Bricault, 2005, I, p. 229-230, no. 202/0198); cf. Dunand, 1973, II, p. 102.

## 6. Kasion

documents (I.Delos 2180-2181) (**13-14**), almost duplicates, he makes a sacrifice for the Great God - probably Sarapis -, Zeus Kasios and Tachnepsis on behalf of the Roman Lucius Granius, son or 'libertus' of a certain Publius, who is probably identical with the Publius Granius Alexander known in other documents<sup>1836</sup>:

1 Θεῶι Μεγάλωι  
καὶ Διὶ Κασίωι καὶ Ταχνηΐσει,  
Ἔρως Ἵρου Κασιώτης  
ὑπὲρ Λευκίου Γρανίου  
5 τοῦ Ποπλίου Ῥωμαίου.  
...

'For the Great God and Zeus Kasios and Tachnepsis, Horos son of Horos Kasiotes on behalf of Lucius Granius son (?) of Publius from Rome. ...'

The goddess Tachnepsis also occurs in the so-called Invocation of Isis (P.Oxy. XI, 1380) (**79**). This papyrus written ca. 98-138 AD mentions Pelousion, the Kasion and the Ekregma; the name of the goddess at the Kasion is 'Tachnepsis'<sup>1837</sup>:

ἐπὶ τοῦ | Κασίου Ταχνηΐσιν  
'at the Kasion Tachnepsis'

Chuvin's interpretation of the Egyptian name Tachnepsis as '\*T3-nt ḥt-nbs - la Dame du jujubier'<sup>1838</sup>, is not without problems<sup>1839</sup>. This priest from Kasion therefore does not only work in the sanctuary of the eponymous god of his hometown, but there is apparently also a special link between Tachnepsis and the Kasion, which makes it one of the few instances in the list of the Invocation, where the relation between the cult name and the toponym is confirmed by external evidence.

The whole context of the Delos inscriptions points to an Egyptian background; Zeus Kasios on Delos therefore probably originates from the Egyptian, not from the Syrian Zeus Kasios<sup>1840</sup>, though some elements suggest that the line between these two gods does not have to be drawn so sharply as some scholars do. First, for Lucius

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<sup>1836</sup> I.Delos 2180, 1-5 (cf. Bricault, 2005, I, p. 230, no. 202/0199); cf. I.Delos 2181, 1-7: [Θεῶι | [Μεγάλωι | [καὶ Διὶ Κασίωι καὶ | [Ταχνηΐσει, | [Ἔρωις Ἵρου Κασιώτης | [ὑπὲρ Λευκίου Γρανίου | τοῦ Ποπλίου Ῥωμαίου (cf. Bricault, 2005, I, p. 230-231, no. 202/0200).

<sup>1837</sup> P.Oxy. XI, 1380, 74-75; cf. Bricault, 1996, p. 69. The translation 'in the Casian district' in Grenfell, P.Oxy. XI, 1915, p. 201 (followed by Collart, 1919, p. 94) is not acceptable.

<sup>1838</sup> Chuvin, 1986, p. 51 and n. 50.

<sup>1839</sup> Willy Clarysse in a personal communication thinks that the Coptic τλ-ⲱϵ-ⲛⲃⲥ would rather correspond with the Greek Ταχενουψις. Bonnet, 1987, p. 129-130 suggests a link with the name of an Egyptian queen Tachpenes in *I Regum*, 11, 19-20, which is usually considered a transcription of the Egyptian T3-ḥm.t-nsw (cf. Helck, 1971, p. 238, n. 57), but the elements -nepsis and -penes seem hardly compatible. See also Schmidt, 1918, p. 111, n. 11 who translates Ταχνηψις as 'Holzstatue', referring to Coptic τλϑ, 'fragment, statue' and ιεπϱη, 'wooden'.

<sup>1840</sup> For Zeus Kasios on Delos, cf. Roussel, 1916, p. 94-97.295; Salač, 1922, p. 162-165; Clédat, 1923b, p. 161, n. 1; Cook, 1925, II 2, p. 984-985; Roussel, I.Delos, 1937, p. 252-253; Vidman, 1969, p. 64; Bruneau, 1970, p. 241-242; Schwabl, Hans, s.v. Zeus. I. Epiklesen, in RE, X A, 1972, col. 321; Couilloud, EAD XXX, 1974, p. 166, n. 2; Weber, 1974, p. 205-206; Schwabl, Hans, s.v. Zeus. Nachträge, in RE, Suppl. XV, 1978, col. 1459; Carrez-Maratray, 1985, p. 158; Chuvin, 1986, p. 59 and n. 77.

## 6. *Kasion*

Granius, who did the offering in I.Delos 2180-2181, special links are known with Antiocheia in Syria<sup>1841</sup> and, secondly, in the Sarapieion A another dedication to Zeus Kasios has been found from an inhabitant of the Syrian city of Berytos<sup>1842</sup>. Thirdly, the name Kasiodoros also appears on Delos in the 2nd and 1st centuries BC, and at least one attestation has a clear link with Syria<sup>1843</sup>.

### *The death of Pompeius Magnus*

On 9 August 48 BC Gnaeus Pompeius Magnus lost the battle of Pharsalos against Gaius Iulius Caesar<sup>1844</sup>. He fled to Mytilene on Lesbos and continued to Pamphylia, Cilicia and Cyprus, gathering friends and soldiers. They decided to take refuge in Egypt with the young Ptolemaios XIII Philopator Philadelphos, because Pompeius had helped to restore his father Ptolemaios XII Neos Dionysos Auletes on the throne in 55 BC. Sources disagree about the number of the ships and armed men Pompeius had at his disposal to make the three days' journey to Egypt. He was accompanied by his wife Cornelia, his son Sextus<sup>1845</sup> and friends and officers among whom father and son Publius Cornelius Lentulus Spinther, Marcus Favonius, Pompeius Bithynicus and Theophanes of Mytilene<sup>1846</sup>. Pompeius probably knew that Ptolemaios was at the eastern Egyptian border, waging war with his sister Kleopatra VII, who had raised troops in Syria<sup>1847</sup>, and he headed for Pelousion<sup>1848</sup>. He found the

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<sup>1841</sup> Cf. I.Delos 2335, 1-6.

<sup>1842</sup> I.Delos 2182: Ξενοφῶν | Διονυσίου | Βηρύτιος | Διὶ Κασίῳ | χαριστήριον ('Xenophon son of Dionysios from Berytos (gave) Zeus Kasios a thank-offering') (ca. 166-88) (cf. Bricault, 2005, I, p. 229, no. 202/0201).

<sup>1843</sup> I.Delos 1963, e, 2 (Κασιόδ[ωρον - - ] | 'Ἀθηναῖον - 'Kasiodoros [ ] of Athenai') (125-100); EAD XXX, 187, 5 (Κοίντου Αὐφιδίου Κασιοδώρου - 'Of Quintus Aufidius Kasiodoros', mentioned together with a woman from Apameia in Syria) (125-75); EAD XXX, 326, 2-3 (Κασιόδωρος Ζήνωνος | Νίκων Κασιοδώρου) - 'Kasiodoros son of Zenon, Nikon son of Kasiodoros') (2nd-1st centuries BC?). The 'Kassios' in EAD XXX, 387, 1 (Κ[ά]σσιος) (200-175) is considered a 'Cassius' by the editor. The problems involving Zeus Kasios in onomastics will be discussed further on.

<sup>1844</sup> Pompeius' last months have been studied in detail by Heinen, 1966, p. 60-68 and Carcopino, 1968, p. 414-418. For his place of death, cf. also Carrez-Maratray, 1995, p. 143 and n. 14; Carrez-Maratray, 1999b, p. 113-118.393-395.

<sup>1845</sup> Florus (67), Pseudo-Aurelius Victor (103) and Orosius (112) incorrectly speak of the sons of Pompeius being present; cf. Heinen, 1966, p. 61, n. 2.

<sup>1846</sup> Cf. Van 't Dack, 1980, p. 30 and n. 120. It is not likely that the merchant Peticus, who according to Plutarchos (68) had picked up Pompeius in Thessalia and had brought him to Asia Minor, has continued all the way to Egypt.

<sup>1847</sup> The statement of Bouché-Leclercq, 1904, II, p. 184 that Kleopatra had fled to Arab tribes at the other side of the Egyptian eastern border, is probably a mere hypothesis, since it is not confirmed in the accounts of Caesar (15), Strabon (43), Appianos (82) or Cassius Dion (93). The story of Malalas, *Chronographia*, 9, 6 (Dindorf, 1831, p. 217; cf. Jeffreys, 1986, p. 114) that she had been banished to the Thebais, is not really trustworthy.

king near the Kasion and, while waiting offshore in his ship, he sent him a message to ask his aid<sup>1849</sup>. The royal council, led by Potheinos, discussed the matter; some members such as the Egyptian priest 'Acoreus' mentioned by Lucanus, preferred to accept Pompeius, others wanted to refuse him access. The rhetorician Theodotos of Chios, though, proposed to kill Pompeius to please Caesar<sup>1850</sup>. The execution of the plan was entrusted to the courtier Achillas. He took Lucius Septimius, who had once been a tribunos of Pompeius, the centurion Salvius and some servants with him in a small boat and they approached Pompeius' ship. The Roman general was invited in their boat and he entered together with two centurions, his freedman Philippos and the slave Skythes. In the meantime the Egyptian royal ships were crewed, while soldiers and people from the king's retinue took place on the shore. Before arriving there, Pompeius was stabbed to death. His head was cut off and his body was thrown out of the boat. Pompeius' ships fled away, but apparently at least some of them were captured<sup>1851</sup>. Philippos stayed with the body and washed it; he built a pyre from an old boat, helped by a certain Servius Cordus, who in his youth had served with the general and who was probably - like Lucius Septimius - one of the Roman soldiers left in Egypt by Gabinius in 55 BC and then serving in the Ptolemaic army. Pompeius died on 28 September 48 BC<sup>1852</sup>. The next day also Lucius Cornelius Lentulus Crus arrived from Cyprus; he went ashore, was seized, and put to death.

A lot of sources describe the death of Pompeius, but they differ in numerous details and there is little consistency in the location of the events. I will run through the passages that contain some geographical information, incorporating the texts mentioning the position of Pompeius' tomb.

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<sup>1848</sup> Against Lucanus (**53**) and Appianos (**82**), who state that Pompeius was heading for Alexandria, but was drifted away by the wind to the eastern border, and against Eutropius (**104**) and the alternative reading in Pseudo-Aurelius Victor (**103**), who state that Pompeius actually went to Alexandria; cf. Bouché-Leclercq, 1904, II, p. 185; Heinen, 1966, p. 62-63, n. 3; Carcopino, 1968, p. 416.

<sup>1849</sup> Lucanus (**53**) specifies that a watchman went by land from Pelousion to the Kasion to warn the court, but this man can hardly be identical with the messengers sent by Pompeius himself; cf. Heinen, 1966, p. 63, n. 1.

<sup>1850</sup> For Lucanus (**53-54**) it is Potheinos who did the final proposal, but the other sources all mention Theodotos; cf. Heinen, 1966, p. 65, n. 1.

<sup>1851</sup> Cassius Dion (**93**) and Orosius (**112**) (cf. Heinen, 1966, p. 67) against Cicero (**17**) and Ploutarchos (**68**), who state that they got away.

<sup>1852</sup> In the Julian calendar this date corresponds with 16 Augustus 48 BC; cf. Bayet, 1940, p. 5-10.



## 6. Kasion

According to Iulius Caesar (15) Pompeius went from Cyprus to Pelousion, where Ptolemaios was staying, waging war against his sister Kleopatra, who had her camp in the neighbourhood<sup>1853</sup>:

quibus cognitis rebus Pompeius ... Pelusium pervenit. ibi casu rex erat Ptolomaeus, puer aetate, magnis copiis cum sorore Cleopatra bellum gerens, quam paucis ante mensibus per suos propinquos atque amicos regno expulerat; castraque Cleopatrae non longo spatio ab eius castris distabant.

'Ascertaining these facts, Pompeius ... arrived at Pelusium. There by chance was king Ptolomaeus, a boy in years, waging war with large forces against his sister Cleopatra, whom a few months before he had expelled from the throne by the help of his relations and friends; the camp of Cleopatra was not far distant from his camp.'

Caesar only briefly mentions that Pompeius is killed in a small boat, and no allusion is made to his tomb:

naviculam parvulam conscendit cum paucis suis: ibi ab Achilla et Septimio interficitur. item L. Lentulus comprehenditur ab rege et in custodia necatur.

'he embarked in a little boat with a few of his friends, and is thereupon assassinated by Achillas and Septimius. L. Lentulus is also arrested by the king and slain in prison.'

Cicero (17) mentions how Pompeius was murdered and how his company, being surrounded by the enemies' fleet, could hardly escape to Tyros<sup>1854</sup>:

constabat eos, qui concidentem vulneribus Cn. Pompeium vidissent, cum in illo ipso acerbissimo miserrimoque spectaculo sibi timerent, quod se classe hostium circumfusos viderent, nihil aliud tum egisse nisi ut remiges hortarentur et ut salutem adipiscerentur fuga: postea quam Tyrum venissent, tum adflicti lamentarique coepisse.

'It was common talk that those who saw Cn. Pompeius sinking under his wounds, in the alarm they felt for their own safety on witnessing that cruel and pitiful scene, because they saw themselves surrounded by the enemies' fleet, did nothing else at the time except urge on the rowers and secure their safety by flight; only on reaching Tyrus did they begin to indulge in grief and lamentation.'

According to the *Periochae* of Livius (32) Pompeius was killed in a small boat coming ashore, but a more precise location is not given. His wife and his son could escape - via Tyros? - to Cyprus<sup>1855</sup>:

Cn. Pompeius cum Aegyptum petisset, iussu Ptolemaei regis, pupilli sui, auctore Theodoto praepceptore, cuius magna apud regem auctoritas erat, et Pothino occisus est ab Achilla, cui id facinus erat delegatum, in navicula, antequam in terram exiret. Cornelia uxor et Sex. Pompeius filius Cypron refugerunt.

'When Cn. Pompeius made for Egypt, he was killed by Achillas, to whom the crime had been assigned, in a small boat before he set foot on land, by order of king Ptolomaeus, Pompeius' own ward, instigated by Theodotus the king's tutor, whose influence with the king was great, and by Pothinus. Cornelia, Pompeius' wife, and Sex. Pompeius, his son, took refuge in Cyprus.'

From Florus' *Epitome de Tito Livio* (67), though, it is clear that for Livius Pompeius died at the coast of Pelousion<sup>1856</sup>:

... ut Syedris in deserto Ciliciae scopulo fugam in Parthos, Africam vel Aegyptum agitare, ut denique Pelusio litore imperio vilissimi regis, consiliis spadonum et, ne quid malis desit, Septimii desertoris sui gladio trucidatus sub oculis uxoris suae liberorumque moreretur.

'(Pompeius suffered the still greater disgrace) of meditating at Syedra, on a lonely rock in Cilicia, an escape to Parthia, Africa or Egypt; and finally of dying by murder in the sight of his wife and

<sup>1853</sup> Caesar, *De bello civili*, 3, 103-104.

<sup>1854</sup> Cicero, *Tusculanae disputationes*, 3, 27, 66.

<sup>1855</sup> Livius, *Periocha* 112.

<sup>1856</sup> Florus, 2, 13, 51-52.

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children on the shores of Pelusium, by order of the most contemptible of kings and by the advice of eunuchs, and, to complete the tale of his misfortunes, by the sword of Septimius, a deserter of his own army.'

Velleius Paterculus (48) states that Pompeius came to Ptolemaios in a merchant ship, but mentions no specific place of arrival; the general did not receive a proper burial<sup>1857</sup>:

Pompeius profugiens cum duobus Lentulis consularibus Sextoque filio et Favonio praetorio, quos comites ei fortuna adgregaverat ... Aegyptum petere proposuit ... missi itaque ab rege, qui venientem Cn. Pompeium (is iam a Mytilenis Corneliam uxorem receptam in navem fugae comitem habere coeperat) consilio Theodoti et Achillae exciperent hortarenturque, ut ex oneraria in eam navem, quae obviam processerat, transcenderet; quod cum fecisset, princeps Romani nominis imperio arbitrioque Aegyptii mancipii C. Caesare P. Servilio consulibus iugulatus est. ... in tantum in illo viro a se discordante fortuna, ut cui modo ad victoriam terra defuerat, deesset ad sepulturam.

'Pompeius fled with the two Lentuli, both ex-consuls, his own son Sextus, and Favonius, a former praetor, friends whom chance had gathered about him as his companions. ... He decided to repair to Egypt. ... Envoys were sent by the king at the instance of Theodotus and Achilles to receive Pompeius on his arrival - he was now accompanied in his flight by his wife Cornelia, who had been taken on board at Mytilene - and to urge him to change from the merchant ship to the vessel which had come out to meet him. Having accepted the invitation, the first of the citizens of Rome was stabbed to death by the order and dictation of an Egyptian vassal, the year of his death being the consulship of C. Caesar and P. Servilius. ... Such was the inconsistency of fortune in his case, that he who but a short time before had found no more lands to conquer, now found none for his burial.'

Lucius Lentulus, following Pompeius, sailed along the Egyptian coast and saw a pyre, which he in a kind of vision identified as that of Pompeius, although he did not know what had happened. Valerius Maximus (49) only mentions this anecdote and does not dwell on Lentulus' own death there<sup>1858</sup>:

Iam quod L. Lentulus litus praenavigans in quo Cn. Pompeii Magni perfidia Ptolomaei regis interempti corpus concisae scaphae lignis comburebatur, ignarus casus eius, cum ipsi Fortunae erubescendum rogam vidisset, comilitonibus dixit 'qui scimus an hac flamma Cn. Pompeius cremetur?' divinitus missae vocis miraculum est.

'When L. Lentulus was sailing past the shore on which the body of Cn. Pompeius Magnus, slain by the treachery of king Ptolomaeus, was being burned with the wood of a boat cut up for the purpose, he saw the pyre for which Fortune herself should have blushed and, though unaware of Pompeius' fate, spoke thus to his comrades in arms: "How do we know whether Cn. Pompeius is not being cremated in this fire?" The utterance was divinely inspired, a wonder.'

Lucanus' poetical account (53-54) describes at length Pompeius' fate<sup>1859</sup>. The general left from Cyprus heading for Alexandria, but because of opposite winds he hardly reached the shoals of the Pelousiac mouth:

462 inde maris vasti transverso vertitur aestu;  
nec tenuit gratum nocturno lumine montem,  
infimaeque Aegypti pugnaci litora velo  
vix tetigit, qua dividui pars maxima Nili  
466 in vada decurrit Pelusia septimus amnis.

<sup>1857</sup> Velleius Paterculus, *Historia Romana*, 2, 53, 1-3.

<sup>1858</sup> Valerius Maximus, 1, 8, 9; cf. also 5, 1, 10 (50) for the burial of Pompeius' head by Iulius Caesar in Alexandria.

<sup>1859</sup> Lucanus, 8, 460-872; cf. also 9, 1-14.51-83 and 10, 378-381.

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'From there he sailed a fresh course along the crosscurrent of the open sea. Unable to make the tower whose light the seaman blesses in darkness, with difficulty he reached the furthest shore of Egypt with battling sail, where the largest branch of the divided Nile, one of seven rivers, runs out to the shoals of Pelusium.'

Pompeius heard that Ptolemaios stayed at mount Kasion<sup>1860</sup> and sailed over there. In the meantime a mounted watchman, probably also leaving from Pelousion, had reached the court:

470 conperit ut regem Casio se monte tenere,  
flectit iter; nec Phoebus adhuc nec carbasa languent.  
iam rapido speculator eques per litora cursu

473 hospitis adventu pavidam compleverat aulam.

'When he learned that the king was encamped on mount Casium, he bent his course thither; the sun was not yet setting, nor the sails flagging. By now a mounted watchman, galloping along the shore, had filled with the news of this arrival the frightened court.'

At the place 'where the land of traitors (sc. Egypt) juts out into the sands of the Kasion and where the Egyptian shoals tell of the neighbouring Syrtes' a small boat is prepared. What intentions has the crowd of Pelousiac Kanopos, cries Lucanus:

539 perfida qua tellus Casii excurrit harenis  
et vada testantur iunctas Aegyptia Syrtes,  
exiguam sociis monstri gladiisque carinam  
instruxit. o superi, Nilusne et barbara Memphis  
et Pelusiaci tam mollis turba Canopi

544 hos animos? sic fata premunt civilia mundum?

'(Achillas) manned a small boat with armed accomplices for the horrid deed, where the land of traitors juts out into the Casian sands, and the Egyptian shoals tell of the neighbouring Syrtes. Ye gods! Do the Nile and barbarous Memphis, and the effeminate people of Pelusiac Canopus, aspire so high as this? Does the curse of the civil war weigh thus on all the world?'

The Kasion was apparently considered the border region of Egypt, known for its sandy dunes<sup>1861</sup>. The 'Egyptian shoals' are the inaccessible coastline of the northern Sinai, and since the indication 'neighbouring Syrtes', cannot be understood geographically, the image probably refers to the similar character of these dangerous Libyan sandbanks. The expression 'Pelusiaci turba Canopi' is possibly a rather odd reference to the people of Egypt living between the Pelousiac and the Kanopic branch<sup>1862</sup>.

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<sup>1860</sup> Cf. Lucanus, scholion ad 8, 470 (Cavajoni, 1990, p. 32) (58): *Casius mons Aegypti est* ('(this) is mount Casium in Egypt'). Baudissin, 1878, II, p. 243, n. 6 incorrectly locates the Kasion in 8, 470.539 and 10, 434 in Syria, while the 'mountain' referred to in 8, 463 has nothing to do with the Kasion, as he suggests, but in fact refers to the Pharos of Alexandria.

<sup>1861</sup> Cf. Lucanus, scholia ad 8, 539 (Usener, 1869, p. 277) (57): *a Casio monte* ('(named) after mount Casium') and ad 8, 539 (Cavajoni, 1990, p. 38) (59): *'Casii harenis' a monte Casio dictum - ('Casii') vel 'siccis'* ('the Casian sands, named after mount Casium' - 'the Casian or (the) dry (sands)').

<sup>1862</sup> Cf. Mayer, 1981, p. 149; Carrez-Maratray, 1995, p. 144. The expression has been copied elsewhere in Latin literature; cf. Statius, *Silvae*, 2, 7, 71: *Pelusiaci scelus Canopi* ('the crime of Pelusiac Canopus'); Avienus, *Descriptio orbis terrae*, 24 (Van de Woestijne, 1961, p. 23): *Pelusiaci templa Canopi* ('the temples of Pelusiac Canopus'; Sidonius Apollinaris, *Carmina*, 9, 274: *Pelusiaco satus Canopo* ('the son of Pelusiac Canopus'), referring to the poet Claudianus of Alexandria. Also for the scholia to this passage [Lucanus, scholion ad 8, 543 (Cavajoni, 1990, p. 38)] 'Pelusiacus' is

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Pompeius strikes his sails and rows towards the coast. A small boat gets near him and he is invited to embark because the dangerous coastline and the surf of the two seas that break upon the shoals, do not allow foreign ships to land:

560 ... iam vento vela negarat  
Magnus et auxilio remorum infanda petebat  
litora; quem contra non longa vecta biremi  
appulerat scelerata manus, Magnoque patere  
fingens regna Phari celsae de puppe carinae  
in parvam iubet ire ratem, litusque malignum  
incusat bimaremque vadis frangentibus aestum,

567 qui vetet externas terris adpellere classes.

'Now Magnus had robbed the wind of his sails and was using oars to bring him to the accursed coast, when the murderous band came alongside to meet him in a little two-oared boat. Pretending that he was welcome to the kingdom of Pharus (sc. Egypt), they invited him to step into their little craft from the stern of his tall vessel, blaming the scanty anchorage and the surf of two seas that broke upon the shallows and hindered foreign ships from access to the land.'

The Sibyl of Cumae had warned that no Roman soldier should visit the Pelousiac mouths of the Nile:

824 haut equidem inmerito Cumanae carmine vatis  
cautum, ne Nili Pelusia tangeret ora

826 Hesperius miles ripasque aestate tumentes.

'With good reason did the Sibyl of Cumae warn us in her verse, that no Roman soldier should visit the Pelousian mouths of the Nile, and those banks which the summer floods.'

Lucanus (56) recalls at length the humble tomb of Pompeius on the Egyptian shore, which visitors will worship rather than Zeus Kasios<sup>1863</sup>, whose temple apparently stood in the neighbourhood:

855 quem non tumuli venerabile saxum  
et cinis in summis forsan turbatus harenis  
avertet manesque tuos placare iubebit

858 et Casio praeferre lovi?

'that gravestone, and those ashes, perhaps disturbed and lying on the surface of the sand, will call him aside to worship, and bid him to appease your spirit, and give it the preference over Casian Iuppiter.'

Cornelia cries out that she refuses to leave the coast of Pelousion:

83 linquere, si qua fides, Pelusia litora nolo.

'With sorrow, if my words may be believed, I leave the Pelousian coast.'

Statius (66) gives a summary of Lucanus' *Bellum civile*, paying much attention to the passage about the death of Pompeius, which is called the crime of Pelousiac Kanopos<sup>1864</sup>:

70 et gratum popularitate Magnum.  
tu Pelusiaci scelus Canopi

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synonymous with 'Aegyptiacus'. It is not likely that there is a link with the story of Skylax (4) about Kanopos and Pelousios.

<sup>1863</sup> Cf. Lucanus, scholia ad 8, 858 (Cavajoni, 1990, p. 58) (60): <Casius> mons in quo colitur Iuppiter - Aegyptio: nam variae gentes deos suos ob maiorem dignitatem Ioves vocabant ('Mount Casium, where Iuppiter is worshipped - (an) Egyptian (Iuppiter): for several people call their own gods Iuppiter because of the greater dignity').

<sup>1864</sup> Statius, *Silvae*, 2, 7, 70-73.

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deflebis pius et Pharo cruenta

73 Pompeio dabis altius sepulcrum.

'... and Magnus, favourite of the people. Thou shalt shed reverent tears for the crime of Pelusiac Canopus, and raise to Pompeius a memorial loftier than bloodstained Pharos.'

The 6th century author Malalas (128) claims to have used the work of Lucanus, but as he states that Pompeius has been killed in Egypt by Iulius Caesar himself, it is clear that he used at best an unreliable intermediary source<sup>1865</sup>:

... ἐπεστράτευσε κατὰ Πομπηίου Μάγνου· καὶ καταφθάσας αὐτὸν ἀνείλεν αὐτὸν εἰς τὴν Αἴγυπτον χώραν, καθὼς περὶ αὐτοῦ ὁ σοφώτατος Λουκανὸς συνεγράψατο.

'(Iulius Caesar) began a campaign against Pompeius Magnus. When he caught up with Pompeius, he killed him in the land of Egypt, as the most learned Lucanus has written about him.'

According to Ploutarchos (68) Pompeius went from Cyprus to Egypt with some Seleucid triremes and some merchant ships, and since he had heard that Ptolemaios stayed in Pelousion with his army, he put in there and sent him a messenger<sup>1866</sup>:

(77, 1) ὡς δ' οὖν ἐνίκα φεύγειν εἰς τὴν Αἴγυπτον, ἀναχθεις ἀπὸ Κύπρου Σελευκίδι τριήρει μετὰ τῆς γυναικός (τῶν δ' ἄλλων οἱ μὲν ἐν μακραῖς ὁμοίως ναυσίν, οἱ δὲ ἐν ὀλκάσιν ἅμα συμπαρέπλεον), τὸ μὲν πέλαγος διεπέρασεν ἀσφαλῶς, πυθόμενος δὲ τὸν Πτολεμαῖον ἐν Πηλουσίῳ καθῆσθαι μετὰ στρατιᾶς, πολεμοῦντα πρὸς τὴν ἀδελφὴν, ἐκεῖ κατέσχε, προπέμψας τὸν φράσοντα τῷ βασιλεῖ καὶ δεησόμενον.

'So when it was decided that he should fly to Egypt, he set sail from Cyprus on a Seleucid trireme with his wife (of the rest, some sailed along with him in ships of war like his own, and others in merchant vessels), and crossed the sea in safety; but on learning that Ptolemaios was posted at Pelousion with an army, making war upon his sister, he put in there, and sent on a messenger to announce his arrival to the king and to ask his aid.'

The royal council held a meeting with Pompeius anchored offshore:

(77, 3) καὶ τοιοῦτου δικαστηρίου ψῆφον Πομπήιος ἐπ' ἀγκυρῶν πρόσω τῆς χώρας ἀποσαλεύων περιέμενεν.

'And it was such a tribunal's verdict which Pompeius, tossing at anchor some distance of the shore, was waiting for.'

The murderers approached the ship of Pompeius in a small vessel. The lack of ceremony made the Romans expect the worse and they advised to go astern to get out of reach of the missiles, which apparently were visible on the shore:

(78, 2) ὡς οἶν εἶδον οὐ βασιλικὴν οὐδὲ λαμπρὰν οὐδὲ ταῖς Θεοφάνους ἐλπίσιν ὁμοίαν ὑποδοχὴν, ἀλλ' ἐπὶ μιᾶς ἀλιάδος προσπλέοντας ὀλίγους ἀνθρώπους, ὑπείδοντο τὴν ὀλιγωρίαν καὶ τῷ Πομπηίῳ παρήνουν εἰς πέλαγος ἀνακρούεσθαι τὴν ναῦν, ἕως ἕξω βέλους εἰσίν.

'Accordingly, when they saw a reception that was not royal, nor splendid, nor in accordance with the hopes of Theophanes, but a few men sailing up in a single fishing-boat, they viewed this lack of respect with suspicion, and advised Pompeius to have his ship rowed back into the open sea, till they were beyond reach of missiles.'

Achillas explained that the coast was too shallow and too sandy for a trireme to approach. At the same time some Egyptian royal ships, which apparently had less

<sup>1865</sup> Malalas, *Chronographia*, 9, 2 (Dindorf, 1831, p. 215); cf. the translation of Jeffreys, 1986, p. 113.

<sup>1866</sup> Ploutarchos, *Pompeius*, 76, 5-80, 6 (659 F-662 A). The account has been followed quite closely by Zonaras, *Epitome historiarum*, 10, 9 (Dindorf, 1869, II, p. 363-365) (145): καὶ μαθὼν Πτολεμαῖον διάγειν εἰς τὸ Πηλούσιον, ἐκεῖ κατηνέχθη ('and on learning that Ptolemaios stayed in Pelousion, he put in there').

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draught than the triremes, were crewed and soldiers were standing along the shore to prevent any escape:

(78, 3) ὁ δὲ Ἀχιλλᾶς ἀσπασάμενος αὐτὸν Ἑλληνιστὶ παρεκάλει μετελθεῖν εἰς τὴν ἀλιάδα· τέναγος γὰρ εἶναι πολύ, καὶ βάθος οὐκ ἔχει πλόμιον τριήρει τὴν θάλατταν ὑπόψαμμον οὔσαν. ἅμα δὲ καὶ ναῦς τινες ἑωρῶντο τῶν βασιλικῶν πληρούμεναι, καὶ τὸν αἰγιαλὸν ὀπλῖται κατεῖχον, ὥστ' ἄφυκτα καὶ μεταβαλλομένοις ἐφαίνετο.

'Then Achilles saluted him in Greek, and invited him to come aboard the boat, telling him that the shallows were extensive, and that the sea, which had a sandy bottom, was not deep enough to float a trireme. At the same time some of the royal ships were seen to be taking their crews aboard, and men-at-arms were occupying the shore, so that there seemed to be no escape even if they changed their minds.'

Pompeius embarked and sailed the long distance towards the shore, where people of the royal company were gathering:

(79, 1) ... καὶ συχνοῦ διαστήματος ὄντος ἐπὶ τὴν γῆν ἀπὸ τῆς τριήρους. ... (79, 3) ὡς δὲ τῇ γῆ προσεπέλαζον, ἡ μὲν Κορινθία μετὰ τῶν φίλων ἐκ τῆς τριήρους περιπαθῆς οὔσα τὸ μέλλον ἀπεσκοπεῖτο, καὶ θαρρεῖν ἤρχετο πολλοὺς ὁρῶσα πρὸς τὴν ἀπόβασιν τῶν βασιλικῶν οἷον ἐπὶ τιμῇ καὶ δεξιώσει συνερχομένους.

'... and since it was a long distance from the trireme to the land, ... Then, as they drew near the shore, Cornelia, together with his friends, stood on the trireme watching with great anxiety for the outcome, and began to take heart when she saw many of the king's people assembling at the landing as if to give him an honourable welcome.'

After the murder of Pompeius his ships fled away, whereas the Egyptians were unable to follow them<sup>1867</sup>:

(80, 1) οἱ δ' ἀπὸ τῶν νεῶν ὡς ἐθεάσαντο τὸν φόνον, οἰμωγὴν ἐξάκουστον ἄχρι τῆς γῆς ἐκχέαντες ἔφυγον, ἀράμεινοι τὰς ἀγκύρας κατὰ τάχος. καὶ πνεῦμα λαμπρὸν ἐβοήθει πελαγίους ὑπεκθέουσιν, ὥστε βουλομένους διώκειν ἀποτραπέσθαι τοὺς Αἰγυπτίους.

'When the people on the ships beheld the murder, they uttered a wailing cry that could be heard as far as the shore, and weighing anchor quickly, took to flight. And a strong wind came to their aid as they ran out to sea, so that the Egyptians, though desirous of pursuing, turned back.'

The following day Lucius Lentulus arrived from Cyprus, following the coast - no mention is made of Pelousion - until he saw Pompeius' pyre. He went ashore and was killed:

(80, 4) ... τῇ δ' ὑστεραία Λεύκιος Λέντλος οὐκ εἰδὼς τὰ πεπραγμένα, πλέων ἀπὸ Κύπρου καὶ παρὰ γῆν κομιζόμενος, ὡς εἶδε νεκροῦ πυρὰν καὶ παρεστῶτα τὸν Φίλιππον, οὔπω καθορώμενος· ... καὶ μετὰ μικρὸν ἀποβάς καὶ συλληφθεὶς ἀπέθανε.

'... and on the following day Lucius Lentulus, as he came sailing from Cyprus and coasted along the shore not knowing what had happened, saw a funeral pyre and Philippos standing beside it, and before he had been seen himself exclaimed: ... And after a little he went ashore, was seized, and put to death.'

In Ploutarchos' *Brutus* (69) a summary is given of the same events and again Pompeius is said to arrive in Pelousion. No details are given about the scene of the murder or about his tomb<sup>1868</sup>:

Πομπηίου Μάγνου προσβαλόντος Αἰγύπτῳ κατὰ Πηλούσιον ...  
'When Pompeius Magnus put in as a fugitive at Pelousion in Egypt ...'

<sup>1867</sup> Against Heinen, 1966, p. 66-67, for whom this passage implies that a part of the fleet was captured by the Egyptians.

<sup>1868</sup> Ploutarchos, *Brutus*, 33, 1-4 (999 B-C).

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According to Appianos (82-83) Pompeius was driven by the wind to the Kasion and there he noticed the army of Ptolemaios, who was expecting an attack of his sister Kleopatra and the army that she had raised in Syria<sup>1869</sup>:

ὁ μὲν δὴ διὰ τὰδε ἐς τὴν Αἴγυπτον ἔπλει· ἄρτι δ' ἐκπεσοῦσης ἀπ' Αἰγύπτου Κλεοπάτρας, ἣ τῷ ἀδελφῷ συνήρχε, καὶ στρατὸν ἀμφὶ τὴν Συρίαν ἀγειρούσης, Πτολεμαῖος ὁ τῆς Κλεοπάτρας ἀδελφὸς ἀμφὶ τὸ Κάσσιον τῆς Αἰγύπτου ταῖς Κλεοπάτρας ἐσβολαῖς ἐφήδρευε, καὶ πῶς κατὰ δαίμονα ἐς τὸ Κάσσιον τὸ πνεῦμα τὸν Πομπήιον κατέφερε. θεασάμενος δὲ στρατὸν ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς πολὺν ἔστησε τὸν πλοῦν καὶ εἴκασεν, ὅπερ ἦν, παρῆναι τὸν βασιλέα.

'For these reasons (Pompeius) sailed to Egypt, whence Kleopatra, who had previously reigned with her brother, had been lately expelled, and was collecting an army in Syria. Ptolemaios, her brother, was at the Kasion in Egypt, lying in wait for her invasion, and, as providence would have it, the wind carried Pompeius to the Kasion. Seeing a large army on the shore he stopped his ship, rightly judging that the king was there.'

After the royal council a small boat was sent to pick up Pompeius because the sea was too shallow for large ships:

κυρωθείσης δὲ τῆς γνώμης σκάφος εὐτελὲς ἐπ' αὐτὸν ἐπέμπετο, ὡς τῆς θαλάσσης οὐσῆς ἀλιτενοῦς καὶ μεγάλαις ναυσὶν οὐκ εὐχεροῦς, ὑπηρέται τέ τινες τῶν βασιλικῶν ἐνέβαινον ἐς τὸ σκάφος.

'His opinion prevailed. So they sent a miserable skiff to him, pretending that the sea was shallow and not adapted to large ships. Some of the king's attendants came in the skiff.'

The Egyptian army was stationed along the coast as if it was a sign of honour, and the king himself was watching the arrival of Pompeius:

ἅμα δὲ ταῦτ' ἐγίνετο, καὶ ὁ στρατὸς ὡσπερ ἐπὶ τιμῇ τοῦ Πομπηίου παρὰ τὸν αἰγιαλὸν ἐξετάσσετο ἅπας, καὶ ὁ βασιλεὺς ἐν μέσῳ τῇ φοινικίδι κατάδηλος ἦν περικειμένη.

'At the same time the whole army was marshalled along the shore as if to do honour to Pompeius, and the king was conspicuous in the midst of them by the purple robe he wore.'

When Iulius Caesar arrived in Alexandria pursuing Pompeius, the king was still at the Kasion<sup>1870</sup>:

ἐσδέχονται δ' αὐτὸν οἱ τοῦ βασιλέως ἐπιτροπεύοντες, ἔτι τοῦ βασιλέως ἀμφὶ τὸ Κάσσιον ὄντος.

'(Caesar) was received by the king's guardians, the king himself being still at the Kasion.'

Ailianos (92) describes how the headless corpse of Pompeius was left on the shore, without any further specific location<sup>1871</sup>:

καὶ τὸν Ῥωμαῖον Πομπήιον τὸν Μέγαν ἐπὶ κλῆν ἀποκτείναντες Αἰγύπτιοι ... εἴασαν ἔρριμμένον, ἀμοιρον τῆς κεφαλῆς, πλησίον τῆς θαλάττης καὶ ἐκείνον.

'And the Egyptians after killing the Roman Pompeius, surnamed the Great, ... left him cast out, a headless corpse, by the sea.'

According to Cassius Dion (93) Pompeius went to Pelousion, where Ptolemaios was encamped waging war against Kleopatra. He brought his ships to anchor and send some messengers<sup>1872</sup>:

(3, 1) ἀλλ' ἐς τὴν Αἴγυπτον δι' ἄπερ εἶπον ὤρμησε, καὶ παρὰ τὴν ἠπειρον μέχρι Κιλικίας κομισθεὶς ἐκείθεν πρὸς τὸ Πηλοῦσιον ἐπεραιώθη, ὅπου ὁ Πτολεμαῖος

<sup>1869</sup> Appianos, *Historia Romana*, 14 (= *Bella civilia*, 2), 12, 84-85 (352-360).

<sup>1870</sup> Appianos, *Historia Romana*, 14 (= *Bella civilia*, 2), 13, 89 (375).

<sup>1871</sup> Ailianos, *De natura animalium*, 12, 6.

<sup>1872</sup> Cassius Dion, 42, 3, 1 - 5, 7. Cf. Xiphilinos, 21 (Boissevain, 1901, III, p. 490) (142): καὶ εἰς Αἴγυπτον ἀῆρε, κακεῖ ἐπιβουλευθεὶς ἀνιρέθη ('and he went to Egypt, and there he was the object of a plot and was killed').

## 6. Kasion

Κλεοπάτρα τῇ ἀδελφῇ πολεμῶν ἐστρατοπεδεύετο. (3, 2) τὰς τε ναῦς ἀνοκωχέουσας ἔπεμψέ τινας, ...

'(Pompeius) set out, then, for Egypt, for the reasons mentioned, and after coasting along the shore as far as Cilicia crossed from there to Pelousion, where Ptolemaios was encamped while making war upon his sister Kleopatra. Bringing the ships to anchor, he sent some men ...'

The messengers were sent back with good news. Septimius and Achilles went to Pompeius in some small boats, asking him to embark with them because it was impossible for large ships to come to the shore:

(4, 1) ... καὶ τοὺς τε ἐλθόντας παρ' αὐτοῦ προέπεμψαν, θαρσεῖν σφας ἔνιοι κελεύσαντες, καὶ αὐτοὶ μετὰ τοῦτο ἀκατίων ἐπιβάντες προσέπλευσαν αὐτῷ, (4, 2) καὶ τὰ τε ἄλλα ἐφιλοφρονήσαντο αὐτὸν καὶ ἠξίωσαν πρὸς ἑαυτοὺς μετεκβῆναι, λέγοντες μήτε τινα ναῦν δύνασθαι ὑπὸ τοῦ μεγέθους διὰ τὰ βράχη πρὸς τὴν γῆν προσσχεῖν.

'So they sent his messengers on ahead, after some had bidden them be of good cheer, and afterwards the conspirators themselves embarked on some small boats and sailed out to him. After many friendly greetings they begged him to come over to their boats, declaring that by reason of its size and the shallow water a ship could not come close to land.'

In his comment on Pompeius' death, which probably reflects another source, Cassius Dion does no longer mention Pelousion, but the general is killed near Egypt, in the neighbourhood of mount Kasion:

(5, 3) ... χιλίων ποτὲ νεῶν, ὡς ὁ λόγος ἔχει, ἄρξας ἐν πλοιαρίῳ τινί, πρὸς τε τῇ Αἰγύπτῳ ... διεφθάρη. ... (5, 5) ... τότε καθάπερ τις καὶ αὐτῶν τῶν Αἰγυπτίων ἔσχατος, πρὸς τε τῷ Κασίῳ ὄρει καὶ ἐν τῇ ἡμέρᾳ ἐν ἣ ποτε τὰ τε τοῦ Μιθριδάτου καὶ τὰ τῶν καταποντιστῶν ἐπινίκια ἤγαγεν, ἐσφάγη.

'And although he had once been, as the saying is, 'master of a thousand ships', he was destroyed in a tiny boat near Egypt ... He was now butchered like one of the lowest of the Egyptians themselves, not only near mount Kasion but on the anniversary of the day on which he had once celebrated a triumph over Mithridates and the pirates.'

An oracle had warned Pompeius for Cassius, but instead of being killed by a man with that name, he was murdered and buried at the homonymous mountain<sup>1873</sup>:

(5, 6) ... καὶ ἐς πάντας τοὺς πολίτας τοὺς Κασσίους ἐκ χρησμοῦ τινος ὑποπτεῦον πρὸς μὲν ἀνδρὸς Κασσίου οὐδενὸς ἐπεβουλεύθη, παρά δὲ δὴ τῷ ὄρει τῷ τὴν ἐπίκλησιν ταύτην ἔχοντι καὶ ἀπέθανε καὶ ἐτάφη.

'again, following a certain oracle, he had been suspicious of all the citizens named Cassius, but instead of being the object of a plot by any man called Cassius he died and was buried beside the mountain that had this name.'

Since Cassius Dion is the only one to mention this oracle about Pompeius, the story has maybe been made up only afterwards; it is not impossible that things got mixed up with the oracle for Caligula to distrust any Cassius, while also Iulius Caesar was killed by a Cassius.

According to Cassius Dion some other people of Pompeius' company got captured by the Egyptians, but Cornelia and Sextus Pompeius could escape:

(5, 7) τῶν δὲ δὴ συμπλεόντων αὐτῷ οἱ μὲν αὐτίκα ἐάλωσαν οἱ δὲ καὶ ἔφυγον, ἄλλοι τε καὶ ὁ παῖς ἢ τε γυνὴ αὐτοῦ.

'Of his fellow-voyagers some were captured at once, while others escaped, among them his wife and son.'

Pseudo-Aurelius Victor (103), who does not specify the place of Pompeius' death, incorrectly states that the body of Pompeius was thrown into the Nile<sup>1874</sup>:

<sup>1873</sup> Cf. Xiphilinos, 22 (Boissevain, 1901, III, p. 490) (142). Pape, 1911, p. 633 incorrectly considers 'Kassios' in τοὺς Κασσίους and ἀνδρὸς Κασσίου an ethnic for Kasion.



## 6. *Kasion*

in Pharsalia victus ad Ptolomaeum Alexandriae regem confugit. eius imperio ab Achilla et Potino satellitibus occisus est. huius latus sub oculis uxoris et liberorum a Septimio, Ptolomaei praefecto, mucrone confossum est. iamque defuncti caput gladio praecisum, quod usque ad ea tempora fuerat ignoratum. truncus Nilo iactatus a Servio Codro rogo inustus humatusque est inscribente sepulcro: hic positus est Magnus.

'Defeated at Pharsalia, (Pompeius) fled to Ptolomaeus the king of Alexandria. By order of this man he was killed by the attendants Achillas and Potinus. He was stabbed in the side with a sword by Septimius, an officer of Ptolomaeus, in the sight of his wife and children. The head was cut from the lifeless body; such an action had been unknown before this time. The rest of the body, thrown into the Nile and burned on a funeral pile by Servius Codrus (immo Cordus), was buried in a tomb with this inscription: Here lies Magnus.'

According to Eutropius (**104**) Pompeius went to Alexandria and was there killed by Ptolemaios, who sent Pompeius' head and ring to Caesar. Eutropius does not specify where Caesar was at that moment, but he continues that Caesar later on arrived in Alexandria<sup>1875</sup>:

ipse fugatus Alexandriam petiit, ut a rege Aegypti, cui tutor a senatu datus fuerat propter iuvenilem eius aetatem, acciperet auxilia. qui fortunam magis quam amicitiam secutus occidit Pompeium, caput eius et anulum Caesari misit. quo conspecto Caesar etiam lacrimas fudisse dicitur, tanti viri intuens caput et generi quondam sui. mox Caesar Alexandriam venit.

'(Pompeius) fled to Alexandria to ask support from the king of Egypt, for whom he was appointed by the senate as a tutor because of his young age. The king followed his fortune rather than his friendship and killed Pompeius; he sent his head and ring to Caesar. It is told that Caesar at this sight even cried, looking at the head of such a man, once his son-in-law. Later on Caesar arrived in Alexandria.'

Summarizing his sources, Eutropius apparently made some mistakes, since the other accounts clearly state that Pompeius went to the eastern delta and that Caesar saw Pompeius' head in Alexandria.

Orosius (**112**) does not mention the place where Pompeius was murdered, but since he states that Lucius Cornelius Lentulus Crus was killed near Pelousion, this might infer that also Pompeius had died there. Cornelia and Sextus Pompeius managed to escape, but when Orosius states that the rest of the fleet got captured and killed - apparently not at Pelousion -, he certainly exaggerated<sup>1876</sup>:

inde per Cyprum in Aegyptum venit ibique, mox ut lites attigit, iussu Ptolomaei adulescentis in gratiam Caesaris victoris occisus est. Pompei uxor fillique fugerunt; cetera pompeiana classis direpta est, omnibus qui in ea erant crudelissime trucidatis; ibique et Pompeius Bithynicus occisus est. Lentulus vero vir consularis apud Pelusium interfectus est.

'Puis il vint en Égypte en passant par Chypre et là, dès qu'il toucha le rivage, il fut tué sur l'ordre du jeune Ptolomaeus qui voulait se concilier Caesar vainqueur. La femme et les fils de Pompeius

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<sup>1874</sup> Pseudo-Aurelius Victor, *De viris illustribus*, 77, 9 (Pichlmayr, 1966, p. 69). Some manuscripts, however, offer a different reading for this passage; the edition of Sherwin, 1973, p. 178-179 (cf. Carrez-Maratray, 1995, p. 143, n. 14 and 1999b, p. 394 and n. 384) so has 'ad Ptolomaeum Alexandriae fugit' ('he fled to Ptolomaeus at Alexandria'), which implies that Pompeius headed for Alexandria and was there killed; this version, which finds a parallel in Eutropius (**104**), perhaps explains the puzzling reference to the Nile, but cannot historically be trusted.

<sup>1875</sup> Eutropius, 6, 21, 3 - 22, 1 (Santini, 1979, p. 40).

<sup>1876</sup> Orosius, *Historia adversus paganos*, 6, 15, 28 (Arnaud-Lindet, 1991, II, p. 210); cf. Heinen, 1966, p. 67 and n. 2-3.

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s'enfuirent; le reste de la flotte pompéienne fut détruite, tous ceux qui étaient à son bord furent massacrés avec la plus grande cruauté; c'est là également que Pompeius Bithynicus fut tué. L'ancien consul Lentulus, pour sa part, fut tué devant Pelusium.'

In an apocryphal *Psalm of Salomon* (16) a conqueror of Jerusalem is called the dragon; he is punished for his pride and lies stabbed near the mountains of Egypt, his corpse dashing in the waves, while there is nobody to bury him<sup>1877</sup>:

μη χρονίσης, ὁ θεός, τοῦ ἀποδοῦναι αὐτοῖς εἰς κεφαλὰς, τοῦ εἰπεῖν τὴν ὑπερηφανίαν τοῦ δράκοντος ἐν ἀτιμία. καὶ οὐκ ἐχρόνισα ἕως ἔδειξέν μοι ὁ θεὸς τὴν ὕβριν αὐτοῦ, ἐκκεκεντημένον ἐπὶ τῶν ὀρέων Αἰγύπτου ὑπὲρ ἐλάχιστον ἐξουδενωμένον ἐπὶ γῆς καὶ θαλάσσης· τὸ σῶμα αὐτοῦ διαφερόμενον ἐπὶ κυμάτων ἐν ὕβρει πολλῇ, καὶ οὐκ ἦν ὁ θάπτων, ὅτι ἐξουθένωσεν αὐτὸν ἐν ἀτιμία.

'Delay not, O God, to recompense them on (their) heads, to turn the pride of the dragon into dishonour. And I had not long to wait before God showed me the insolent one slain on the mountains of Egypt, esteemed of less account than the least, on land and sea; his body (, too,) borne hither and thither on the billows with much insolence, with none to bury (him), because He had rejected him with dishonour.'

Although also identifications with Antiochos IV Epiphanes and emperor Titus have been proposed, it is usually accepted that the author refers to Pompeius Magnus and that the psalm therefore can be dated about 48-47 BC. The 'mountains of Egypt' probably stand for the Kasion, although the plural is puzzling. In the term δράκων, 'dragon', Eissfeldt sees an allusion to the myth of Typhon, which is said to be hidden in lake Serbonis, but this interpretation is hardly convincing.

Already before 35 BC the tomb of Pompeius had become a topic in Latin literature<sup>1878</sup>. Terentius Varro Atacinus (19) stresses its small dimensions (marmoreo Licinus tumulo iacet, at Cato nullo, Pompeius parvo - 'Licinus lies in a marble tomb, but Cato in none and Pompeius in a small one')<sup>1879</sup>. Ten other anonymous epigrams in the *Anthologia Latina* (20-29) refer to Pompeius' death<sup>1880</sup>. Especially the fact that Pompeius and his two sons are buried on three different continents appealed to the imagination; Pompeius' tomb is usually located in Africa or Libye (396: Magne, premis Libyam - 'Magnus, you weigh on Libya' (20); 397: tam late sparsit funera, Magne, tua - '(Fortune) located your funeral that far, Magnus' (21); 398: membra pater Libyco posuit male tecta sepulcro - 'the father put his body badly covered in a Libyan tomb' (22); 399: aut Asia aut Europa tegit aut Africa Magnos

<sup>1877</sup> *Psalmi Salomonis*, 2, 25-27 (Rahlf's, 1935, II, p. 473); cf. the translation of Gray, 1913, p. 633-634; Eissfeldt, 1932, p. 28 and p. 40, n. 1; Delcor, M., s.v. Psaumes de Salomon, in DB, Suppl. IX, 1979, col. 229-236.

<sup>1878</sup> For a discussion of the sources on the tomb of Pompeius, cf. Pekáry, 1972, p. 195-198.

<sup>1879</sup> Varro Atacinus, *Anthologia Latina*, 1, 411 (Shackleton Bailey, 1982, p. 317); the epigram, however, is sometimes also ascribed to Seneca.

<sup>1880</sup> *Anthologia Latina*, 1, 396-400.436.452-454 (Shackleton Bailey, 1982, p. 310-311.331.339); 845 (Riese, 1906, II, p. 306).

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- 'Asia, Europe and Africa cover Magnus and his sons' (23); 453: sine nominibus, Europa<que> Asiaque simul Libyaque sepultos! - 'buried without their names both in Europe, Asia and Libya' (27); 454: infida, Magne, iaces Libya - 'Magnus, you lie in perfidious Libya' (28)). Only in two instances a specific reference is made to Egypt (452: alter Niliaco tumulo iacet - 'one lies in a tomb at the Nile' (26); 845: at me post soceri civilia bella cruenti I dextera Septimii Phariis laceravit in undis - 'but after the civil wars with my father-in-law the hand of bloody Septimius mutilated me in the waves of Pharos' (29)). Some epigrams also allude to the unworthy dimensions of the tomb (400: sub isto ... (quantus quam parvo vix tegeris!) tumulo - 'under that tomb (the great man you are is hardly covered by the small construction)' (24); 436 ('<De Pompeio et Catone>'): hic parvo, nullo conditus ille loco - 'About Pompeius and Cato: the former is buried in a small tomb, the latter has no tomb at all' (25); cf. already 398 and 453). Propertius (31) is vague about the place of Pompeius' death (noxia Alexandria, dolis aptissima tellus, et totiens nostro Memphi cruenta malo, tris ubi Pompeio detraxit harena triumphos, 'Guilty Alexandria, land ever ready for treason, and Memphis, so often blood-stained at our cost, where the sand robbed Pompeius of his three triumphs')<sup>1881</sup>.

The geographers Strabon, Plinius and Ammianus Marcellinus link the tomb of Pompeius with mount Kasion. Strabon (41), incorporating the northern Sinai in his discussion of Phoenicia, states that the region between Gaza and the Kasion and further on to Pelousion is dry and sandy. The Kasion itself is a sandy hill without water and forms a promontory; there lies the tomb of Pompeius Magnus, who was killed by the Egyptians in the neighbourhood, and a temple of Zeus Kasios<sup>1882</sup>:

εἶτα συνεχῆς ἄλλη τοιαύτη ἢ ἐπὶ τὸ Κάσιον, κάκεῖθεν ἐπὶ τὸ Πηλούσιον. ἔστι δὲ τὸ Κάσιον θινώδης τις λόφος ἀκρωτηριάζων ἄνυδρος, ὅπου τὸ Πομπηίου τοῦ Μάγνου σῶμα κεῖται καὶ Διὸς ἔστιν ἱερὸν Κασίου· πλησίον δὲ καὶ ἐσφάγη ὁ Μάγνος, δολοφονηθεὶς ὑπὸ τῶν Αἰγυπτίων.

'Then follows another continuous tract of this kind as far as the Kasion, and then one comes to Pelousion. The Kasion is a sandy hill without water and forms a promontory; the body of Pompeius Magnus is buried there, and on it is a temple of Zeus Kasios; near this place Magnus was slain, being treacherously murdered by the Egyptians.'

<sup>1881</sup> Propertius, *Elegiae*, 3, 11, 35.

<sup>1882</sup> Strabon, 16, 2, 32-33 (C 760); cf. *Chrestomathiae ex Strabonis Geographicorum*, 16, 35 (Müller, 1861, II, p. 627) (46): ὅτι τὸ Πομπηίου τοῦ Μάγνου σῶμα ἐν τῷ Κασίῳ λόφῳ κεῖται περὶ Σερβωνίδα λίμνην πλησίον Πηλουσίου πόλεως ('the tomb of Pompeius Magnus lies on the Kasion hill in the neighbourhood of lake Serbonis near the city of Pelousion').

## 6. Kasion

In his discussion on Alexandria Strabon mentions how Kleopatra was banished and set sail to Syria with her sister Arsinoe, and how Pompeius, who had fled to Pelousion and mount Kasion, was slain (43)<sup>1883</sup>:

οἱ μὲν οὖν Ἀλεξανδρεῖς ἀπέδειξαν βασιλέας τὸν τε πρεσβύτερον τῶν παίδων καὶ τὴν Κλεοπάτραν, οἱ δὲ συνόντες τῷ παιδί καταστασιάσαντες ἐξέβαλον τὴν Κλεοπάτραν, καὶ ἀπῆρε μετὰ τῆς ἀδελφῆς εἰς τὴν Συρίαν. ἐν τούτῳ Πομπήιος Μάγνος ἦκε φεύγων ἐκ Παλαιφαρσάλου πρὸς τὸ Πηλούσιον καὶ τὸ Κάσιον ὄρος· τοῦτον μὲν οὖν δολοφονοῦσιν οἱ μετὰ τοῦ βασιλέως.

'Now the Alexandrians proclaimed as sovereigns both the elder of the boys and Kleopatra; but the associates of the boy caused an uprising and banished Kleopatra, and she set sail with her sister to Syria. In the meantime Pompeius Magnus had come in flight from Palaipharsalos to Pelousion and mount Kasion; now Pompeius was treacherously slain by the king's party.'

Plinius (63) locates mount Kasion, the temple of Zeus Kasios and the tomb of Pompeius Magnus between Pelousion and Ostrakine. He also mentions that according to Herodotos mount Kasion lay next to lake Serbonis, which might imply that this was no longer the case in his time<sup>1884</sup>:

a Pelusio Chabriae castra, Casius mons, delubrum Iovis Casii, tumulus Magni Pompei. Ostracine Arabia finitur, a Pelusio LXV p. mox Idumaea incipit et Palaestina ab emersu Sirbonis lacus, quem quidam CL circuitu tradidere: Herodotus Casio monti adplicuit; nunc est palus modica.

'After Pelusium (come) the camp of Chabrias, mount Casium, the temple of Iuppiter Casius, the tomb of Pompeius Magnus. With Ostracine Arabia ends, 65 miles from Pelusium. Then begins Idumaea and Palestine, starting from the outlet of lake Sirbonis, for which some writers record an circumference of 150 miles: Herodotus approaches it to mount Casium; now it is an insignificant swamp.'

In the late 4th century AD Ammianus Marcellinus (106) mentions Kasion as one of the places in the Egyptian province Augustamnica and he still knows it as the spot where Pompeius is buried. The temple of Zeus Kasios is no longer referred to<sup>1885</sup>:

in Augustamnica Pelusium est oppidum nobile ... et Cassium, ubi Pompei sepulchrum est Magni, et Ostracine et Rhinocorura.

'In Augustamnica is the famous town of Pelusium ... and Cassium, where the tomb of Pompeius Magnus is, and Ostracine and Rhinocorura.'

Appianos (82) describes how Pompeius' head was cut off, but the remainder of his body was buried on the shore. Near the Kasion a small tomb was erected, on which somebody had written a one-line hexameter as epitaph. Bronze statues have been added later, but they had been damaged and hidden in the inner sanctuary of the

<sup>1883</sup> Strabon, 17, 1, 11 (C 796); cf. *Chrestomathiae ex Strabonis Geographorum*, 17, 14 (Müller, 1861, II, p. 631) (43): ὁ δὲ Πομπήιος, φεύγων ἐκ Φαρσάλου, ἦκεν εἰς τὸ Πηλούσιον καὶ τὸ Κάσιον ὄρος καὶ δολοφονεῖται ὑπὸ τῶν ἀμφὶ Διόνυσον ('Pompeius fled from Pharsalos, came to Pelousion and mount Kasion, and was treacherously killed by the people of Dionysos (sic)').

<sup>1884</sup> Plinius, *Naturalis historia*, 5, 14, 68; cf. Solinus, 34, 1 (Mommsen, 1895, p. 153) (97), with the tomb of Pompeius incorrectly linked to Ostrakine: a Pelusio Cassius mons est et delubrum Iovis Casii, atque ita Ostracine locus Pompeii Magni sepulchro inclitus. Idumaea inde incipit palmis opima ('After Pelusium there is mount Cassium, the temple of Iuppiter Cassius, and Ostracine, a place famous for the tomb of Pompeius Magnus. Then Idumaea starts, rich of palm trees').

<sup>1885</sup> Ammianus Marcellinus, 22, 16, 3. Incorrectly linked with the Kasion in Syria in Bonnet, 1987, p. 126, n. 135. Steuernagel, Karl - Kees, Hermann, s.v. Kasion 2, in RE, X 2, 1919, col. 2264 think that Ammianus incorrectly considers Kasion a city, but there is no reason to doubt Ammianus' account.

temple; he probably refers to the temple of Zeus Kasios in the neighbourhood<sup>1886</sup>. In the time of Appianos the tomb was covered with sand and people were looking for the statues, until Hadrianus had the monument cleared and embellished and the statues of Pompeius reinstated during his visit in 130 AD<sup>1887</sup>:

τὸ δὲ λοιπὸν σῶμα τις ἔθαιψεν ἐπὶ τῆς ἡμόνος καὶ τάφον ἤγειρεν εὐτελεῆ· καὶ ἐπίγραμμα ἄλλος ἐπέγραψε·

τῷ ναοῖς βρῖθοντι πόση σπάνις ἔπλετο τύμβου.

χρόνῳ δὲ τὸν τάφον τόνδε ἐπικρυφθέντα ὄλον ὑπὸ ψάμμου καὶ εἰκόνας, ὅσας ἀπὸ χαλκοῦ τῷ Πομπηίῳ περὶ τὸ Κάσσιον ὕστερον οἱ προσήκοντες ἀνέθηκαν, λελωβημένα πάντα καὶ ἐς τὸ ἄδυτον τοῦ ἱεροῦ κατενεχθέντα ἐζήτησε καὶ εὗρεν ἐπ' ἐμοῦ Ῥωμαίων βασιλεὺς Ἀδριανὸς ἐπιδημῶν, καὶ τὸν τάφον ἐνεκάθηρε γνώριμον αὐτῆς εἶναι καὶ τὰς εἰκόνας αὐτοῦ Πομπηίου διωρθώσατο.

'The remainder of the body was buried by somebody on the shore, and a small monument was erected over it, on which somebody else wrote this inscription: "How pitiful a tomb for one so rich in temples." In the course of time this monument was wholly covered with sand, and the bronze images that had been erected to Pompeius near the Kassion at a later period by his kinsfolk, had all been outraged and afterwards removed to the secret recess of the temple, but in my time they were sought for and found by the Roman emperor Hadrianus, while making a journey thither; he cleared away the rubbish from the monument and made it again conspicuous, and placed Pompeius' images in their proper places.'

Appianos does not know the author of the epigram written on the monument, which complains that such a great man had received such a small tomb. For Cassius Dion (94) it was Hadrianus himself who had written the line when he visited the tomb of Pompeius and restored the monument, which had fallen in ruins<sup>1888</sup>:

διὰ δὲ τῆς Ἰουδαίας μετὰ ταῦτα ἐς Αἴγυπτον παριῶν καὶ ἐνήγισε τῷ Πομπηίῳ πρὸς ὄν καὶ τοῦτ' ἐπος ἀπορρίψαι λέγεται

τῷ ναοῖς βρῖθοντι πόση σπάνις ἔπλετο τύμβου.

καὶ τὸ μνημα αὐτοῦ διεφθαρμένον ἀνωκοδόμησεν.

'After this he passed through Judaea into Egypt and offered sacrifice to Pompeius, concerning whom he is said to have uttered this verse: "How pitiful a tomb for one so rich in temples." And he restored his monument, which had fallen in ruin.'

Also in the *Anthologia Palatina* (78) Hadrianus is mentioned as the author of the epigram<sup>1889</sup>:

Ἀδριανοῦ Καίσαρος (εἰς τὸν τάφον Πομπηίου ἐν Αἰγύπτῳ).

τῷ ναοῖς βρῖθοντι πόση σπάνις ἔπλετο τύμβου.

'By emperor Hadrianus (for the tomb of Pompeius in Egypt).

How pitiful a tomb for one so rich in temples.

<sup>1886</sup> Schwartz, 1968, p. 93 suggests that the tomb was destroyed during the Jewish revolt in Kyrene about 115-117 AD (apparently mixing up the tomb at the Kasion and the place near Alexandria where according to Appianos, *Historia Romana*, 14 (= *Bella civilia*, 2), 13, 90 (380) the head of Pompeius was buried), but this view has rightly been rejected by Pekáry, 1972, p. 195; cf. also Carrez-Maratray, 1999a, p. 12-13. Weingärtner, 1969, p. 70 tentatively suggests that Germanicus on his way to Alexandria in 19 AD might have visited the tomb of Pompeius, but this is a mere hypothesis.

<sup>1887</sup> Appianos, *Historia Romana*, 14 (= *Bella civilia*, 2), 12, 86 (361-362). Goukowsky, 1995, p. 58-59 suggests to follow the manuscript reading ἐπίγραμμα ἄλλως ἐπέγραψε ('on which nothing but an inscription was written'). I do not see any reason to follow the emendation τὸ ἄδυτόν του ἱεροῦ, 'the secret recess of some temple', of Viereck, 1905, II, p. 222.

<sup>1888</sup> Cassius Dion, 69, 11, 1. Cf. Xiphilinos, 247-248 (Boissevain, 1901, III, p. 654) (143) and Zonaras, *Epitome historiarum*, 11, 23 (Dindorf, 1870, III, p. 73) (146). Clédat, 1912b, p. 105 incorrectly supposes that Hadrianus restored the monument in Pelousion.

<sup>1889</sup> Hadrianus, *Anthologia Palatina*, 9, 402 (Beckby, 1968, III, p. 250). Goukowsky, 1995, p. 55-58 prefers to follow Appianos (82) and supposes that the epigram was written shortly after the death of Pompeius but was later incorrectly ascribed to Hadrianus.

The *Historia Augusta* (**119**) states that Hadrianus went to Pelousion and had the tomb of Pompeius restored, but its location is not specified<sup>1890</sup>:

peragrata Arabia Pelusium venit et Pompeii tumulum magnificentius exstruxit.

'He then travelled through Arabia and finally came to Pelusium; he rebuilt Pompeius' tomb on a more magnificent scale.'

Cassius Dion (**95**), finally, tells how emperor Septimius Severus in 200 AD made an offering at the grave of Pompeius, somewhere between Palestine and Upper Egypt, but further geographical details are lacking<sup>1891</sup>:

ἐς τὴν Παλαιστίνην μετὰ τοῦτο ἦλθε καὶ τῷ Πομπηίῳ ἐνήγισε, καὶ ἐς τὴν Αἴγυπτον τὴν ἄνω διὰ τοῦ Νείλου ἀνέπλευσε καὶ εἶδε πᾶσαν αὐτὴν πλὴν βραχέων.

'He then went to Palestine and he sacrificed to the spirit of Pompeius. Thence he sailed to Upper Egypt, passing up the Nile, and viewed the whole country with some few exceptions.'

Sources differ about the location of Pompeius' death. Caesar (**15**), Florus (**67**), Ploutarchos (**68-69**), Orosius (**112**) and the *Historia Augusta* (**119**) only mention Pelousion, while Appianos (**82**) only speaks of the *Kasion*. Cassius Dion (**93**) apparently mentions both versions from different sources<sup>1892</sup>. Probably Strabon (**43**) and Lucanus (**53-54**) are right stating that Pompeius first went to Pelousion, there heard of the king's presence at the *Kasion* and continued his journey towards the mountain at the Egyptian border, where Ptolemaios was encamped. This position is not only confirmed in the geographical accounts of Plinius (**63**) and Ammianus Marcellinus (**106**), who situate Pompeius' tomb at the *Kasion*, but also the description of Pompeius' landing place does not fit the harbour of Pelousion, since it is unanimously stressed that the sea before the coast was too shallow to allow any larger ship. Also the fact that Pompeius' body was burnt in all solitude on the beach does not fit the environment of a city such as Pelousion. The presence of the king's army at the *Kasion* with equipment like boats and missiles is sufficiently explained by the war

<sup>1890</sup> *Historia Augusta, Hadrianus*, 14, 4.

<sup>1891</sup> Cassius Dion, 76, 13, 1; the text is a compilation of Xiphilinos, 311 (Boissevain, 1901, III, p. 698) (**144**) [ἐς τὴν Παλαιστίνην μετὰ τοῦτο ἦλθε καὶ τῷ Πομπηίῳ ἐνήγισε. ἐλθὼν δὲ καὶ ἐς τὴν Αἴγυπτον πᾶσαν τε εἶδε - 'After this he went to Palestine and offered sacrifice to Pompeius. He went to Egypt and viewed the whole country'] and *Excerpta Constantini Porphyrogeniti de virtutibus et vitiis*, 346 (Roos, 1910, p. 385) (**137**) [ὅτι ὁ Σεβήρος ἐς τὴν Ἀραβίαν ἐκ τῆς Συρίας καὶ ἐς τὴν Παλαιστίνην ἦλθε καὶ τῷ Πομπηίῳ ἐνήγισε, καὶ ἐς τὴν Αἴγυπτον τὴν ἄνω διὰ τοῦ Νείλου ἀνέπλευσε καὶ εἶδε πᾶσαν αὐτὴν πλὴν βραχέων - 'Severus went from Syria to Arabia and to Palestine and offered sacrifice to Pompeius; he sailed to Upper Egypt, passing up the Nile, and viewed the whole country with some few exceptions']; cf. Boissevain, 1901, III, p. 350. In the *Souda*, Σ 182, s.v. Σεβήρος (Adler, 1935, IV, p. 335) the reference to the grave of Pompeius has dropped out: οὗτος εἰς Ἀραβίαν ἐκ τῆς Συρίας καὶ ἐς τὴν Παλαιστίνην ἦλθε καὶ εἰς τὴν Αἴγυπτον τὴν ἄνω διὰ τοῦ Νείλου ἀνέπλευσε ('He went from Syria to Arabia and to Palestine, and sailed to Upper Egypt, passing up the Nile').

<sup>1892</sup> The suggestion of Dalman, 1924, p. 47, that Pompeius was killed in Pelousion, but buried at the *Kasion*, cannot be confirmed in the sources.

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against Kleopatra VII; unless one is greatly outnumbered, in which case Pelousion is the best defence line, it is always wiser to meet the enemy before he enters Egypt. Also the actual presence on the field of the king and his council is not surprising if one considers that it was a kind of civil war between a brother and a sister about the Egyptian throne and that the army's sympathy is hard to win if one gives orders from Pelousion or Alexandria. The sole mention of Pelousion in some authors is easily explained as the result of the abbreviation of an original account mentioning both Pelousion and the Kasion or as a geographical generalisation, since both places are not that far from each other and the Kasion is often linked with Pelousion in general accounts.

### *Mount Kasion in Syria and in Egypt*

Some texts describe how at the break of dawn the sunrise in the east is visible from the 1770 m high mountain Kasion in Syria. In one case this description has incorrectly been transferred to the small hill in the Sinai<sup>1893</sup>. Pomponius Mela (51) about 43-44 AD describes Arabia between the Pelousiac mouth and the Red Sea. The area is barren and flat, except where mount Kasion rises, and there is the harbour of Azotos. Then the grammatical construction is no longer clear, but it can only be intended that a mountain is so high that it is possible to see the sun rise from its summit already in the fourth quarter of the night<sup>1894</sup>:

Arabia hinc ad Rubrum mare pertinet, sed illic magis laeta et ditior ture atque odoribus abundat, hic, nisi qua Casio monte adtollitur, plana et sterilis, portum admittit Azotum suarum mericium emporium, qua in altum abit adeo edita ut, ex summo vertice, a quarta vigilia ortum solis ostendat.

'D'ici jusqu'à la mer Rouge s'étend l'Arabia, mais, plus fertile et plus riche là-bas où elle abonde en encens et autres parfums, ici, à l'exception des hauteurs du mont Casium, plate et stérile elle n'offre que la place d'Azotus pour le commerce de ses produits; là où elle s'élève, elle atteint une telle hauteur que, du haut de son point culminant, le lever du soleil est visible dès la quatrième veille.'

The structure of Mela's text only becomes clear when compared with three successive passages of Plinius. For this author Arabia, the area between the Pelousiac branch, the Red Sea and Arabia Felix, is mostly barren and except for mount Kasion there is nothing noteworthy (62)<sup>1895</sup>:

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<sup>1893</sup> Cf. Clédat, 1923a, p. 77; Cook, 1925, II 2, p. 981; Ball, 1942, p. 72. Steuernagel, Karl - Kees, Hermann, s.v. Kasion 2, in RE, X 2, 1919, col. 2264 and Abel, 1933, I, p. 386 incorrectly state that a similar mistake has been made in Mela (52) and in Lucanus (53-55).

<sup>1894</sup> Pomponius Mela, 1, 10, 61 (Silberman, 1988, p. 18).

<sup>1895</sup> Plinius, *Naturalis historia*, 5, 12, 65; cf. the rather confused summary in Solinus, 33, 2 (Mommsen, 1895, p. 148): Rubri autem maris Arsinoe oppidum. verum haec Arabia procedit ad usque illam

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ultra Pelusiacum Arabia est, ad Rubrum mare pertinens et odoriferam illam ac divitem et beatae cognomine inclutam. haec Cattabanum et Esbonitarum et Scenitarum Arabum vocatur, sterilis praeterquam ubi Syriae confinia attingit, nec nisi Casio monte nobilis.

'Beyond the Pelusiac mouth of the Nile is Arabia, extending to the Red Sea and to the Arabia known by the surname of Happy and famous for its perfumes and its wealth. This bears the names of the Cattabanes, Esbonitae and Scenitae tribes of Arabs; its soil is barren except where it adjoins the frontier of Syria, and its only remarkable feature is mount Casium.'

Further in his work the northern Sinai and mount Kasion are again described (63), and - more to the east - the city of Azotos is mentioned<sup>1896</sup>. In a third passage Plinius describes the Syrian Kasion<sup>1897</sup>:

super eam mons eodem quo alius nomine, Casius, cuius excelsa altitudo quarta vigilia orientem per tenebras solem aspicit, brevi circumactu corporis diem noctemque pariter ostendens. ambitus ad cacumen XIX p. est, altitudo per directum IV.

'Above (Seleucia) is a mountain having the same name as the other one, Casium, which is so extremely lofty that in the fourth quarter of the night it commands a view of the sun rising through the darkness, so presenting to the observer if he merely turns round a view of day and night simultaneously. The winding route to the summit measures 19 miles, the perpendicular height of the mountain being 4 miles.'

This mountain is so high that in the fourth quarter of the night it is possible to see the sun rise in the east, while the rest of the world is still covered in darkness.

Pomponius Mela (51) and Plinius have therefore apparently used a similar source<sup>1898</sup>, but in Pomponius' work things got mixed up. The description of the sunrise, although applied to the Egyptian Kasion, in fact comes from an account about the mountain in Syria and does not contain any reference to the solar character of Zeus Kasios in Egypt<sup>1899</sup>.

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odoriferam et divitem terram, quam Catabani et Scaenitae tenent Arabes, nobiles monte Cassio ('Arsinoe a town at the Red Sea. This Arabia continues till that land famous for its perfumes and its wealth where the Catabani and the Scaenitae live, who are remarkable because of mount Cassium').

<sup>1896</sup> Plinius, *Naturalis historia*, 5, 14, 68, already partially quoted for Pompeius' tomb.

<sup>1897</sup> Plinius, *Naturalis historia*, 5, 18, 80. Cf. Solinus, 36, 3 (Mommsen, 1895, p. 156; cf. p. 229): in Seleucia alter Cassius mons est, Antiochiae propinquus, cuius e vertice vigilia adhuc quarta conspicitur globus solis et brevi corporis circumactu radii caliginem dissipantibus illinc nox hinc dies cernitur. talis e Cassio specula est, ut lucem prius videas quam auspicetur dies ('in Seleucia there is another mount Cassium, near Antiochia; from its summit one can see the sun disc in the fourth quarter of the night and if one merely turns round, one sees the night at one side and the day at the other, while the sunrays chase away the darkness. Such a sight there is from the Cassium that one notices the light before the day'); Martianus Capella, 6, 680 (Willis, 1983, p. 241): ... Antiochia, quae Oronte amne dividitur, super eam mons nomine Casius, cuius altitudo quarta vigilia solem per tenebras videt ('... Antiochia, which is split by the Orontes river; above the town there is a mountain called Casium, which is so lofty that in the fourth quarter of the night it commands a view of the sun rising through the darkness'). Solinus has been quoted in Willelmus Tyrensis, *Chronicon*, 4, 10 (Huygens, 1986, p. 246).

<sup>1898</sup> Cf. Silberman, 1988, p. 133, n. 8-9.

<sup>1899</sup> Against Chuvin, 1986, p. 63.



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The same sunrise phenomenon is described in other texts clearly referring to mount Kasion in Syria. In the winter of 129-130 AD the emperor Hadrianus climbed the Kasion at night to be able to watch the sunrise in the morning<sup>1900</sup>:

sed in monte Casio, cum videndi solis ortus gratia nocte ascendisset, imbre orto fulmen decidens hostiam et victimarium sacrificanti adflavit.

'As he was sacrificing on mount Casium, which he had ascended by night in order to see the sunrise, a storm arose, and a flash of lightning descended and struck both the victim and the attendant.'

Ammianus Marcellinus refers to a similar visit of emperor Iulianus in 363 AD<sup>1901</sup>:

denique praestituto feriarum die Casium montem ascendit, nemorosum et tereti ambitu in sublime porrectum, unde secundis galliciniis videtur primo solis exortus. cumque lovi faceret rem divinam, ...

'Finally, on a previously appointed festal day, he ascended mount Casium, a wooded hill rising of high with a rounded contour, from which at the second cock-crow the sun is first seen to rise. And as he was offering sacrifice to Iuppiter, ...'

The same theme is alluded to in 395 AD by Licentius, who describes the empty peaks of the huge mount Kasion in the 'Cassia' region, from where dawn is already noticed in the middle of the night<sup>1902</sup>:

64 ibimus et Leucos, qua Leucia solis in ortus  
65 tenditur, et vasti deserta cacumina Cassi,  
    quis Epidaphneas aequat sibi Cassia rupes,  
    unde quiescentem Auroram currusque solutos  
68 sopitamque diem media sub nocte videre est,  
69 te suadente petam; ...

'I will go even to the Leuci, where Leucia is stretched out towards the East and to the empty peaks of huge mount Cassium, wherewith (the region) Cassia matches the heights of Epidaphne. Here at your insistence would I go where one can see, in the middle of the night, the dawn sleeping and her unyoked chariot and the day slumbering. ...'

In the 15th century AD the Arab author Maqrizi, who discussed the height of the Pharos, also quotes Aristoteles about a (nameless) mountain where the sun sets later and rises earlier than normal<sup>1903</sup>:

'Aristoteles, dans sa *Metaphysica*, rapporte que, du côté de l'Orient d'été, se trouve une montagne très haute et cite entre autres particularités la concernant, le fait que, pour elle, le soleil ne se couche qu'à trois heures de la nuit et se lève trois heures avant le jour.'

According to Figueras the Kasion in Egypt is referred to<sup>1904</sup>, but if the passage really refers to the Kasion, it surely is the one in Syria.

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<sup>1900</sup> *Historia Augusta, Hadrianus*, 14, 3. There is no reason to follow Weber, 1974, p. 205 and n. 12, who thinks that the Kasion in Egypt is referred to.

<sup>1901</sup> Ammianus Marcellinus, 22, 14, 4.

<sup>1902</sup> Licentius, *Carmen ad Augustinum*, 65-68 (Shanzer, 1991, p. 114.120); cf. De-Vit, 1868, II, p. 153, whose interpretation of 'Cassia' s.v. 'Casius (Adiect.)' is in contradiction with the interpretation he gave already s.v. 'Casius (Nomen)'.

<sup>1903</sup> Maqrizi (translated in Bouriant, 1900, p. 447); cf. Clédât, 1923a, p. 77 and n. 2. I did not manage to identify the original passage of Aristoteles, but it does not seem impossible that Maqrizi's identification of the source is inaccurate.

<sup>1904</sup> Figueras, 2000, p. 174.

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An inscription found in Keramos in Caria<sup>1905</sup> evokes the rising of the sun over the top of the *Kasion*, but the text raises some problems:

- 1 Θέων Ἀλεξαν-  
δροῦς εὐξαμίε-  
3 νος ἐκόσμησε.  
4 ἔστασέμ με Φίλιστος ἐπάκοον ἐσθλὸν ὁδίταις  
Ἑρμᾶν τοῖς ὁσίροις ἄγγελον εὐτυχίας·  
ἐνθεν ἰσαμερίας ἀτρεκῆς δρόμος, ἀλίου εἶτ' ἄν  
7 ἀκτῖς ἀκροτάτου λάμπη ὑπὲρ Κασίου.

'Theon aus Alexandria hat (dies) auf Grund eines Gelübdes kunstvoll hergerichtet.

Philistos hat mich, den Hermes, den edlen (Gott), der ergört hat, aufgestellt, als Boten des guten Gelingens für die frommen Wanderer. Von hier (beginnt) der exakte Lauf der Tag- und Nachtgleiche, sobald der Strahl des Helios über dem Gipfel des *Kasion* leuchtet.'

The inscription is found on a marble column, which probably carried a *Hermes* statue and which possibly stood in the neighbourhood of a sundial or - according to Crampa - at the place where the sun is visible for the first time on the day of equinox. The monument was restored by a certain Theon of Alexandria, who dedicated the first part of the inscription (l. 1-3), which can be dated palaeographically to the Roman period before the late 4th century AD. The second part, mentioning the *Kasion*, is possibly written in the Hellenistic period. Whatever *Kasion* is meant, it is clear that the mountain is only mentioned symbolically to represent the east and that the provenance of the monument has not to be looked for in the neighbourhood of one of these mountains<sup>1906</sup>. Most scholars prefer an identification with the Egyptian *Kasion* and - referring to Theon of Alexandria - it has been suggested that the stone has been brought from Egypt to Keramos as ballast. Crampa, though, stresses that the column is apparently made in the same material as several other stones in Keramos, which excludes an Egyptian origin of the monument. Since the image of the sun coming up over the very top of the *Kasion* seems more appropriate for the high Syrian mountain, I think that the inscription refers to the Syrian rather than to the Egyptian *Kasion*<sup>1907</sup>.

In one text, however, a similar image is definitely set in an Egyptian context. Iulius Caesar is besieged in Alexandria in 49-48 BC. Lucanus (55) describes how - after a night full of conspiracy - the morning star brings daylight over Egypt coming from over 'the Kasian rock'<sup>1908</sup>:

<sup>1905</sup> Cf. Varinlioglu, 1984, p. 133-135 and pl. 5 c-d; Robert, BE, 1984, p. 498, no. 442; Varinlioglu, IGSK XXX, 1986, p. 22-24, no. 11; SEG XXXIV, 1984 [= 1987], p. 276, no. 1069; Chuvin, 1986, p. 63; Crampa, 1988, p. 606; Brixhe, BE, 1989, p. 454, no. 648; Carrez-Maratray, 1989, p. 57; SEG XXXVI, 1986 [= 1989], p. 295-296 (ad no. 992) and p. 473 (ad no. 1582); Fauth, 1990, p. 112; Carrez-Maratray, 1999b, p. 201-206, no. 390 and p. 426-427.

<sup>1906</sup> Against Carrez-Maratray, 1989, p. 57 and 1999b, p. 203.

<sup>1907</sup> Cf. also Fauth, 1990, p. 112 and n. 74.

<sup>1908</sup> Lucanus, 10, 434-435. Cf. Lucanus, scholion ad 10, 434 (Cavajoni, 1990, p. 158) (61): a Casio monte ('from mount Casium').

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434 *Lucifer a Casia prospexit rupe diemque*

435 *misit in Aegyptum primo quoque sole calentem.*

'The morning star looked forth from the Casian rock and sent the daylight over Egypt, where even sunrise is hot.'

It is clear that the *Kasion* here just stands metaphorically for the east, and there is no reason to state that Lucanus exaggerates<sup>1909</sup> or that the image has something to do with the sunrise visible from the Syrian *Kasion*<sup>1910</sup>.

In the fragmentary poem P.Oxy. XXXVII, 2818, palaeographically dated to the late 1st century AD, the 'flanks of [ ] and of (the) high *Kasion*' ([- ~ ~ - λαγόνεσσι καὶ αἰπεινοῦ Κασ[λοιο ]) are mentioned. The text is written in hexameters, but nothing is known about the subject or the identity of the author<sup>1911</sup>. The editor and Lloyd-Jones refer to both the Egyptian and the Syrian *Kasion* without proposing an explicit identification. For Tsafirir the Egyptian *Kasion* is described. The expression 'high *Kasion*', however, points to the Syrian mountain rather than to the Egyptian hill.

Pseudo-Apollodoros in the 1st century AD describes the mythical struggle of the Olympic gods with the monster Typhon. Most gods fled to Egypt and disguised themselves as animals, but Zeus struck Typhon with his lightning and pursued him till mount *Kasion*, which is situated north of Syria. In the following struggle Typhon won and he took Zeus by sea to Cilicia, where he imprisoned him in a cave<sup>1912</sup>:

θεοὶ δ' ὡς εἶδον αὐτὸν ἐπ' οὐρανὸν ὀρμώμενον, εἰς Αἴγυπτον φυγάδες ἐφέροντο, καὶ διωκόμενοι τὰς ἰδέας μετέβαλον εἰς ζῶα. Ζεὺς δὲ πόρρω μὲν ὄντα Τυφῶνα ἔβαλλε κεραυνοῖς, πλησίον δὲ γενόμενον ἀδαμαντίνη κατέπληττεν ἄρπη, καὶ φεύγοντα ἄχρι τοῦ Κασίου ὄρους συνεδίωξε· τοῦτο δὲ ὑπέρκειται Συρίας. κείθι δὲ αὐτὸν κατατετρωμένον ἰδὼν εἰς χεῖρας συνέβαλε. Τυφῶν δὲ ταῖς σπείραις περιπλεχθεὶς κατέσχευεν αὐτόν, καὶ τὴν ἄρπην περιελόμενος τὰ τε τῶν χειρῶν καὶ ποδῶν διέτεμε νεῦρα, ἀράμενος δὲ ἐπὶ τῶν ὤμων διεκόμισεν αὐτὸν διὰ τῆς θαλάσσης εἰς Κιλικίαν καὶ παρελθὼν εἰς τὸ Κωρύκιον ἄντρον κατέθετο.

'But when the gods saw him rushing at heaven, they made for Egypt in flight, and being pursued they changed their forms into those of animals. However Zeus pelted Typhon at a distance with thunderbolts, and at close quarters struck him down with an adamantine sickle, and as he fled pursued him closely as far as mount *Kasion*, which overhangs Syria. There, seeing the monster sore wounded, he grappled with him. But Typhon twined about him and gripped him in the coils, and wresting the sickle from him severed the sinews of his hands and feet, and lifting him on his shoulders carried him through the sea to Cilicia and deposited him on arrival in the Korykian cave.'

There is some controversy about the identification of mount *Kasion*. The manuscripts read *Κασίου*, *Καυσίου* or *Καυκασίου*. This last form has been emended by some

<sup>1909</sup> Against Cook, 1925, II 2, p. 985.

<sup>1910</sup> Against Silberman, 1988, p. 133, n. 8.

<sup>1911</sup> P.Oxy. XXXVII, 2818, 8; cf. Luppe, 1973, p. 329; Lloyd-Jones, 1983, p. 441-442, no. 940; Tsafirir, 1994, p. 101.

<sup>1912</sup> Pseudo-Apollodoros, *Bibliotheca*, 1, 6, 3, 6-8.

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scholars to Καυκάσου, situating the fight in the Caucasian mountains<sup>1913</sup>; these indeed lie north of Syria, but it is hard to image how Typhon could go from the Caucasos to Cilicia by sea. Other scholars think that the Kasion in Egypt is referred to and they point out the mention of Egypt in the first line and stress that Typhon or Seth is closely linked with lake Serbonis in the northern Sinai, which lies next mount Kasion; the location north of Syria they consider a mistake of Pseudo-Apollodoros<sup>1914</sup>. The Egyptian Typhon, though, is only connected with the lake and never with the mountain and there is no reason to suppose that the author has made a mistake. The mountain referred to, therefore, is most likely the Syrian Kasion, especially because a Hittite myth mentions this mountain as the battlefield between the weather god and a giant<sup>1915</sup>.

Also on the Roman magical amulet Fröhner 460 the expression ἐξορκίζω σε ... θεὸν τὸν καθήμενον ἐπάνω τοῦ ὄρους παλαμναίου, 'I conjure you ..., god seated on the abominable mountain', has been linked by Donner with the alleged presence of the god Typhon (Seth) on the Egyptian mount Kasion, but Robert rightly considers it a reference to the biblical mountain where Isaac was sacrificed<sup>1916</sup>.

According to Philon's *History of Phoenicia*, quoted by Eusebios, the descendants of the Dioskouroi built ships, but shipwrecked at mount Kasion, after which they dedicated a temple there<sup>1917</sup>:

κατὰ τοῦτον τὸν χρόνον οἱ ἀπὸ τῶν Διοσκούρων σχεδίας καὶ πλοῖα συνθέντες ἔπλευσαν, καὶ ἐκριφέντες περὶ τὸ Κάσσιον ὄρος ναὸν αὐτόθι ἀφιέρωσαν.

'At about this time the descendants of the Dioskouroi put together rafts and ships, and made voyages; and, being cast ashore near mount Cassium, consecrated a temple there.'

Some scholars claim that the Egyptian Kasion is referred to<sup>1918</sup>, but because of the general context of Philon's work and because of the fact that the Syrian Kasion has

<sup>1913</sup> Baudissin, 1878, II, p. 243, cf. Salač, 1922, p. 179.

<sup>1914</sup> Baudissin, 1878, II, p. 243; Steuernagel, Karl - Kees, Hermann, s.v. Kasion 2b, in RE, X 2, 1919, col. 2264; Salač, 1922, p. 179; Cazelles, 1987 [= 1955], p. 200-201.

<sup>1915</sup> Pape, 1911, p. 631; Cook, 1925, II 2, p. 981; Eissfeldt, 1932, p. 23.26-27; Abel, 1933, I, p. 338; Lauha, 1943, p. 9, n. 2; Schwabl, Hans, s.v. Zeus. I. Epiklesen, in RE, X A, 1972, col. 320; van Zijl, 1972, p. 333; Weber, 1974, p. 204-205 and n. 9; von Geisau, Hans, s.v. Typhoeus, Typhon in KP, V, 1975, col. 1022; Bonnet, 1987, p. 134; Fauth, 1990, p. 108; Koch, 1993, p. 216.

<sup>1916</sup> Delatte, 1964, p. 316-317, no. 460; Donner, 1974, p. 86-91 (followed by Koch, 1993, p. 215-216); Robert, 1981, p. 6-8.14 and fig. 1; Chuvin, 1986, p. 44, n. 13; Fauth, 1990, p. 115-116.

<sup>1917</sup> Eusebios, *Praeparatio evangelica*, 1, 10, 20 (Des Places, 1982, I, p. 47); Philon of Byblos, FGrHist no. 790, F 2; cf. the translation of Gifford, 1903, p. 42.

<sup>1918</sup> Baudissin, 1878, II, p. 240; Wiedemann, 1890, p. 63; Drexler, W., s.v. Kasios, in Roscher, 1890-1894, II 1, col. 972; Salač, 1922, p. 166.170; Cook, 1925, II 2, p. 984, n. 4; Eissfeldt, 1932, p. 43; Gese, 1970, p. 127; Baumgarten, 1981, p. 198 (in doubt); Bonnet, 1987, p. 129 (in doubt).

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already been mentioned earlier by Philon, the Syrian mountain is more likely meant<sup>1919</sup>.

### *Kasion in the Roman period*

In the late 1st century BC Vitruvius (30) situates Kasion near Egypt and he mentions salty marshes in the neighbourhood, probably referring to lake Serbonis<sup>1920</sup>:

item Paraetonio et quod est iter ad Ammonem et Casio ad Aegyptum lacus sunt palustres, qui ita sunt salsi, ut habeant insuper se salem congelatum.

'At Paraetonium and on the road to the oracle of Ammon, and at the Casium near Egypt, there are marshy lakes which contain so much salt that it cakes over them.'

One can wonder whether mount Kasion or the city Kasion is referred to, but since lake Serbonis is often linked with the mountain, never with the city, most likely 'Casius (mons)' is meant.

During Strabon's stay in Alexandria (37), ca. 25-20 BC, the sea about Pelousion and mount Kasion rose, flooded the country and made an island of the mountain. The road to Phoenicia passing by the Kasion was no longer accessible and one had to cross the area by boat<sup>1921</sup>:

ἡμῶν δ' ἐπιδημούντων ἐν Ἀλεξανδρείᾳ τῇ πρὸς Αἰγύπτῳ, περὶ Πηλούσιον καὶ τὸ Κάσιον ὄρος μετεωρισθὲν τὸ πέλαγος ἐπέκλυσε τὴν γῆν καὶ νῆσον ἐποίησε τὸ ὄρος, ὥστε πλωτὴν γενέσθαι τὴν παρὰ τὸ Κάσιον ὁδὸν τὴν εἰς Φοινίκην.

'And when we were residing in Alexandria near Egypt, the sea about Pelousion and mount Kasion rose and flooded the country and made an island of the mountain, so that the road by the Kasion into Phoenicia became navigable.'

Strabon does not mention here what caused this flood, but maybe he refers to this event when he describes (39) how sometimes in the neighbourhood of the Kasion a wave from the sea falls upon the shore, caused by undersea movements of the surface of the earth<sup>1922</sup>:

τοιαῦτα δὲ καὶ περὶ τὸ Κάσιον συμβαίνει τὸ πρὸς Αἰγύπτῳ, σπασμῶ τινι ὀξεῖ καὶ ἀπλῶ περιπιπούσης τῆς γῆς καὶ εἰς ἑκάτερον μεταβαλλομένης ἅπαξ, ὥστε τὸ μὲν μετεωρισθὲν αὐτῆς μέρος ἐπαγαγεῖν τὴν θάλατταν, τὸ δὲ συνιζήσαν δέξασθαι, τραπομένης δὲ τὴν ἀρχαίαν πάλιν ἔδραν ἀπολαβεῖν τὸν τόπον, τότε μὲν οὖν καὶ ἐξαλλάξεώς τινος γενομένης τότε δ' οὐ.

<sup>1919</sup> Pape, 1911, p. 633; Adler, Ada, s.v. Kasios 2, in RE, X 2, 1919, col. 2266; Albright, 1950, p. 12; Ebach, 1979, p. 145, n. 54; Fauth, 1990, p. 106. For the other mention of the Kasion in this work, cf. Eusebios, *Praeparatio evangelica*, 1, 10, 9 (Des Places, 1982, I, p. 44); Philon of Byblos, FGrHist no. 790, F 2.

<sup>1920</sup> Vitruvius, *De architectura*, 8, 3, 7.

<sup>1921</sup> Strabon, 1, 3, 17 (C 58). The interpretation of Daressy, 1931a, p. 218-221 that not Phoenicia, but the Egyptian place Benou is referred to (see s.v. Tcharou), is unacceptable.

<sup>1922</sup> Strabon, 16, 2, 26 (C 758). The context of this passage refers to Poseidonios, but the mention of the Kasion comes from Strabon himself, cf. Theiler, 1982, I, p. 66, F 58 and II, p. 65. According to Bonnet, Corinne, s.v. Baal Saphon, in Lipiński, 1992, p. 60 this passage implies that Baal-Saphon and Horos are assimilated, but I cannot see any of this.

## 6. Kasion

'Like occurrences take place in the neighbourhood of the Kasion situated near Egypt, where the land undergoes a single quick convulsion, and makes a sudden change to a higher or lower level, the result being that, whereas the elevated part repels the sea and the sunken part receives it, yet, the land makes reverse change and the site resumes its old position again, a complete interchange of levels sometimes having taken place and sometimes not.'

According to Strabon (40) the distance between Ioppe in Palestine and the Kasion near Pelousion is more than 1000 stadia (ca. 185 km), while the distance between the Kasion and Pelousion is 300 stadia (ca. 55,5 km)<sup>1923</sup>:

εἰς δ' ἐντεῦθεν εἰς τὸ Κάσιον τὸ πρὸς Πηλουσίῳ μικρῶ πλείους ἢ χίλιοι στάδιοι, τριακόσιοι δ' ἄλλοι πρὸς αὐτὸ τὸ Πηλούσιον.

'Thence to mount Kasion near Pelousion the distance is little more than one thousand stadia; and, three hundred stadia farther, one comes to Pelousion itself.'

This passage is a clear indication that the location 'near Pelousion' is very relative and that texts situating the Kasion 'near Pelousion' cannot be used as evidence that the mountain has to be looked for somewhere between Tell el-Farama and el-Qels.

Strabon mentioned the Kasion in his chapter on Phoenicia (41), which is already discussed, but the mountain is referred to again in his following description of Judaea (42), which is probably based upon another source. Mount Kasion is situated at the western outskirts of that region, near lake Serbonis and the Idumaeans<sup>1924</sup>:

τῆς δ' Ἰουδαίας τὰ μὲν ἐσπέρια ἄκρα τὰ πρὸς τῷ Κασίῳ κατέχουσιν Ἰδουμαῖοί τε καὶ ἡ λίμνη.

'As for Judaea, its western extremities towards the Kasion are occupied by the Idumaeans and by the lake.'

Iuba (33), quoted in Plinius (64), describes three roads from the Mediterranean across the isthmus to Arsinoe at the Red Sea. The first road goes from Pelousion, the second from the neighbourhood of mount Kasion, joining the road from Pelousion after some 60 miles (ca. 90 km), and the third from Gerra<sup>1925</sup>:

nihilominus iter totum terreno frequentatur, a mari Aegyptio, quod est triplex: unum a Pelusio ...; alterum ultra Casium montem, quod a LX p. redit in Pelusiacam viam - accolunt Arabes Autaei; tertium a Gerro ... eae omnes viae Arsinoen ducunt ...

'Nevertheless the whole journey from the Egyptian sea is constantly performed by land, there being three routes: one from Pelusium ...; another route beyond mount Casium, after 60 miles rejoining the road from Pelusium - along this route dwell the Arab tribe of the Autaei; and a third starting from Gerrum ... All these routes lead to Arsinoe ...'

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<sup>1923</sup> Strabon, 16, 2, 28 (C 759); cf. *Chrestomathiae ex Strabonis Geographicorum*, 16, 32 (Müller, 1861, II, p. 627) (45): ὅτι ἀπὸ Κασίου εἰς τὸ Πηλούσιον, πόλιν Αἰγύπτου, στάδιοι τ' ('from (the) Kasion to Pelousion, a city of Egypt, it are 300 stadia'); the phrasing ἀπὸ Κασίου, without the article, might suggest that not the mountain, but the city Kasion is referred to, but most likely the same mount Kasion as in Strabon's account is meant.

<sup>1924</sup> Strabon, 16, 2, 34 (C 760). Jacoby, FGrHist no. 87, F 70 ascribes the passage to Poseidonios, but the fragment is not accepted as such by Theiler, 1982, I, F 59-60, F 133 and II, p. 64-65.

<sup>1925</sup> Plinius, *Naturalis historia*, 6, 33, 166-167; Iuba, FGrHist no. 275, F 34. Clédat, 1924, p. 37-39 (against his earlier view expressed in 1923a, p. 96) incorrectly thinks that the roads lead to the Gulf of Aqaba; cf. Tsafir, 1982, p. 213; Rokéah, 1983, p. 95.

## 6. Kasion

This isthmus has been linked with the Kasion already in Herodotos (2) and in a summary of Strabon (44) a similar view is shown in the expression ὁ κατὰ τὸ Κάσιον ἰσθμὸς τῆς Ἀραβίας ('the isthmus of Arabia at the Kasion')<sup>1926</sup>.

For Pomponius Mela (52) the Arabian Gulf even almost approaches the 'Arabian' mount Kasion<sup>1927</sup>:

Arabici et os artius et latitudo minor est, maior aliquanto recessus et multo magis longa latera. inquit penitus introrsusque, dum Aegyptum paene et montem Arabiae Casium adtingat quodam fastigio minus ac minus latus, et quo magis penetrat angustior.

'Le golfe Arabique a et une ouverture plus étroite et une largeur moindre, mais il forme un enfoncement nettement plus considérable et ses côtés sont beaucoup plus longs. Il pénètre profondément à l'intérieur des terres jusqu'à atteindre presque l'Égypte et le mont Casium en Arabie, devenant à son extrémité de moins en moins large et, à mesure qu'il s'enfonce, plus étroit.'

At the beginning of 70 AD Vespasianus sent his son Titus with an army from Alexandria to Jerusalem (65). Leaving Pelousion Titus camped the first night near the sanctuary of Zeus Kasios<sup>1928</sup>:

... τῇ τρίτῃ διέξεισι τὰς ἐμβολὰς τοῦ Πηλουσίου, καὶ προελθὼν σταθμὸν ἓνα διὰ τῆς ἐρήμου πρὸς τῷ τοῦ Κασίου Διὸς ἱερῷ στρατοπεδεύεται, τῇ δ' ἡσπεραία κατὰ τὴν Ὀστρακίνην' ...

'... on the third (day) he crossed the river-mouths of Pelousion, and, advancing one station through the desert, encamped near the temple of Zeus Kasios, and on the next day at Ostrakine; ...'

According to Dionysios Periegetes (70) the foreland of the Kasion is the eastern end of the so-called sea of Pharos; west of the Kasion the sea of Sidon starts<sup>1929</sup>:

115 ναῦται δὲ πρώτην Φαρίην ἄλα κυκλήσκουσιν,

ἕστατον ἔς πρηῶνα τιτανομένην Κασίωιο

117 Σιδουίην δ' ἑτέρην, ...

'sailors call the first one the sea of Pharos, which extends till the foreland of (the) Kasion, and the other the sea of Sidon ...'

<sup>1926</sup> *Chrestomathiae ex Strabonis Geographicorum*, 1, 43 (Müller, 1861, II, p. 534) at Strabon, 1, 3, 17 (C 58).

<sup>1927</sup> Pomponius Mela, 3, 8, 74 (Silberman, 1988, p. 88).

<sup>1928</sup> Iosephos, *Bellum Iudaicum*, 4, 11, 5 (661); cf. the Latin adaptation of Pseudo-Hegesippos, *Historia*, 4, 33, 3 (Ussani, 1932, p. 292) (105): per desertum agens iter pervenit usque ad Casi Iovis templum ('advancing through the desert he arrived at the temple of Iuppiter Casius').

<sup>1929</sup> Dionysios Periegetes, 115-117 (Brodersen, 1994, p. 48). Cf. Pseudo-Nikephoros Blemmides, 41-168 (Müller, 1861, II, p. 458) (154): ὁ δὲ πρὸς νότον Φαρίη καλεῖται· ἔστι δὲ ὅπου τὸ Κάσιον ὄρος ἐστίν ('the one in the south is called the sea of Pharos; this is where mount Kasion lies'). There are two Latin adaptations of the text: Avienus, *Descriptio orbis terrae*, 165-166 (Van de Woestijne, 1961, p. 28) (107): nautae Pharium dixere profundum, I quod procul in Casiae vergit confinia cautis ('sailors call it the deep sea of Pharus, which extends a long way till the region of the Casian rock'); Priscianus, *Periegesis*, 118-119 (Van de Woestijne, 1953, p. 44) (120) incorrectly stresses the steep character of the Kasion: quod prius est, Pharium perhibent; hoc litora tangit I praecipitis Casii montis ('the first one they consider the sea of Pharus; it reaches the coasts of the precipitous mount Casium').

## 6. *Kasion*

This passage has often been paraphrased or commented upon. In an anonymous Greek paraphrase (72) this mount *Kasion* is situated 'at the other side' i.e. east of *Pelousion* near lake *Serbonis*<sup>1930</sup>:

τὴν δε πρώτην τῶν δύο θαλασσῶν Φαρίαν, ἥτοι Αἰγυπτίαν, καλοῦσιν, ἐπὶ τὴν ἐσχάτην ἐξοχὴν ἐκτεινομένην τοῦ Κασίου ὄρους, ὃ ἔστιν ὑπὲρ τὸ Πηλούσιον πρὸς τῇ Σερβωνίδι λίμνῃ.

'the first of the two seas they call the sea of Pharos or the Egyptian sea, and it extends till the last prominence of mount *Kasion*, which lies at the other side of *Pelousion* near lake *Serbonis*.'

A scholiast at this passage (74) describes the *Kasion* as a sandy cape north of *Pelousion*<sup>1931</sup>:

δύο δὲ πελάγη ... ὧν τὸ μὲν Αἰγύπτιον ἄχρι τοῦ Κασίου περατοῦσθαι· τοῦτο δὲ ἄκρον ἐστὶ ψαμμῶδες, ἐπὶ τὰ βόρεια τοῦ Πηλουσίου κείμενον.

'two seas ... of which the Egyptian sea extends till the *Kasion*; this is a sandy cape that lies north of *Pelousion*.'

The situation north of *Pelousion* is probably due to an incorrect interpretation of an expression such as 'at the other side of *Pelousion*' found in the preceding passage.

Another scholion (75) incorrectly identifies the *Kasion* with the homonymous mountain in Syria, which is said to extend till *Pelousion*<sup>1932</sup>:

τὸ γὰρ Κάσιον τῆς Συρίας, ἐπεκτεινόμενον ἄχρι τοῦ Πηλουσίου. ἢ καὶ ἄλλως· τὸ Κάσιόν ἐστὶ δεξιᾷ χειρὶ τοῦ Νείλου τῆς εἰς θάλασσαν ἐκροίας, ἐγγὺς τοῦ Πηλουσίου. τὸ δὲ Πηλούσιον πρὸς τῇ Σερβωνίδι λίμνῃ.

'The *Kasion* of Syria that extends till *Pelousion*. Also otherwise: The *Kasion* lies at the right-hand side of the mouth of the Nile into the sea, near *Pelousion*. *Pelousion* lies near lake *Serbonis*'

It is not clear how the scholiast came to this erroneous view and one can only notice that the same mistake is made by Pape, locating the *Kasion* of *Dionysios* in Syria<sup>1933</sup>.

The second remark rightly places the *Kasion* east of the *Pelousiac* branch of the Nile, near the city of *Pelousion*.

In another context *Dionysios* (71) refers to the Egyptian Mediterranean coast; in the west there is *Alexandreia* and, in the east, next to mount *Kasion*, which is described as the '*Kasiotic rock*', lies *Pelousion*<sup>1934</sup>:

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<sup>1930</sup> *Dionysios Periegetes, Paraphrasis*, 112-129 (Müller, 1861, II, p. 410); cf. scholion at *Dionysios Periegetes*, 120 (Müller, 1861, II, p. 436) (76): καὶ αὐτὴν τὴν Φαρίαν θάλασσαν παρατεινόμενος εἰς τὴν τελευταίαν ἐξοχὴν τοῦ Κασίου, ὃ ἔστι Πηλούσιον ('and that sea of Pharos extends till the last prominence of the *Kasion*, which is *Pelousion*'), with apparently an expression as ὑπὲρ τὸ Πηλούσιον incorrectly abbreviated. Eustathios, *Commentarii in Dionysium*, 248 (Müller, 1861, II, p. 260) (148) incorporates similar remarks on the *Kasion* when lake *Serbonis* is mentioned by *Dionysios*: οἱ περὶ που τὴν παραλίαν τὴν πρὸς τῇ Σερβωνίδι· λίμνῃ δὲ αὕτη καὶ χώρα, περὶ ἣν φασι τὸν Τυφῶνα κεκρύφθαι, πλησίον οὔσαν τοῦ πρὸς τῷ Πηλουσίῳ Κασίου ὄρους ('the people who live along the coast near lake *Serbonis*; this is a lake and a region in which it is said that *Typhon* lies hidden, in the neighbourhood of mount *Kasion* near *Pelousion*').

<sup>1931</sup> Scholion at *Dionysios Periegetes*, 113 (Müller, 1861, II, p. 436).

<sup>1932</sup> Scholion at *Dionysios Periegetes*, 116 (Müller, 1861, II, p. 436).

<sup>1933</sup> Pape, 1911, p. 631.

<sup>1934</sup> *Dionysios Periegetes*, 260-261 (Brodersen, 1994, p. 58). Cf. *Dionysios Periegetes, Paraphrasis*, 254-269 (Müller, 1861, II, p. 412) (73): μετὰ ταύτην, ἡγουν τὴν Αἴγυπτον, ἐπὶ τὴν ἀνατολὴν περὶ τὸ Κάσιον ὄρος τὸ Πηλούσιον ἐστὶ ('after his place, sc. after Egypt, towards the east, near mount *Kasion*, lies *Pelousion*'); scholion at *Dionysios Periegetes*, 260 (Müller, 1861, II, p. 442) (77):



## 6. Kasion

260 τὴν δὲ μετ' ἀντολίηνδε παραὶ Κασιώτιδα πέτρην  
Πηλῆος πτολιέθρον ἐπάνυμον ἄνδρες ἔχουσιν

262 ἔξοχα ναυτιλῆς δεδαημένοι. ...

'East of this place, near the Kasiotic rock, live men that are very skilled in shipping, in a city named after Peleus.'

In the preceding passage Dionysios also describes the 'Macedonian city' (Μακηδόνιον πτολιέθρον) in the west, where a large temple can be found of Zeus of Sinope<sup>1935</sup>. According to Figueras Kasion or perhaps Pelousion is referred to<sup>1936</sup>, but there is no doubt whatsoever that actually Alexandria is meant.

On 19 August 142 AD (80) a certain Kasis son of Kasios Kasiotes acknowledges that he had sold a camel in Therenouthis - probably Terenouthis in the western Delta - to an inhabitant of Soknopaiou Nesos in the Arsinoites<sup>1937</sup>:

1 Κάσις [Κασίου Κασιώτης [τῷ δεῖνα]  
Σώτου [τῶν ἀπὸ Νήσου Σεκνεπαίου  
χαίρειν. ὁμολογῶ ἐν Θερενοῦθι πεπρα-  
κέσαι σοι τὴν ὑπάρχουσάν μοι κάμηλον  
5 θήλιαν ...  
14 ... Κάσις Κασίου πέπρακα καθῶ[ς]  
15 πρόκειται.

'Kasis son of Kasios Kasiotes to [ ] son of Sotes from Nesos Seknepaiou, greetings. I acknowledge that I have sold you in Therenouthis a female camel that belonged to me. ... I, Kasis son of Kasios, have sold as is written down.'

The name and patronymic of the merchant, which are both related to the eponym god of mount Kasion, make it clear that 'Kasiotes' here is a real ethnic and not the indication of a profession.

According to Aristeides (81) lake Serbonis is situated east of Pelousion and east of one of the mountains that enclose Egypt. Earlier these were called the Libyan

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μετὰ δὲ τὴν Αἴγυπτον ἔστι πλησίον τοῦ Κασίου τοῦ Πηλέως ἡ πόλις, τὸ ἐπάνυμον Πηλούσιον ('after Egypt, near the Kasion, lies the city of Peleus named Pelousion'); Eustathios, *Commentarii in Dionysium*, 260 (Müller, 1861, II, p. 263) (149): ὅτι πρὸς ἀνατολὰς Αἰγύπτου περὶ τὴν Κασιώτιδα πέτραν, ἧτοι περὶ τὸ Κάσιον ὄρος, ἡ πόλις τὸ Πηλούσιον κέλιται ('east of Egypt near the Kasiotic rock, i.e. near mount Kasion, lies the city of Pelousion'); Pseudo-Nikephoros Blemmides, 247-269 (Müller, 1861, II, p. 460) (155): μετ' αὐτὴν δὲ τὴν Ἀλεξάνδρειάν ἔστι τὸ Πηλούσιον πρὸς ἀνατολὰς παρὰ τὴν Κασιώτιδα πέτραν ('after Alexandria itself Pelousion lies in the east, near the Kasiotic rock'). Avienus, *Descriptio orbis terrae*, 380-381 (Van de Woestijne, 1961, p. 35), when locating Pelousion, does not translate the reference to the Kasion, but in his adaptation of Dionysios, 253, where lake Serbonis is mentioned at the northeastern border of Egypt, he uses the expression *Serbonidis alta paludis* (372 - Van de Woestijne, 1961, p. 35) (108); these 'heights of lake Serbonis' probably allude to mount Kasion. Priscianus, *Periegesis*, 244 (Van de Woestijne, 1953, p. 51) (121) gives again a more direct translation: *post urbs sub Casio Pelusi vergit ad ortus* ('further on towards the east the city of Pelusium lies under the Casium').

<sup>1935</sup> Dionysios Periegetes, 254-259 (Brodersen, 1994, p. 58).

<sup>1936</sup> Figueras, 2000, p. 68.85.88.122.

<sup>1937</sup> P.Lond. III, p. 142, 1132b, 1-5.14-15. Wilcken, 1908b, p. 549 correctly states that the name Κάσις stands for Κάσιος, but Matthes, 1932, p. 70, no. 564-565 accents Κᾰσις; other examples of the name Kasios will be discussed further on.

## 6. Kasion

and the Arabian mountain and when Aristeides further in the text explicitly mentions mount Kasion, it is clear that he considers it part of the Arabian mountain chain<sup>1938</sup>:

ἢ δ' αὖ Σερβωνίς λίμνη περιφανῶς ἔξω τῶν ὄρων τούτων ἐστίν· ὑπερελθόντι γάρ Πηλούσιον καὶ τῶν ὄρων τῶν συγκλειόντων τὴν Αἴγυπτον θάτερον ἐστὶ πρὸς Ὀστρακίνην βαδίζοντι, ἥπερ ἐστὶ μέση μάλιστα τῆς ἀνύδρου τῆς Ἀραβικῆς. ... ἀλλὰ τί φήσομεν περὶ τῆς ἔξω τοῦ Κασίου ταύτης ἣς ἐμνήσθην ἀρτίως;

'But on the other hand lake Serbonis is clearly outside these mountains. For it is located beyond Pelousion and one of the two mountains which enclose Egypt as you go toward Ostrakine, which is right in the middle of the waterless district of Arabia. ... But what shall we say about this land outside of the Kasion, which I just now mentioned?'

East of Pelousion and Gerra Ptolemaios (84) lists the toponyms Kasion (Κάσιον), Ekregma of lake Serbonis, Ostrakine and Rinokoloura, which are said to belong to the Kasiotis region (Κασιώτιδος). Kasion itself is placed at 63° 45' - 31° 15', at maximum 10 km west of Ekregma and about 18,5 km east of Gerra<sup>1939</sup>. It is not really clear whether Ptolemaios refers to mount Kasion or to a homonymous village on that same spot; the mention of Ekregma in the next line - also written without a definite article - is an indication that not only villages or towns are listed. The fact, though, that Ptolemaios adds the word ὄρος for the mountains mentioned in 4, 5, 8.10, might imply that here the settlement Kasion and not the mountain is referred to<sup>1940</sup>.

### *Kasion in the Byzantine period*

In the *Itinerarium provinciarum Antonini Augusti* (99), composed ca. 300 AD, Kasion is situated at 26 miles (ca. 39 km) from Ostrakine and at 20 miles (ca. 30 km) from Pentaschoinon<sup>1941</sup>.

Ostracena

Cassio m.p. XXVI

Pentascino m.p. XX

'(From Ostracena to) Cassium: 26 miles; (from Cassium to) Pentascinum: 20 miles.'

The official Theophanes travelled from Upper Egypt to Antiocheia in Syria, possibly in 322 or 323 AD. Some memoranda and accounts of this journey - both drafts and fair copies - are preserved. On 19 Pharmouthi (14 April) Theophanes came

<sup>1938</sup> Aristeides, 36 (48), 74.78 (cf. 64-69) (Keil, 1898, II, p. 284-288); cf. Behr, 1981, p. 208-211.

<sup>1939</sup> Ptolemaios, 4, 5, 6 (Müller, 1901, I 2, p. 682). Ball, 1942, p. 105 transposes 63° 45' - 31° 15' into the 'Greenwich system' as 33° 10' - 31° 15'; cf. Ball, 1942, pl. 2.3. Pape, 1911, p. 633 incorrectly considers the Kasiotis a region in Marmarica.

<sup>1940</sup> Cf. Pape, 1911, p. 633.

<sup>1941</sup> *Itinerarium provinciarum Antonini Augusti*, 152, 1-3 (Cuntz, 1929, p. 21). The figures '26 or 29' and '16 or 23 miles' between Ostrakine and Kasion in Amélineau, 1893, p. 211.289 are probably just a mistake.

## 6. Kasion

from Pentaschoinou, travelled 16 miles (ca. 24 km) - his eighth stage - and arrived in Kasion, where he spent the night. The next day he travelled 26 miles (ca. 39 km) to Ostrakine. This itinerary is mentioned twice (**100-101**), both as a draft and as a fair copy<sup>1942</sup>:

|                  |     |                                     |            |
|------------------|-----|-------------------------------------|------------|
| (627, draft)     |     |                                     |            |
| 232              | η   | ἀπὸ Πεντασχοίνου εἰς τὸ [Κάσιον     | μίλ(ια) ις |
| 233              | θ   | [ἀ]πὸ Κασίου εἰς Ὀστρακί[ην         | μίλ(ια) κς |
|                  | '8  | From Pentaschoinou to the [Kasion   | milia] 16  |
|                  | 9   | From Kasion to Ostrakin[e           | milia] 26' |
| (628, fair copy) |     |                                     |            |
| 7                | [η  | ἀπὸ] Πεντασχοίνου εἰς τὸ Κάσιον]    |            |
| 8                | [θ  | ἀπὸ] τ[οῦ] Κασίου εἰς Ὀστ[ρακίην]   |            |
|                  | '[8 | From] Pentaschoinou t[o the Kasion] |            |
|                  | [9  | From] the Kasion to Ost[rakine]'    |            |

The fact that the article before the name Kasion is once omitted in the draft, reflects the ambiguity in the naming of both mountain and village<sup>1943</sup>.

On his way back from Antiocheia to Egypt Theophanes travelled again from Ostrakine to Kasion (**102**), where he bought cheeses for supper, household olive oil and a kind of fish (?) named hexatilia, probably in the evening of 11 Mesore (4 August)<sup>1944</sup>:

|     |                     |          |
|-----|---------------------|----------|
| 477 | ἐν τῷ Κασίῳ         |          |
|     | τυρίων εἰς δῖπνον   | (δρ.) τ  |
|     | ἐλαίου κιβαρ(λου)   | (δρ.) φ  |
| 480 | ἕξατιλίων           | (δρ.) σ  |
|     | 'At the Kasion      |          |
|     | cheeses for supper  | 300 dr.  |
|     | household olive oil | 500 dr.  |
|     | hexatilia           | 200 dr.' |

He did no shopping in Kasion in the morning of 12 Mesore (5 August) probably because he left very early in order to cover the whole distance Kasion - Pelousion in one day.

On the *Tabula Peutingeriana* (**109**), a map that possibly shows the situation of the 4th century AD, 'Cassio' is situated west from Ostrakine, but the distance between the two places is lost; the next station is Gerra at 23 miles (ca. 34,5 km) west from Kasion<sup>1945</sup>.

<sup>1942</sup> P.Ryl. IV, 627, 232-233 is a draft for P.Ryl. IV, 628, 7-8.

<sup>1943</sup> See § Orthographic variants.

<sup>1944</sup> P.Ryl. IV, 630\*, 477-480 [immo 633: fair copy; 637, 477-479: draft].

<sup>1945</sup> *Tabula Peutingeriana* (Miller, 1916, col. 813), with a drawing of this section of the *Tabula* col. 857-858 - for Kasion, see section IX 5 - and the data transposed to a modern map col. 813-814. Because the distance of 23 miles is somewhat low, Müller, 1901, I 2, p. 682.683 suggests that XXXIII miles (ca. 49,5 km) is to be read, but this figure seems to be too high for the estimated distance of 36 miles (ca. 54 km) between Kasion and Pelousion; if the fault is due to the figure, it would be more likely that XXIII is a mistake for XXVIII (ca. 42 km).

## 6. Kasion

*Isaias*, 19, 18 prophesies that one day Egypt will be terrified for Judah and that five towns in Egypt will speak the language of Canaan and pledge themselves to Yahweh. In his comment on this passage Hieronymus (111) refers to the opinion that Ostrakine was one of these places, together with other cities in the neighbourhood of Rinokoloura and Kasion. This last phrase is puzzling; while the interpretation 'a city in the neighbourhood of (mount) Kasion' would be acceptable, such a description is impossible for Rinokoloura, and most likely the towns of Rinokoloura and Kasion themselves are referred to. Till his own time, Hieronymus adds, people in that region (which probably corresponds with the Kasiotis) speak Syrian although living in Egypt<sup>1946</sup>:

alii ares, id est ὄστρακον, hoc est testam, urbem Ostracinem intellegi volunt, et ceteras iuxta Rhinocoruram et Casium civitates, quas usque hodie in Aegypto lingua Chananitide, hoc est, Syra loqui manifestum est.

'Others understand 'ares', sc. 'ostrakon', i.e. 'sherd', as the city of Ostracine and the other cities near Rhinocorura and Casium, of which it is clear that they still today speak in the language of Canaan, i.e. in Syrian.'

A bishop Ailianos is the addressee of a letter of Isidoros of Pelousion together with Hermogenes bishop of Rinokoloura and a bishop Theodosios<sup>1947</sup>. Évieux suggests that Ailianos is the bishop of Kasion, who preceded bishop Lampetios, but despite his very sophisticated argumentation, this remains a mere hypothesis.

On the Council of Ephesos held in 431 AD Lampetios was bishop of Kasion<sup>1948</sup>:

(113, 116) Λαμπετίου Κασίου (33, 131; 73, 128) - Lampetio Cassii (11, 1, 132) - Lampetio Casii (24, 1, 130; 38, 1, 127) - (113a) Lampetio Casiensi (911, 145)

'Lampetios of Kasion'

(114) Λαμπέτιος ἐπίσκοπος Κασίου ἐπαρχίας Αὐγουσταμνικῆς (45, 110)

'Lampetios bishop of Kasion in the province Augustamnica'

(115, 117) Λαμπέτιος ἐπίσκοπος τοῦ Κασίου (62, 121; 79, 159) - Lampetius episcopus Casii (19, 11, 156) - Lampetius episcopus Casii (46, 43, 161; 38, 84, 154).

'Lampetios bishop of Kasion'

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<sup>1946</sup> Hieronymus, *Commentarii in Esaiam*, 5, 19, 18 (Adriaen, 1963a, p. 197-198). See also s.v. Ostrakine for the broader context of the passage.

<sup>1947</sup> Isidoros of Pelousion, *Epistulae*, 1253 (5, 30) (Evieux, 1997, I, p. 250-251); cf. Évieux, 1995, p. 63.66.67.

<sup>1948</sup> *Concilium universale Ephesenum*, 33, 131; 45, 110; 62, 121 (Schwartz, 1927, 1, 1, 2, p. 7.28.60); 73, 128; 79, 159 (Schwartz, 1929, 1, 1, 7, p. 88.116); see also 95, 79 (Schwartz, 1927, 1, 1, 3, p. 36); Latin version: 11, 1, 132; 19, 11, 156 (Schwartz, 1925-1926, 1, 2, p. 30.74); 24, 1, 130; 46, 43, 161 (Schwartz, 1929, 1, 3, p. 56.139); 38, 1, 127; 38, 84, 154 (Schwartz, 1924-1925, 1, 5, 1, p. 88.115); *Concilium universale Chalcedonense*, 911, 131 (Schwartz, 1935, 2, 3, 1, p. 201); cf. Gams, 1873, p. 461. Fedalto, 1988, p. 605 specifies that Lampetios appeared in Ephesos between 22 June and 22 July 431 AD. Instead of Lampetios also the name Lampon occurs in a manuscript; cf. Schwartz, 1927, 1, 1, 2, p. 7, Munier, 1943, p. 16 and Worp, 1994, p. 300.

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In the Coptic lists of the Council the Greek name of the city, considered masculine, is transliterated<sup>1949</sup>

ΛΑΜΠΕΔΙΟΣ ΠΕΠΙΣΚΟΠΟΣ ΚΑΣΙΟΥ ('Lampedios the bishop of Kasios') - ΛΑΜΠΕΤΙΟΣ ΚΑΣΙΟΥ ('Lampetios of Kasios') (113) - ΚΑΣΙΟΣ ΕΤΗΡ ΕΤΕΡΑΡΧΙΑ ΝΤΑΥΚΟΥΣΤΑΜΝΙΚΗ ΕΤΖΝΙΚΗΜΕ ('Kasios from the province Aukoustamnike in Egypt') (114)

This bishop of Kasion is probably identical with the bishop Lampetios who is an addressee in the correspondence of Isidoros of Pelousion<sup>1950</sup>, and with the Lampetios mentioned together with Hermogenes of Rinokoloura in the second letter of pope Sixtus III to Kyrillos of Alexandria ca. 432 AD<sup>1951</sup>.

The papyrus SB XXVI, 16607 (118), probably written in the 5th century AD, contains an itinerary of places in Egypt, Palestine and Asia Minor. Πικασπίσω (Kasion) is mentioned between Πεντάσκαλος (Pentaschoinon) in the west and Ἀσσοδρακινα (Ostrakine) in the east<sup>1952</sup>.

Hierokles (122) ca. 527/528 AD mentions Kasion (Κάσιον) between Ostrakine and Pentaschoinon as one of the thirteen towns lying in the ἐπαρχία Αὐγούστα α' (province Augustamnica I)<sup>1953</sup>.

Stephanos of Byzantion mentions lake Serbonis near mount Kasion (126)<sup>1954</sup>:

Σίρβων καὶ Σιρβωνίς, λίμνη πλησίον τοῦ Κασίου  
'Sirbon and Sirbonis, a lake near the Kasion'

In another context he also locates the Barathra near that mountain (123)<sup>1955</sup>:

ἔστι καὶ Βάραθρα πλησίον τοῦ Κασίου

<sup>1949</sup> Cf. Bouriant, 1892, p. 70.134; Amélineau, 1893, p. 211; Kraatz, 1904, p. 65.124; Gerland, 1936, p. 94, no. 265; Munier, 1943, p. 16; Muysier, 1946, p. 145. Kosack, 1971, I, p. 28.62 did not recognize the place and his etymological suggestions are to be discarded.

<sup>1950</sup> Isidoros of Pelousion, *Epistulae*, with some 31 letters addressed to Lampetios; cf. Le Quien, 1740, II, col. 545-546; Fedalto, 1988, p. 605; Éviéux, 1995, p. 62-63.67.236-238.399 and passim (with a hypothetical reconstruction of Lampetios' career). Figueras, 2000, p. 178.242 suggests that this bishop Lampetios is identical with the heretic priest who - according to Photios, *Bibliotheca*, 52 [13b] (Henry, 1959, p. 40) - was defended by bishop Alpheios of Rinokoloura possibly ca. 450 AD (see s.v. Rinokoloura), but there are little arguments for such an identification.

<sup>1951</sup> *Concilium universale Ephesenum*, 101 (Schwartz, 1929, I, 1, 7, p. 144-145). Cf. Le Quien, 1740, II, col. 545-546; Gerland, 1936, p. 94.

<sup>1952</sup> SB XXVI, 16607 (P.von Scherling G110), 9-11; cf. Noordegraaf, 1938, p. 274.

<sup>1953</sup> Hierokles, 727, 2 (Honigmann, 1939a, p. 46).

<sup>1954</sup> Stephanos of Byzantion, *Ethnica*, s.v. Σίρβων (Meineke, 1849, p. 572), possibly via Herodianos *De prosodia catholica*, 1 (Lentz, 1867, I, p. 22, 29 - 23, 1) (85) [Σίρβων λίμνη πλησίον τοῦ Κασίου ('lake Sirbon near the Kasion')], *De prosodia catholica*, 4 (Lentz, 1867, I, p. 96, 17) (86) [Σιρβωνίς· λίμνη πλησίον <τοῦ> Κασίου ('Sirbonis: a lake near the Kasion')].

<sup>1955</sup> Stephanos of Byzantion, *Ethnica*, s.v. Βάραθρον (Meineke, 1849, p. 158), possibly via Herodianos, *De prosodia catholica*, 13 (Lentz, 1867, I, p. 388, 1-3) (89) [ἔστι καὶ Βάραθρα πλησίον τοῦ Κασίου ('There are also Barathra near the Kasion')].

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'There are also Barathra near the Kasion'  
Stephanos alone explicitly distinguishes between mount Kasion and a city Kasion probably in the immediate neighbourhood, both situated near Pelousion (125). Kasion is named after the Aegean island Kasos or after a certain Kasos son of Kleochos (or Kleomachos), who founded a sanctuary of Zeus Kasios. In other sources the eponym Kasos is always linked with the Syrian Kasion, so Stephanos probably refers to the sanctuary on the top of that mountain. The Kasiotic clothes he also mentions, have already been discussed<sup>1956</sup>:

Κάσιον, ὄρος καὶ πόλις Αἰγύπτου πρὸς τῷ Πηλουσίῳ. ἐκλήθη δὲ ἀπὸ τῆς Κυκλάδος νήσου ἢ ἀπὸ Κάσου τοῦ Κλεόχου, ἀφ' οὗ καὶ Κασίου Διὸς ἱερόν. ὁ πολίτης Κασιώτης ὡς Πηλουσιώτης, καὶ θηλυκὸν Κασιώτις, καὶ τὸ κτηρικὸν Κασιωτικός, ἀφ' οὗ ἐν τῇ συνηθείᾳ τὰ Κασιωτικὰ ἱμάτια.

'Kasion, a mountain and a city in Egypt near Pelousion. It is named after the Cycladic island or after Kasos son of Kleochos after whom also a sanctuary of Zeus Kasios is named. The ethnic is Kasiotes, like Pelousiotes; the feminine form is Kasiotis, and the adjective is Kasiotikos, after which the Kasiotic clothes are named in ordinary language.'

In the Medaba mosaic (127), made somewhere in the middle of the 6th century AD, Kasion (τὸ Κασιν) is drawn on the map as a small city between Ostrakine and Pentaschoinon<sup>1957</sup>. The sketch of the city is of the same size as that of Ostrakine, somewhat smaller than that of Rinokoloura and somewhat bigger than that of Pentaschoinon, and perhaps shows a church with a red roof.

Georgios of Cyprus (130) ca. 591-603 AD mentions Kasion (Κάσιον) in the ἐπαρχία Αὐγουσταμνικῆς (province Augustamnica, sc. I) belonging to the dioikesis of Egypt. The order Ostrakine - Pentaschoinon - Kasion - Aphnaion is geographically not correct<sup>1958</sup>.

In 578 AD Iakobos Baradaïos, who originated from the monastery Phesiltha near the city of Tella in Mesopotamia, went from Syria to Alexandria together with eight men (129). Arriving at 'the great monastery of Kasion on the borders of Egypt',

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<sup>1956</sup> Stephanos of Byzantion, *Ethnica*, s.v. Κάσιον (Meineke, 1849, p. 363), possibly via Herodianos, *De prosodia catholica*, 13 (Lentz, 1867, I, p. 359, 15-17) (88). Stoll, H. W., s.v. Kasos, in Roscher, 1890-1894, II 1, col. 974, Jacoby, 1905, p. 47 and Cook, 1925, II 2, p. 981 apparently prefer the other manuscript tradition that reads Κλεομάχου as patronymic.

<sup>1957</sup> Medaba mosaic (IGLS XXI 2, 153), 129. According to Jacoby, 1905, p. 47 the reduction of the ending -ιον to -ιν is a Semitizing element, but this late Greek declension is common in Byzantine texts in Egypt; cf. Gignac, 1981, II, p. 25-26; see also Weber, 1974, p. 204, n. 8.

<sup>1958</sup> Georgios of Cyprus, 694 (Honigmann, 1939a, p. 58). Jacoby, 1905, p. 46-47 and Fedalto, 1988, p. 605 erroneously consider the work of Georgios and its previous edition in *Notitia episcopatum*, I (Parthey, 1866) as two different works. The list of Georgios has been copied as a list of bishoprics [ὁ Κασσίου] in *Notitia episcopatum*, B, 1, 7 (Benešević, 1927, p. 69) (159).

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one of the bishops with him fell sick and died; later on the synkellos Sergios and also Iakobos himself passed away, followed by his deacon. The monks of the monastery refused to let the body of Iakobos leave and buried him with great honour<sup>1959</sup>.

(Ioannes) '... When therefore they had commenced their journey, and had reached the great monastery of Kasion on the borders of Egypt, there first of all, as was said, immediately one of the bishops who accompanied him, and who was abbot of Kartamin, died. And the old man arose, and celebrated the communion over him to his memory. Almost immediately afterwards, Sergios his own synkellos, and who was also a bishop, fell sick and died; and then the old man also fell sick, and lingered for three days, and died; and finally the deacon who waited upon him. All these died unexpectedly one after another within a period of twelve days; and men wondered greatly, and interpreted it in various ways, and their thoughts were troubled. And when the news reached Alexandria, Damianos and the rest of the clergy hastened thither, but arrived after the old man's death, and wanted to carry away his remains with them, but the inhabitants of the monastery would not give their consent. ...'

(Pseudo-Ioannes) '... But the monks of the convent of Kasion laid the blessed man in a coffin and took possession of him with great honour. Then the whole of Syria sorrowed over the old man's death; and many came to the monastery and were visited. ...'

Bar Hebraeus (**150**) gives a similar story, but adds some details. Iakobos arrives 'at the great monastery of Mar Romanos, which is also called the monastery of Kasion, at the Egyptian border'. The first bishop who died, is named Ioannes, and Iakobos died on 30 July 578 AD<sup>1960</sup>. Bar Hebraeus is the only source linking a certain Romanos with Kasion. Abel identifies Romanos with the monophysite abbot who lived in 451 AD in a monastery south of Jerusalem and who founded about 457 AD a monastery in Eleutheropolis in Palestine<sup>1961</sup>, but this is just a hypothesis because the name occurs often in the 4th to 6th centuries AD. There is certainly no reason to follow Abel in his assumption that the brothers Ioannes and Timotheos of Pelousion, who probably lived in Romanos' monastery in Eleutheropolis<sup>1962</sup>, first stayed in Kasion.

In 622 AD the bishop of Tella sent some monks to the monastery of Kasion to steal the corpse of Iakobos Baradaïos (**132**). Because one of them pretended to be sick, he was allowed to pass the night next to the sarcophagus of the saint. At night he and his companions dug up the body and, having stolen the keys of the monastery,

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<sup>1959</sup> Ioannes of Ephesos, *Historia ecclesiastica*, 4, 33 (Syriac) (translated into Latin in Brooks, 1936, p. 160); cf. the English translation of Smith, 1860, p. 290-292. Smith, 1860, p. 291 and Schönfelder, 1862, p. 165 incorrectly read 'the monastery of Cassianus'. Cf. Pseudo-Ioannes of Ephesos, *Vita Iacobi Baradaei* (Syriac) (translated in Brooks, 1926, III, p. 266-267) (**131**). Cf. Kugener, 1902, p. 202, n. 3 and p. 205, n. 1.

<sup>1960</sup> Bar Hebraeus, *Chronicon ecclesiasticum*, I (Syriac) (translated into Latin in Abbeloos, 1872, I, col. 244). Abbeloos incorrectly reads 'the monastery of Cassianus'. Cf. Oren, 1982a, p. 38.

<sup>1961</sup> Abel, 1940, p. 233; cf. Maraval, 1985, p. 312 and n. 10; for these monasteries, cf. Vailhé, 1900, p. 46-48.272-273.

<sup>1962</sup> Ioannes Rufus, *Plerophoriae*, 87 (Syriac) (translated in Nau, 1912, p. 140-141). Figueras, 1999, p. 212 and 2000, p. 178.302 supposes that a monastery of Romanos in Kasion was meant, but in Ioannes Rufus, *Plerophoriae*, 25 (Syriac) (translated in Nau, 1912, p. 58) this monastery is clearly situated in Palestine.

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they managed to escape to Palestine. The monks of Kasion pursued them, but had to come back empty-handed and stricken by grief<sup>1963</sup>.

'... He sent four blessed men from his convent, and two of the clergymen of the city (and he supplied them with a swift animal and money) to go to the monastery of Kasion in which he fell asleep, and steal him thence. ... And, having gone and arrived at the monastery of Kasion, they went into the monastery and prayed and came near and were blessed by the holy Mar Iakobos, and by the brothers of the house. ... And his companions began to be distressed and weep; and in sorrow they went on to fasten their companion to the sarcophagus of the holy Mar Iakobos, in order that he might learn how to steal that holy body, while his companions on his account slept with him close by the sarcophagus itself. But during the night they would bore, and in the day cover the borings that they had made. And, when the task had become easy for them, they took the keys of the monastery to themselves, that their task might be easily accomplished. Then they said to the members of the monastery of Kasion ... and the man who had feigned madness and his companion rose by night and took the body of the holy Mar Iakobos, and wrapped it in silk shrouds, and came on the swift animal to their companions in Palestine according to the agreement that they had made with another. But the blessed men the members of the monastery of Kasion, when they rose in the morning and saw that the saint's body had been taken away, lifted up their voice in weeping and in sobs; they went in all directions after them, and did not find them; and they returned to their monastery mourning.' ...'

In the 7th century AD the Ravennas geographus (133-135) three times mentions 'Cassion'. First it is listed in 'Iudee Palestine' between Ostrakine and Gerra. Secondly it is mentioned among other Egyptian towns without much geographical order between 'Thenis' (Tanis?) and 'Phagorior' (Phagroriopolis in the eastern Delta). In a third list mentioning places from Libya to Syria Kasion is placed between Gerra and Ostrakine<sup>1964</sup>.

In the church of Stephanos at Umm el-Rasas (Kastron Mephaa) (136), completed in 785 AD, the vignettes of ten Egyptian cities occur in the Nilotic frieze of a mosaic. They are apparently listed without any geographical order: To Pelousion (ΤΟΠΙΛΟΥΧΗΝ - τὸ Πιλούσην), Antinaou, To Heraklion, Alexandria, To Kasion (ΤΟ|ΚΑ|CΙΝ - τὸ Κάσιον), Thenesos, Kynon Polis, Pseudostomon, Tamiathis and Panaou. Most cities apparently belong to the Delta, perhaps along a road from Pelousion to Alexandria, Kasion being the only city from the northern Sinai. The vignette of Kasion shows two towers of different size and colour. The left tower is

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<sup>1963</sup> Pseudo-Kyriakos, *Commentarius de interceptione ossium Iacobi Baradaei* (Syriac) (translated in Brooks, 1926, III, p. 268-273); cf. Kugener, 1902, p. 202-208; Figueras, 1999, p. 212.

<sup>1964</sup> Ravennas geographus, 2, 14 (Pinder, 1860, p. 83, 9; Schnetz, 1940, p. 25); 3, 2 (Pinder, 1860, p. 130, 8; Schnetz, 1940, p. 35); 5, 7 (Pinder, 1860, p. 356, 6; Schnetz, 1940, p. 90), quoted by Guido, 93 (Pinder, 1860, p. 524, 8; Schnetz, 1940, p. 133) (147).



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white and has three floors; the right tower is ochre and had four floors. They both have a door at ground level, two windows in every floor and a similar roof<sup>1965</sup>.

On the 13th century Hereford map (**151**) mount Kasion (*mons Cassius*) and 'the Arabic desert' (*Arabica deserta*) are for unknown reasons incorrectly located at the southern end of the Sinai peninsula<sup>1966</sup>.

The Greek *Notitia Alexandrina* (**156-158**), found on a map of 1722 AD, is based upon an alphabetically arranged Latin bishops' list of 1661 AD, which goes back on a not alphabetical list of 1641 AD. The bishopric Κάσιος (*Cassium ... Episcopus Cassii ... [1641] - Cassii [1661]*) is situated in the province Augustamnica I<sup>1967</sup>.

### *Zeus Kasios in Egypt*

From the late 1st century BC till the 2nd century AD, at mount Kasion<sup>1968</sup> a sanctuary of Zeus Kasios is explicitly mentioned in Strabon (**41**), Plinius (**63**) and Iosephos (**65**) (Διὸς ἱερὸν Κασίου - *delubrum Iovis Casii* - τὸ τοῦ Κασίου Διὸς ἱερὸν). Appianos (**82**) probably referred to the inner sanctuary of that same temple (τὸ ἄδυτον τοῦ ἱεροῦ) and also Lucanus (**56**) probably knew of a cult of Zeus Kasios at the Kasion. Further information about the worship of the god at this mountain is lacking and one may doubt whether a real sanctuary already existed in the Ptolemaic period.

The earliest attestations of the cult of Zeus Kasios elsewhere in Egypt, though, go back to the 3rd and 2nd centuries BC. The first document is very damaged and does not contain any indication about date or provenance; palaeographically it can be dated in the second half of the 3rd century BC (**174**). It is a petition of a priest of Arsinoe and Zeus Kasios to an official, whose name and function are lost (| |παρ.. | | λουται.... | ἱερέως Ἀρσινόης καὶ | Διὸς Κασίου); the man was arrested for

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<sup>1965</sup> Piccirillo, 1994b, p. 257, no. 13g; cf. Piccirillo, 1989, p. 294 (with fig.).300.301; Duval, 1994, p. 190 (with fig.) and p. 228, pl. 21, 1; Piccirillo, 1994a, p. 143, fig. 34; Hamarneh, 1999, p. 187.

<sup>1966</sup> Hereford map (Miller, 1896, IV, p. 31 and map).

<sup>1967</sup> *Notitia Alexandrina*, 31 (Honigmann, 1961, p. 156-157); cf. Gelzer, 1893b, p. 25.

<sup>1968</sup> Pape, 1911, p. 631 and Adler, Ada, s.v. Kasios 2, in RE, X 2, 1919, col. 2265-2266 incorrectly mix up the sanctuary of Zeus Kasios at the Kasion and the one in Pelousion.

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unclear reasons after an inspection of the wheat of the sanctuary he worked in (ἀποσ]ταλεις Φαβίας ὑπὸ σοῦ | τὴν ἐπίσκεψιν ποιήσασθαι τοῦ σίτου το[ῦ] | ἐν τῶι ἱερῶι)<sup>1969</sup>. The title of the priest indicates that the royal cult of Arsinoe and the cult of Zeus Kasios were apparently closely linked. The editor adduces two 2nd century AD parallels as mentioning Zeus Kasios in the village Pelousion in the meris of Themistos of the Arsinoites and she therefore thinks that this document also comes from that place. As will be shown further on, at least one and probably both parallels are not linked with the Arsinoites, but with Pelousion in the Delta and they can therefore not be used to locate this papyrus. If the sanctuary of Zeus Kasios, however, is identical with the one mentioned in the following document a location in the Arsinoites in general can be maintained.

In the part of an unpublished account (175) concerning male, female and castrated sheep that are owing, are sold or have died, two castrated sheep are mentioned 'from Zeus Kasios' or maybe 'from the (temple) of Zeus Kasios' (ἀπὸ τοῦ Διὸς Κασίου τό(μιοι) β)<sup>1970</sup>. On the recto of the document the years 36 and 37 are mentioned and since the amounts of money listed probably belong to a period after the 3rd century BC, a date under Ptolemaios VIII (135/134 - 134/133 BC) is more appropriate than a date under Ptolemaios II (250/249 - 249/248 BC). The papyrus mentions the villages Herakleia and Eleusis, which can be situated in the Arsinoites, respectively in the meris of Themistos and the meris of Polemon<sup>1971</sup>. Therefore also the sanctuary of Zeus Kasios apparently belonged to that nome, although it is impossible to specify the meris.

The other documents with information about the presence of Zeus Kasios in Egypt all belong to the Roman period - especially the 2nd century AD - and refer to the region of Pelousion in the Delta<sup>1972</sup>.

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<sup>1969</sup> P.Heid. VI, 378, 2-9.

<sup>1970</sup> P.Trier S 77-28, Vo, Fr. II, col. I, 11 (unpublished). I want to express my gratitude to Bärbel Kramer, who informed me of the contents of the papyrus, which was mentioned briefly by Van 't Dack, 1989, p. 67, n. 74 (followed by Duttenhöfer, P.Heid. VI, 1994, p. 120).

<sup>1971</sup> In the text a certain Hagasias or Agasias is mentioned; since the name is very rare in Egypt, it is perhaps possible to identify the man with the Hagasias living in Oxyryncha in the meris of Polemon in 150/149 or in 139/138 BC (P.Tebt. III 2, 1001, Vo 46; cf. PP, 1959, IV, no. 8574; see BL VIII, 1992, p. 496 and BL IX, 1995, p. 360 for the date).

<sup>1972</sup> Clédat, 1911, p. 433 describes a Nabataean inscription said to be found at mount Kasion (sc. Mahammediya for him) and said to be mentioning Zeus Kasios, but in fact this 1st century BC inscription comes from Qasr Ghet and does not refer to any Kasios; cf. Clédat, 1912, p. 146, n. 1 and p. 157; Littmann, 1954, no. 82-83 and the discussion of the text s.v. Qasr Ghet. Fröhner, discussed in

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In 1911 Clédat found in Tell el-Farama<sup>1973</sup> an inscribed architrave in pink granite (195), which probably belonged to the temple of Zeus Kasios<sup>1974</sup>. The first part of the fragmentary inscription is a dedication by a person whose name is lost, to Zeus Kasios on behalf of emperor Hadrianus and his family. In the second part a man with possibly the theophoric name ...os Kasios states that he took care of the decoration (of the temple?) at his own expense with the help (?) of a certain Apollonios. The inscription and the decoration of the temple are possibly linked with the visit of Hadrianus to Pelousion in 130 AD<sup>1975</sup>:

1 [ὑπὲρ Αὐτοκράτορος Καίσαρος Τραιανοῦ Ἀδριανοῦ Σε]βαστοῦ καὶ τοῦ σύ[μ]παντος αὐτοῦ οἰ[κ]οῦ Διὶ Κασίῳ  
[ ca. 42 ]ρου ἀνέθηκεν καὶ ...ος Κάσιος δι[ὰ] ? Ἀπολλωνίου  
[ ca. 42 τὸν συν?] αὐτοῖς πάντα κόσ[μ]ον] σ[υ]ννορθῶν ἰδ[ί]ωι ἀναλώματι  
4 [ ca. 42? (ἔτους) - Αὐτοκράτορος Καίσαρος Τραιανοῦ Ἀδριανοῦ Σεβασ]τοῦ  
'[On behalf of Emperor Caesar Traianus Hadrianus Au]gustus and his whole family, [ ] dedicated [ ] to Zeus Kasios and ...os Kasios through (?) Apollonios [ ] restored the whole decoration at his own expenses [ in the year .. of Emperor Caesar Traianus Hadrianus August]us'

In Achilleus Tatios' *Leucippe et Clitophon* (196), possibly written about 180 AD, the two heroes strand in Pelousion after a shipwreck. There they visit the holy statue of Zeus Kasios, which shows a young man, rather an Apollon than a Zeus, holding a pomegranate in his outstretched hand, about which there is a mystical story. They prayed to the god and asked him a token about their lost friends, since it was said that the god gave oracles. Afterwards they walked around the temple and saw there the double picture made by Euanthes, representing Andromeda and Prometheus in chains and described in detail by Achilleus Tatios<sup>1976</sup>:

ἔστι δὲ ἐν τῷ Πηλουσίῳ Διὸς ἱερὸν ἄγαλμα Κασίου· τὸ δὲ ἄγαλμα νεανίσκος, Ἀπόλλωνι μᾶλλον εἰκώς· οὕτω γὰρ ἠλικίας εἶχε· προβέβληται δὲ τὴν χεῖρα καὶ ἔχει ροιάν ἐπ' αὐτῇ· τῆς δὲ ροιᾶς ὁ λόγος μυστικός· προσευξάμενοι δὲ τῷ θεῷ καὶ περὶ

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Drexler, W., s.v. Kasios, in Roscher, 1890-1894, II 1, col. 971-972, thinks on the basis of a medallion that also emperor Lucius Verus visited the temple of Zeus Kasios in Pelousion about 167 AD, but Drexler argued that the Syrian sanctuary is meant, while for Adler, Ada, s.v. Kasios 2, in RE, X 2, 1919, col. 2265 there is no link with Zeus Kasios at all; cf. Cook, 1925, II 2, p. 982.

<sup>1973</sup> Rübsam, 1974, p. 138 (followed by Duttonhöfer, P.Heid. VI, 1994, p. 119) is wrong stating that the inscription originates from Pelousion in the Arsinoites.

<sup>1974</sup> SEG XXXVIII, 1840, 1-3; cf. Clédat, 1912b, p. 104-105; Clédat, 1913a, p. 82-84; Cagnat, AE, 1915 [= 1916], p. 3, no. 4; Preisigke, SB I, 1915, p. 622-623, no. 5689; Bernand, 1984, p. 78, no. 20; Chuvin, 1986, p. 43, n. 10; p. 56, n. 65 and p. 58, n. 73; Abd el-Maksoud, 1988, p. 100-101; AE, 1988 [= 1991], p. 291, no. 1058; SEG XXXVIII, 1988 [= 1991], p. 528, no. 1840; Duttonhöfer, P.Heid. VI, 1994, p. 119; Carrez-Maratray, 1995, p. 141; Carrez-Maratray, 1999b, p. 216-222, no. 394 and p. 245 no. 405.

<sup>1975</sup> There is, however, no reason to follow Clédat, 1912b, p. 105, who supposes that Hadrianus at this occasion actually transferred the cult of Zeus Kasios from mount Kasion to Pelousion.

<sup>1976</sup> Achilleus Tatios, 3, 6, 1-2. The interpretation of the 'mystical story' by Anderson, 1979, p. 515-517 (the Hebrew word for pomegranate is 'caphthor', which is also used for Cappadocia; the pomegranate of Zeus Kasios therefore refers to the Cappadocian (? immo Hittite?) origin of the god) is too far fetched. Adler, Ada, s.v. Kasios 2, in RE, X 2, 1919, col. 2265-2266; Reinach, 1921, p. 406-407, n. 2; and Vilborg, 1962, p. 69 incorrectly assume that the sanctuary of Zeus Kasios at mount Kasion is referred to.

## 6. Kasios

τοῦ Κλεινίου καὶ τοῦ Σατύρου σύμβολον ἔξαιτήσαντες (καὶ γὰρ ἔλεγον μαντικὸν εἶναι τὸν θεὸν) περιήειμεν τὸν νεών.

'At Pelousion is the holy statue of Zeus Kasios; in it the god is represented so young that he seems more like Apollon. He has one hand stretched out and holds a pomegranate in it, and this pomegranate has a mystical signification. After adoring the deity and asking for an oracle about Klinias and Satyros (we were told that the god was willing to give prophetic answers) we went round the temple.'

It is not explicitly stated that the statue of Zeus Kasios stood in his own temple. The possibility, therefore, cannot be ruled out that Zeus Kasios was a σύνναος θεός, who shared the temple with some other god as he did in the Heidelberger papyrus (174). Since he seems a very popular god in the region, it is likely, though, that he actually had his own temple in Pelousion. The fact that Leukippe and Kleitophon went to pray for Zeus Kasios immediately after their shipwreck, possibly implies that the god was especially worshipped with regard to save travelling by sea.

About the same time Sextos Empeirikos (197) states that no initiate would ever offer an onion to Zeus Kasios at Pelousion<sup>1977</sup>:

κρόμμυον δὲ οὐκ ἂν τις προσενέγκαιτο τῶν καθιερουμένων τῷ κατὰ Πηλούσιον Κασίῳ Δί.

'And no one would bring an onion as an offering to Zeus Kasios of Pelousion.'

This is the only passage where the taboo on the onion typical of Pelousion is especially linked with the cult of Zeus Kasios.

In 1930-1932 a stopper of a large (wine? oil?) amphora with a diameter of 12 cm was found during excavations in Qolzum, the ancient Klyasma, near Suez (198). A seal, palaeographically dated to the 1st or 2nd century AD, was stamped on it and shows that the vessel and its contents belonged to Zeus Kasios (SEG XXIV, 1196)<sup>1978</sup>:

1 Διὸς Κ-  
ασίου Κέ-  
ρδων Κασί-  
ου τοῦ Δι-  
5 δύμου

'Of Zeus Kasios, Kerdon son of Kasios son of Didymos'

Kerdon son of Kasios and grandson of Didymos was probably the temple official who had sealed the jar that belonged to the temple of Zeus Kasios. It is not impossible that the city of Klyasma had its own sanctuary of Zeus Kasios, but the presence of the

<sup>1977</sup> Sextos Empeirikos, *Pyrrhoniae hypotyposes*, 3, 24, 224 (ca. 180-200).

<sup>1978</sup> Cf. Cazelles, 1987 [= 1955], p. 204-206 and fig. 1; Bruyère, 1966, p. 102-103 and pl. 28, 15; SEG XXIV, 1969, p. 345, no. 1196; Schwabl, Hans, s.v. Zeus. I. Epiklesen, in RE, X A, 1972, col. 321 and s.v. Zeus. II, in RE, Suppl. XV, 1978, col. 1194; Chuvin, 1986, p. 54-58 and fig. 7; Bonnet, 1987, p. 128, n. 148; Bingen, BE, 1988, p. 465, no. 920; SEG XXXVI, 1986 [= 1989], p. 437-438.

stopper in a busy trading place as *Klysmā* is no real surprise and the jar came perhaps from the temple in Pelousion<sup>1979</sup>.

In 1828 the Museum of Leiden bought a bronze stamp with a 13 cm diameter that has a similar seal (**199**). Its provenance is not known and it can probably also be dated in the 1st to 2nd centuries AD. The temple official on this seal is Athenas son of Appianos and grandson of Isidoros (SEG XXXVI, 1456)<sup>1980</sup>:

1 Διὸς Κα-  
σίου Ἀθηνα-  
ῶος Ἀππι-  
ανοῦ Ἰ-  
5 σιδ[ώ]ρου

'Of Zeus *Kasios*, Athenas son of Appianos son of Isidoros.'

The major difference with the preceding seal is that in the middle of l. 3-4 the so-called hemhem crown is shown, apparently the symbol of the god<sup>1981</sup>.

The description of the statue of Zeus *Kasios* in Achilles Tatios (**196**) and the hemhem crown on the stamp of Leiden (**199**) are linked with some fourteen types of coins (**176-183**, **185-189**), datable between 108 and 293 AD, one lead token (**184**) and five cameos (**190-194**), which probably also belong to the 2nd and 3rd centuries AD<sup>1982</sup>. Clédat found some of these coins in and near Tell el-Farama (Pelousion)<sup>1983</sup>. Four cameos probably came from Egypt - one of them possibly from Tuna el-Djebel near Hermou Polis (**191**) - and the fifth has been bought in Beirut in Syria (**194**). For the other objects information about their discovery or provenance is lacking.

On the obverse of a coin from the twelfth year of Traianus (108/109 AD) (**176**) a youthful male figure is standing, wearing a hemhem crown, a chiton and a himation dressed around his body and his left arm; in his left hand he carries a

<sup>1979</sup> Against Schwabl, Hans, s.v. Zeus. II, in RE, Suppl. XV, 1978, col. 1194.

<sup>1980</sup> Cf. CIG IV, 1877, p. 49, no. 7044b (incorrectly under the heading 'Gemmae'); Steuding, H., s.v. Casius, in Roscher, 1884-1886, I 1, col. 855 (incorrectly linked with the Syrian Zeus *Kasios*); Drexler, W., s.v. *Kasios*, in Roscher, 1890-1894, II 1, col. 973 (incorrectly 'Bronzespiegel'); Gruppe, 1906, p. 1104, n. 1 (incorrectly 'Gemme'); Pape, 1911, p. 631; Adler, Ada, s.v. *Kasios* 2, in RE, X 2, 1919, col. 2266; Salač, 1922, p. 188; Cook, 1925, II 2, p. 987; Cazelles, 1987 [= 1955], p. 204, n. 114; Bruyère, 1966, p. 102, n. 1; Weber, 1974, p. 206, n. 15; Schwabl, Hans, s.v. Zeus. I. Epiklesen, in RE, X A, 1972, col. 321; Chuvin, 1986, p. 46.52-58 and fig. 5-6 (with references to older literature); Bonnet, 1987, p. 132; Bingen, BE, 1988, p. 465, no. 920; Yoyotte, 1988b, p. 177-178; SEG XXXVI, 1986 [= 1989], p. 437-438, no. 1456 and p. 473, no. 1582

<sup>1981</sup> For this hemhem crown, cf. Chuvin, 1986, p. 46-48; Sage, 1987, p. 164; Yoyotte, 1988b, p. 169-178.

<sup>1982</sup> Cf. Bonner, 1946, p. 51-59 and 1950, p. 289-290; Carrez-Maratray, 1999b, p. 254-266.404.406-407.409 [the reference to coins from catalogues I could not consult personally, is mainly copied from this survey and from Geissen, 1983, IV, p. 145].

<sup>1983</sup> Clédat, 1923a, p. 98, n. 3 apparently describing a type of Hadrianus' year 11 (126/127 AD) (**180-182**); cf. Abel, 1940, p. 236. At least one of his coins is now in the Ismailia Museum, cf. el-Khachab, 1956, p. 121.

sceptre, in his right hand a pomegranate. To his right a small boy, wearing a chlamys, reaches with both arms for the pomegranate. It is accompanied with the inscription Πηλουσιούτης or Πηλίουσιούτης νόμος, 'Pelousiotes nome'<sup>1984</sup>. This coin is one of the so-called nome coins. This group is in fact ordinary coinage and may not be treated separately from the other coin types minted in Alexandria<sup>1985</sup>. One can only guess whether Tatios and the coins actually describe a specific, existing statue, and whether they refer to the same statue, whether or not placed in Pelousion<sup>1986</sup>, but in any case the description in Tatios of a youth stretching out a hand holding a pomegranate resembles quite closely the main figure on the coins. Most likely therefore Zeus Kasios is portrayed on them, with the hemhem crown, not mentioned in Tatios, confirmed by the stamp of Leiden. Already Tatios was surprised that Zeus was depicted as a young man and it is now generally accepted among scholars that a kind of syncretism has taken place with Harpokrates, the young Horos, who often wears a hemhem crown<sup>1987</sup>. A temple text of Edfu mentions the god Horos wearing the hemhem crown and fighting with the followers of Seth near Tcharou at the northeastern border of Egypt<sup>1988</sup>, but no documents explicitly link Harpokrates with Pelousion or the northern Sinai. The small boy has often been identified with Pan or Paniskos, but Carrez-Maratray quite convincingly suggested that the god Pelousios was depicted.

A similar scene on a nome type from the thirteenth year of Traianus (109/110 AD) (177) presents some remarkable differences<sup>1989</sup>. Zeus Kasios now wears a beard,

<sup>1984</sup> Dattari, 1901a, p. 418, no. 6345 and pl. 34; Bonner, 1946, p. 52.57 and pl. 12, 1; Donner, 1974, p. 90 and fig. 1; Christiansen, 1988, I, p. 229 (with three other examples in Berlin, Brussels and New York); Christiansen, 1991, p. 121, no. N.125; Carrez-Maratray, 1999b, p. 259-264.

<sup>1985</sup> Cf. Milne, 1932, p. 73-78 and Christiansen, 1988, I, p. 227-237 and II, p. 49 with further literature. Speculations looking for commemorative or other explanations for these nome coins (cf. still recently Grenier, 1998, p. 1331-1340) are highly imaginative, but not convincing; cf. the discussion in Christiansen, 1988, I, p. 227-228. Kees, Hermann, s.v. Pelousion 1, in RE, XIX 1, 1937, col. 412 is wrong stating that the coins are independent issues of Pelousion itself. For the nome coins in general, cf. the articles of Geissen, 2003-2006b.

<sup>1986</sup> Against Salač, 1922, p. 170-175 and Bonner, 1946, p. 53.57-59 (followed by Carrez-Maratray, 1999b, p. 265), who want to reconstruct the original statue of Pelousion with the descriptive elements of the coins. Vogt, 1924, I, p. 59, on the other hand, probably rightly thinks that the images on nome coins are no copies of existing statues.

<sup>1987</sup> For Harpokrates with the hemhem crown, cf. Chuvin, 1986, p. 47. Donne, William Bodham, s.v. Casius mons, in Smith, 1854, I, p. 558; Brugsch, 1875, p. 31; Brugsch, 1879, p. 915 in Drexler, W., s.v. Kasios, in Roscher, 1890-1894, II 1, col. 970; Hommel, 1926, p. 963; Griffiths, 1970, p. 334 incorrectly equal Zeus Kasios with Amon; cf. Schwabl, Hans, s.v. Zeus. II - Nachträge, in RE, Suppl. XV, 1978, col. 1460.

<sup>1988</sup> See s.v. Lake Serbonis.

<sup>1989</sup> Jungfleisch, 1954b, p. 321-322.326 and fig. 1 (cf. Carrez-Maratray, 1999b, p. 260-264; to be added to the list in Christiansen, 1988, I, p. 232).

but no chiton; in his right hand he holds a pomegranate, but the sceptre in his left hand has apparently been dropped. To the left of him Pelousios holds in his right hand a leafed branch, in his left hand a purse; Jungfleisch seems pretty sure of the identification of these two objects, although I could not identify them as such on the photograph. The inscription is *πόλεως Πηλουσιουτῶν*, 'of the city of Pelousion'.

On a coin from the thirteenth year of Traianus (109/110 AD) (**178**), which does not belong to the nome types, another variant of the same scene is portrayed<sup>1990</sup>. A nude Zeus Kasios still holds a sceptre, but now in his right hand; to the right of him possibly Pelousios is standing on a large basis, to the left of him an oinochoe on another basis. A similar disposition, although varying in quite some details, is found on some coins from the sixteenth year of Traianus (112/113 AD) (**179**)<sup>1991</sup>.

The three nome types of the eleventh year of Hadrianus (126/127 AD) do no longer show the standing Zeus Kasios in full. On two types (**180-181**) - with the inscription *Πηλο(σίου)*, *Πηλού(σίου)* or *Πηλού(σίου)* - only the (beardless) head of the god is portrayed, wearing a hemhem crown and a tainia or lint, his hair hanging loose or bound behind<sup>1992</sup>. The third type (**182**) - with the inscription *Πηλού(σίου)* - only shows the pomegranate the god had in his hand<sup>1993</sup>. On a normal coin type from the twenty-second year of Hadrianus (137/138 AD) (**183**) both details are joined and the bust of Zeus Kasios is preceded by a pomegranate<sup>1994</sup>.

<sup>1990</sup> Dattari, 1901a, no. 907-908 and pl. 14; Vogt, 1924, II, p. 30; Bonner, 1946, p. 54 and pl. 12, 3; Christiansen, 1988, I, p. 161 (with four other examples in New York and Paris); Carrez-Maratray, 1999b, p. 259-264.

<sup>1991</sup> Dattari, 1901a, no. 909; Vogt, 1924, II, p. 35; Geissen, 1974, I, p. 180-181, no. 611-612; Yoyotte, 1988b, pl. 17b; Carrez-Maratray, 1999b, p. 264.266.

<sup>1992</sup> Mionnet, 1813, VI, p. 543, no. 118-119; Tôchon, 1822, p. 153, no. 1-2; Birch, 1839, p. 99; Lenormant, 1841, p. 67 and pl. 35, 46; Langlois, 1852, p. 39, no. 69 and pl. 3, 1; De Rougé, 1870, p. 41, no. 1; Feuardent, 1873, p. 314, no. 3545; Poole, 1892, p. 351, no. 44-45; Dattari, 1901a, p. 418, no. 6346-6347 and pl. 35; Milne, 1971 [= 1933], no. 1226; Christiansen, 1974, no. 1135; Donner, 1974, p. 90 and fig. 2; Geissen, 1983, IV, p. 144-145, no. 3418; Förchner, 1988, p. 432, no. 1372; *Égypte romaine*, 1997, p. 90-91, no. 91; Carrez-Maratray, 1999b, p. 254-264.404.

<sup>1993</sup> Zoega, 1787, p. 118, no. 199; Mionnet, 1813, VI, p. 543, no. 122; Tôchon, 1822, p. 153, no. 3; Lenormant, 1841, p. 67, no. 46; Langlois, 1852, p. 39, no. 70; Donne, William Bodham, s.v. Pelusium, in Smith, 1857, II, p. 573, fig.; De Rougé, 1870, p. 41, no. 2; Feuardent, 1873, p. 314, no. 3546-3547; Poole, 1892, p. 351, no. 46; Dattari, 1901a, p. 418, no. 6348 and pl. 35; Clédat, 1923a, p. 98, n. 3; Milne, 1971 [= 1933], no. 1248; el-Khachab, 1956, p. 121 and pl. 9, 45; Christiansen, 1974, no. 1136; Geissen, 1983, IV, p. 144-145, no. 3419; Christiansen, 1991, p. 121, no. N.126-127; *Égypte romaine*, 1997, p. 90-91, no. 90; Carrez-Maratray, 1999b, p. 254-264.404; Carrez-Maratray in Bonnet, 2000, p. 96 (with a specimen found in Tell el-Makhzan / Pelousion itself).

<sup>1994</sup> Mionnet, 1813, VI, no. 1335 and 1837, IX, no. 237; Feuardent, 1873, no. 1519-1520 and pl. 20; Poole, 1892, p. lxxv, p. 90, no. 764-765 and pl. 17; Dattari, 1901a, no. 1738-1740 and pl. 14; MacDonald, 1905, p. 457, no. 391; Vogt, 1924, II, p. 60; Milne, 1971 [= 1933], no. 1574-1575; Bonner, 1946, p. 54, n. 10; Christiansen, 1974, no. 416; Geissen, 1978, II, p. 170, no. 1245-1246; Carrez-Maratray, 1999b, p. 257-264.404.

## 6. *Kasion*

Rather puzzling is a token in lead (**184**), which apparently could be used as coinage, portraying a pomegranate in front of the bust of Harpokrates or - if linked with Pelousion - of Zeus Kasios. It is similar to the preceding coin type, except that it is inscribed with Ἡρώος<sup>1995</sup>. Because of the scene Dattari and Jungfleisch ascribe the token to the series related with Pelousion, but they leave the inscription unexplained. Does the indication 'of Hero' or 'of (the) hero' refer to the portrayed bust? Is it an allusion to Hadrianus' 'hero' Antinoos? Also a link with the town Heroon Polis in the Wadi Tumilat, which is named Ἡρώ in Stephanos and Hero in the *Itinerarium Antonini*, is possible, but this name is unparalleled among the nome coins. Zeus Kasios, however, may have been worshipped in that place, which is quite close to Pelousion and the Kasion<sup>1996</sup>.

The scene with Zeus Kasios and Pelousios reappears on a coin of the fifteenth year of Gallienus (267/268 AD) (**185**). The god is wearing the hemhem crown, a diadem, a chlamys and kothoroi or slippers; in his right hand he holds a leafed branch, in his left hand a pomegranate. To the left at his feet Pelousios reaches for the branch with his right arm. To the right a palm is shown<sup>1997</sup>. A similar scene is shown on a type of the first year of Claudius II Gothicus (268/269 AD) (**186**)<sup>1998</sup> and of his second year (269/270 AD) (**187**)<sup>1999</sup>, of the eighth year of Diocletianus (291/292 AD) (**188**)<sup>2000</sup> and of the eighth year of Maximianus (292/293 AD) (**189**)<sup>2001</sup>.

A similar composition with Zeus Kasios and Pelousios with only minor differences occurs on five cameos, probably copying the iconography of the coins. On the red carnelian cameo Ruthven 3 (Michigan) (**190**) Zeus Kasios, nude but for a

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<sup>1995</sup> Dattari, 1901a, p. 428, no. 6435 and pl. 36; Jungfleisch, 1954b, p. 325 (not listed in Carrez-Maratray, 1999b, p. 264).

<sup>1996</sup> Meeks, Dimitri, s.v. Harpokrates, in *LÄ*, II, 1977, col. 1004 and n. 17 mentions a special geographical link between Harpokrates and the eastern 'Pithom' nome, but this link, which goes back on De Rougé, 1870, p. 52, is no longer accepted, since De Rougé incorrectly identified this 'Pithom' nome with the Phthemphouthi nome in the western Delta on whose nome coins Harpokrates actually appeared.

<sup>1997</sup> Feuardent, 1873, no. 3107bis; Poole, 1892, p. 288, no. 2213 and pl. 17; Dattari, 1901a, no. 5237; MacDonald, 1905, p. 532, no. 941; Vogt, 1924, II, p. 158; Bonner, 1946, p. 54-55 and pl. 12, 4; Carrez-Maratray, 1999b, p. 258-264.

<sup>1998</sup> Feuardent, 1873, no. 3194; Dattari, 1901a, no. 5389 and pl. 14; Vogt, 1924, II, p. 158; Carrez-Maratray, 1999b, p. 259-264; Verhoogt, 2000, p. 56-57.78, no. 180.

<sup>1999</sup> Feuardent, 1873, no. 3206 and pl. 33; Poole, 1892, no. 2326; Dattari, 1901a, no. 5390 and pl. 14; MacDonald, 1905, p. 537, no. 982; Vogt, 1924, II, p. 159; Bonner, 1946, p. 55 and pl. 12, 5; Geissen, 1983, IV, p. 26-27, no. 3036; Carrez-Maratray, 1999b, p. 258-264.

<sup>2000</sup> Feuardent, 1873, no. 3405; Dattari, 1901a, no. 5696; Vogt, 1924, II, p. 171; Bonner, 1946, p. 55 and pl. 12, 6; Carrez-Maratray, 1999b, p. 259-264.

<sup>2001</sup> Feuardent, 1873, no. 3462; Vogt, 1924, II, p. 173 (not listed in Bonner, 1946, p. 55 or Carrez-Maratray, 1999b, p. 264).



chlamys, holds a tall staff in his left hand, a pomegranate in his right. Pelousios holds his right hand up towards the fruit. On the reverse the magical words *αιαναχθα αλθμαξα μελαχω αρηακω* are written inside an ouroboros snake<sup>2002</sup>. On the bluish-grey limestone cameo Michigan 26102 (**191**), possibly found in Tuna el-Djebel, Zeus Kasios holds the pomegranate again in his left hand, but now a leafed branch in his right hand<sup>2003</sup>. On the black jasper cameo Lewis (Cambridge) (**192**), dated by Henig in the 3rd century AD, the scene is very similar, but with the god not looking at the pomegranate, but to the left, which was possibly a free adaptation<sup>2004</sup>. The black glass paste cameo Michigan 26104 (**193**) is inscribed on the reverse (*ἡ χάρις* - 'the grace') and was used as an amulet. Zeus Kasios is nude and looks to the left at the boy. Pelousios reaches for the branch with his left hand and no longer with his right hand<sup>2005</sup>. The haematite cameo Ayvaz (**194**), inscribed with a fragmentary magical text, has been bought in Beirut in Syria; it closely resembles the preceding cameo, but Zeus Kasios again wears a chlamys<sup>2006</sup>.

Bonner made the distinction between scenes of type I - with the god holding a pomegranate and a sceptre, and the boy reaching for the pomegranate - and type II - with the god holding a pomegranate and a leafed branch<sup>2007</sup>, and the boy reaching for the branch. Type I occurs on the coins of Traianus' twelfth year (**176**) and on the cameo Ruthven 3 (**190**), Type II on the 3rd century coins (**185-189**) and the other cameos (**191-194**). The coin of Traianus with the bases (**178**) is considered a very free adaptation of type I. Bonner thinks that a real statue of Zeus Kasios is depicted and tries to link the first type with the supposed statue in an older temple in Pelousion or on mount Kasion and the second type with the temple in Pelousion, which - in his view - has been founded or restored in 130 AD. Bonner's suggestion can be criticised on several points, but it is mainly another deviant image on the coin of Traianus'

<sup>2002</sup> Bonner, 1946, p. 52-54 and pl. 12, 2; Bonner, 1950, p. 289, no. 217 and pl. 10; Carrez-Maratray, 1999b, p. 261-263.

<sup>2003</sup> Bonner, 1946, p. 55-56 and pl. 12, 7; Bonner, 1950, p. 289, no. 218 and pl. 10; Carrez-Maratray, 1999b, p. 262-263.

<sup>2004</sup> Middleton, 1892, p. 75, no. 177; Bonner, 1946, p. 56 and pl. 12, 8; Bonner, 1950, p. 289-290, no. 219A and pl. 10; Henig, 1975, p. 36, no. 126 and pl. 8 (with the image turned round); Carrez-Maratray, 1999b, p. 262-263.

<sup>2005</sup> Bonner, 1946, p. 56-57.59 and pl. 12, 9; Bonner, 1950, p. 289, no. 219 and pl. 10; Carrez-Maratray, 1999b, p. 262-263.

<sup>2006</sup> Mouterde, 1943, p. 112, no. 19 and pl. 17; Bonner, 1946, p. 59; Chuvin, 1986, p. 58-59 (not listed in Carrez-Maratray, 1999b, p. 261-263).

<sup>2007</sup> Identified as a branch of a laurel (Bonner, 1946, p. 59 referring to the function of Zeus Kasios as an oracle god), a pomegranate tree (Jungfleisch, 1954b, p. 322) or a jujube tree (Bricault, 2005, I, p. 230 referring to the supposed etymology of the name of the goddess Tachnepsis).

## 6. *Kasion*

thirteenth year (177) published by Jungfleisch that enfeebls his scheme. Thus there are three (or even four - cf. 179) types of coins of Traianus, all only remotely similar<sup>2008</sup>; instead of considering two of the three as free adaptations of the first, it seems therefore more plausible to consider them all the work of different artists, who each have in mind a story - rather than a statue - about a young god with a hemhem crown, a pomegranate, a little boy and a leafed branch, possibly situated in the Pelousiotes nome or in Pelousion itself, and who represent it in different ways according to their abilities. What exactly this story is about Zeus Kasios and Pelousios, the scene does not tell us.

The cult of Zeus Kasios in Pelousion is also explicitly mentioned in a papyrus. On 14 Phaophi (10 September), probably in the 2nd century AD, a woman called Zoe wrote a letter (200) to her brother Apollinarios, who apparently lived in the Arsinoites, where the papyrus probably was found<sup>2009</sup>. According to the docket on the verso it was given to Apol(l)inarios by Petronios the 'dromedarios', i.e. the driver of a fast dromedary, who came from Pelousion (Vo, 31-32: ἀπό(δος) Ἀπολιναρίω ἀπὸ Πετρωνίου δρομιδάρου ἀπὸ Πηλουσίου). After the greeting formula (1-2) Zoe states that she performed an act of worship for Apollinarios with Zeus Kasios (2-3: τὸ προσκύνημά | σου παρὰ τῷ Δὶ τῷ Κασίῳ). She apparently went to Pelousion concerning some problems about documents and money, which involve the wife of Acharis(?), a certain Gemelos, the epistrategos and a 'kyrios', but the general picture is not clear (3-19). It is the third letter she writes (20-21). She asks Apollinarios to keep an eye on her house (21-23: ἔπεχε τῇ οἰκίᾳ μου, ἐκτίνασσε τὰ ἔρι|α καὶ τὰ ἰμά[τ]ια) and continues - quite unexpectedly - that they pleased (the god) Pelousios with their offerings (23-24: ἀφωσιόκα[τ]ε Πηλούσιν)<sup>2010</sup>. After the brief statement that she is weak (24: ἀσθενῶ), she adds that Serenos, Petronios and his sister, and Hermione, who are apparently also staying in Pelousion, send their regards to

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<sup>2008</sup> Against Carrez-Maratray, 1999b, p. 261, for whom the similarities are more important than the differences.

<sup>2009</sup> BGU III, 827; for the reading Zoe, cf. BL I, 1922, p. 70. If Apollinarios is identical with the homonym in BGU I, 261 (as Wilcken, 1901, p. 555 wants), he probably lived in the neighbourhood of Kerkesoucha in the meris of Herakleides.

<sup>2010</sup> For this interpretation, cf. Carrez-Maratray, 1985, p. 136.153 ('Votre sacrifice a contenté Pelousios' - only tentatively, however, in Carrez-Maratray, 1999b, p. 186, no. 369 and p. 213, n. 184). Abel, 1940, p. 236, n. 4 (followed by Chuvin, 1986, p. 58), on the other hand, sees the passage as a reproach of Zoe that Apollinarios neglects Pelousion, meaning that he neglects her and the things she is doing there; this interpretation is not very convincing since such a metaphorical usage does not fit the general tone of the letter.

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Apollinarios, and she finally asks to great Charitous and her sister-in-law, who probably live near Apollinarios (24-29).

Scholars disagree about the identification of the Pelousion mentioned in the text. If Zoe stayed in Pelousion in the meris of Themistos in the Arsinoites and visited there a sanctuary of Zeus Kasios, this would imply that not only the name Pelousion, but also the cult of Zeus Kasios had been transferred from the Delta to the village in the Arsinoites<sup>2011</sup>. Others think that the city in the Delta is referred to<sup>2012</sup> and I am inclined to share this view. Every other source of the 2nd century AD mentioning Zeus Kasios not only focuses on Pelousion and the northern Sinai, but also the fact that the document itself mentioned an epistrategos, a function well known for Pelousion in the Delta<sup>2013</sup>, seems sufficient evidence for an identification with this city.

A last possible reference to Zeus Kasios in Egypt comes from the 4th century author Epiphanius (201). In a list of mortals who became worshipped as gods, also the skipper Kasios is mentioned in Pelousion<sup>2014</sup>:

... Κάσιος δὲ ὁ ναύκληρος παρὰ Πηλουσιώταις.  
'... Kasios the skipper (is worshipped) in Pelousion.'

Since there are some indications that the cult of Zeus Kasios was especially popular among seamen and people travelling by sea, it has been suggested that the god who protected seamen, became himself a sailor in this so-called euhemeristic vision on mythology<sup>2015</sup>.

### *Zeus Kasios in Egyptian onomastics*

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<sup>2011</sup> Cf. Wilcken, 1901, p. 555; Wessely, 1904, p. 124; Roussel, 1916, p. 97; Ronchi, 1974, II, p. 401; RübSam, 1974, p. 138; Chuvin, 1986, p. 58 and n. 74; Fauth, 1990, p. 111-112; Duttonhöfer, P.Heid. VI, 1994, p. 117.120-121.

<sup>2012</sup> Cf. Salač, 1922, p. 175 (in doubt); Cook, 1925, II 2, p. 987 and 1940, III 2, p. 1177 (inconsequently ascribing the sanctuary first to Pelousion and afterwards to mount Kasion); Noordegraaf, 1938, p. 282 (mixing up the sanctuaries in Pelousion and at mount Kasion); Abel, 1940, p. 236, n. 4; Schwabl, Hans, s.v. Zeus. I. Epiklesen, in RE, X A, 1972, col. 321; Calderini, 1984, IV, 2, p. 120; Bonnet, 1987, p. 129; Van 't Dack, 1989, p. 67, n. 74; Carrez-Maratray, 1999b, p. 219, n. 214.

<sup>2013</sup> Cf. Thomas, 1982, II, p. 33-39.

<sup>2014</sup> Epiphanius, *Ancoratus*, 106, 9 (Holl, 1915, p. 130).

<sup>2015</sup> Cf. Baudissin, 1878, II, p. 243; Salač, 1922, p. 166, n. 8 and p. 170; Seyrig, 1927, p. 233.

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Although the name Kas(s)ios and its derivations appear quite often in the documents<sup>2016</sup>, it is far from clear if the cult of Zeus Kasios is reflected in Egyptian onomastics. The name Kasios might just as well be the ethnic of the Greek island Kasos, a name based upon the *κασία* or cassia perfume<sup>2017</sup>, or - in most instances - a variant of the Latin nomen gentilicium Cassius<sup>2018</sup>. In some cases Kasios can indeed be a theophoric name, but then it is seldom clear whether the Egyptian or the Syrian Zeus Kasios is referred to.

A certain Sopatros son of Kassiodoros occurs in a list of men of the garrison of Hermou Polis Magna in the late 2nd century BC<sup>2019</sup>. This is the only Egyptian attestation for the name Kas(s)iodoros and Chuvin rightly suggests that it refers to the Syrian Zeus Kasios<sup>2020</sup>.

The only occurrence of the name Kasios in Ptolemaic Egypt is a patronymic in P.Hamb. I, 57<sup>2021</sup>. On 28 October 160 BC four 'nesiotai' working on a mercenary ship near Herakleous Polis Magna swear an oath. There is some discussion whether the ethnic 'nesiotes' refers to the politeuma of the Nesiotei in the Aegean or to some islands west of Alexandria. Most of the names - Achilles son of Horos, Hermias son of Protarchos, Apollonios son of Kasios and Herakleides son of P.r...tes - are Greek, except for the common Egyptian name Horos, and they do not provide much information about the provenance of the men. Therefore I am not so confident as Chuvin to consider Kasios a theophoric name related with the cult of Zeus Kasios in the northern Sinai<sup>2022</sup>.

While in the two preceding examples a link with Zeus Kasios is at least still possible, the names Kasia and Kassias in the Zenon archive have probably nothing to

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<sup>2016</sup> Cf. Chuvin, 1986, p. 55-56 and especially n. 65; Abd el-Maksoud, 1988a, p. 100-101; Fauth, 1990, p. 113.

<sup>2017</sup> Not only for the female form Kasia (as stated in Chuvin, 1986, p. 55), but possibly also for the male form Kasios, as it can perhaps be understood from *Κάσιος μυροπώλης*, the 'perfume salesman Kasios' son of Origenes from Memphis (I.Métriques 27, 10 (Bernand, 1969, p. 147-152); 3rd-4th centuries AD).

<sup>2018</sup> Cf. Sittig, 1911, p. 18 and e.g. the comment of Masson, 1996, p. 145 and n. 14 on SEG XL, 1568, 12.49 (28 October 220 AD).

<sup>2019</sup> SB I, 599, 62: Σώπατρος Κασσιόδωρου; for Sopatros, cf. PP, 1952, II, no. 2434.

<sup>2020</sup> Cf. Chuvin, 1986, p. 55-56 and n. 62-64. For the name Kassiodoros, cf. De-Vit, 1868, II, p. 158; Robert, 1933, p. 128; 1963, p. 179, n. 9; 1973, p. 444 and BE, 1979, p. 419-420, no. 15.

<sup>2021</sup> P.Hamb. I, 57, 18-21: Ἀχιλλεὺς Ὁρου καὶ Ἑρμίας Πρωτάρχου καὶ | Ἀπολλώνιος Κασίου καὶ Ἡρακλείδης Π.ρ...του οἱ τέσσαρες | νησιῶται τῶν ἀπὸ τῆς Νικάδου Νησιωτίας μισθόφορου | νησιωτῶν (Achilleus son of Horos and Hermias son of Protarchos and Apollonios son of Kasios and Herakleides son of P.r...tes the four nesiotei of the nesiotei from the mercenary war vessel of Nikades); for the persons mentioned, cf. PP, 1963, V, no. 13895, 13903, 13920, 13930, 14106; for the ethnic, cf. Schubart, 1926, p. 745.

<sup>2022</sup> Cf. Chuvin, 1986, p. 55.

do with the name of the god. The slave girl Kasia is mentioned in the Memphites about 257 AD<sup>2023</sup>. Although the woman's name Kasia in a Syrian context can possibly be linked with Zeus Kasios, it is most likely that this slave name refers to the cassia perfume<sup>2024</sup>. In the same archive a man Kassias is probably working on the dorea in Philadelphiea<sup>2025</sup>. The etymology of the name is not clear and a link with Zeus Kasios is not likely.

In an account of Tebtynis about 127-124 BC a certain Kallikrates (son of?) Kases is mentioned<sup>2026</sup>. The same name Kases possibly reappears in the 2nd<sup>2027</sup> and in the 3rd century AD<sup>2028</sup> and has in this last instance been linked by the editor with the name Kasis. The form Kasis occurs quite often in the Roman period, but has been differently treated in the editions. With the accentuation *Kâσις* it is considered an Egyptian name<sup>2029</sup> and an unattested genitive *Κάσιτος* is reconstructed<sup>2030</sup>. With the accentuation *Κάσις* it is a form of the name Kasios, which at least in some instances also stands for the Latin name Cassius. The only genitive attested being the form *Κασίου*, it is not unlikely that there is only one name - *Κάσι(ο)ς* - which occurs in both a Greek and an Egyptian milieu. The name Kases probably does not stand for *Kasi(ο)s*<sup>2031</sup> and is best considered a different name. Chuvin thinks that it has a theophoric character<sup>2032</sup>, but his arguments are not very convincing.

The first Latin Cassius known in Egypt is Gaius Cassius Parmensis, a follower of Marcus Antonius, killed in Alexandria in 30 BC<sup>2033</sup>. It is not clear whether the *κρίτης* or judge Kasios in Sais about 19 BC can be considered a Cassius<sup>2034</sup>. The first

<sup>2023</sup> PSI VII, 854, 14.20 (8 March 257 AD); P.Cair.Zen. IV, 59699, 22 (263-227); P.Cair.Zen. IV, 59700, 5 (263-227); for the girl, cf. PP, 1963, V, no. 12766 and Clarysse, P.L.Bat. XXI, 1981, p. 351.

<sup>2024</sup> Bechtel, 1917, p. 545; Robert, 1963, p. 179-180 and 1973, p. 444.

<sup>2025</sup> P.Cair.Zen. IV, 59788, 48.54 (263-227) [dat. *Κασσίαι*]; for the man, cf. PP, 1959, IV, no. 10263 and Clarysse, P.L.Bat. XXI, 1981, p. 351. The name Kassias also occurs in the Theban graffiti Baillet, 1926, no. 17 [*Κασσίας | Δημήτριος*] and no. 736 [(?) ...λις | *Κασσι[ας]*].

<sup>2026</sup> P.Tebt. III 2, 1092, 5 [*Καλλικρά(της) Κασῆς*, immo *Κασῆτος*? (an unattested genitive reconstructed by the editor)].

<sup>2027</sup> P.Berl.Leihg. II, 31, I, 6 (ca. 165-200 AD; Arsinoites, meris of Themistos) [*Κασῆ(ς)*].

<sup>2028</sup> P.L.Bat. XIII, 19, 4 (3rd century AD, provenance unknown) [*Κάσην*, immo *Κάσιν* according to the editor].

<sup>2029</sup> Cf. Bernand, 1969, p. 152.

<sup>2030</sup> Cf. Meyer, P.Hamb. I, 1924, p. 171 (ad Rom.Mil.Rec. 76, 15, 2), followed by Preisigke, 1922, p. 167.

<sup>2031</sup> The ending *-ις* is indeed rendered as *-ης* from the 3rd century BC on (cf. Mayser, 1970, I 1, p. 52-53; Gignac, 1976, I, p. 273-239), but in the examples listed the *-ις* never stands for *-ιος*.

<sup>2032</sup> Cf. Chuvin, 1986, p. 56, n. 65.

<sup>2033</sup> Orosius, *Historia adversus paganos*, 6, 19, 20 (Arnaud-Lindet, 1991, II, p. 226); cf. PP, 1968, VI, no. 16116; Van 't Dack, 1980, p. 43.

<sup>2034</sup> BGU IV, 1138 (= Chrest.Mitt. 100), 7-20; cf. Matthes, 1932, p. 70, no. 563; Thomas, 1982, II, p. 31-32.34.175.212.

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certain mention in a documentary source, therefore, is the Roman Cassius Aquila in Syene about 16-15 BC<sup>2035</sup>. The name Kas(s)ios is very frequent in Roman and Byzantine Egypt, but Abd el-Maksoud and Carrez-Maratray rightly think it only possible to accept a theophoric character for the name if there are definite links with Pelousion, mount Kasion or Zeus Kasios<sup>2036</sup>. We already mentioned ...os Kasios who - possibly about 130 AD - made a dedication to Zeus Kasios in an inscription from Pelousion (SEG XXXVIII, 1840, 2) (195), the merchant Kasi(o)s son of Kasios Kasiotes, active in Terenouthis about 142 AD (P.Lond. III, p. 142, 1132b, 1.14) (80), and the possible official of the temple of Zeus Kasios Kerdon son of Kasios and grandson of Didymos in the 1st or 2nd century AD (SEG XXXIV, 1196, 2-5) (198). To this list can be added Marcus Aurelius Kasios son of Isidorion honoured in an inscription of about 160-200 AD found in el-Farama (Pelousion) (SEG XXXVIII, 1839, 1-2); the name (?) 'Kasios Kasios' mentioned on a Roman cippus found in Mahammediya (Gerra) some 15 km east of el-Farama (Carrez-Maratray, 1999, p. 243, no. 402)<sup>2037</sup>; the (former) officials Sarapion son of Kasios, Philadelphos son of Kasios and another Kasios occur in a papyrus of possibly the late 3rd century AD, which might be related to Gerra and Pelousion (CPR XXIII, 19)<sup>2038</sup>. Carrez-Maratray also lists the Kas(s)ios described as a πολιτευόμενος ('official') in the letters of Isidoros of Pelousion in the first half of the 5th century AD under this group<sup>2039</sup>; but in that Christian context the name Kasios, which is also used in the corpus for a scholastikos and a priest, seems to refer rather to the Latin Cassius than to be a distant remainder of the cult of Zeus Kasios.

Chuvin thinks that every Kasios with a double name or mentioned in a homogeneous Egyptian and Greek context at least possibly has a theophoric name and he gives a long list of references to sources from the 1st to the 4th century AD, including names as Kasion(?)<sup>2040</sup> and Kasotes(?)<sup>2041</sup>. Some of these references being

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<sup>2035</sup> P.Strass. I, 79, 4.

<sup>2036</sup> Abd el-Maksoud, 1988a, p. 101.

<sup>2037</sup> This inscription is discussed more in detail s.v. Mahammediya.

<sup>2038</sup> This papyrus is discussed more in detail s.v. Gerra.

<sup>2039</sup> Carrez-Maratray, 1995, p. 149 and n. 64; cf. Isidoros of Pelousion, *Epistulae*, 3, 157-158.400 (Migne, PG 78, 1960, col. 852-853.1037) [Κασ(σ)ίω πολιτευομένω]; the Kasios mentioned in 5, 486 (Migne, PG 78, 1960, col. 1609) is probably another man; cf. Évieux, 1995, p. 127-129.390, who in 3, 400 prefers to read πολιτευομένω instead of the πρεσβυτέρω of Migne.

<sup>2040</sup> One can doubt whether in O.Mich. I, 294, 3-4 (3rd century AD, Karanis) [Ἰσίδωρο(ς) | Κασι( )] the name should be restored as Κασί(ωνος); cf. Chuvin, 1986, p. 56, n. 65. Except in the toponym Topos Kasionos, discussed § Homonyms, the name Kasion is not attested elsewhere in Egypt, while the names Kasios and Kasianos occur frequently in Karanis. For the (theophoric?) name Kasion on

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discussed already, I only dwell on two of them. In a list of names from Panos Polis (ca. 175-200 AD) not only a Kasios alias Apollon occurs and a Kasios alias Ser..k[ ].. as mentioned by Chuvin, but also a Kasia Gemella - from the Latin 'gemella' or twin sister -, a Kasia alias Kallimachis and a Kasios Loggos or Cassius Longus<sup>2042</sup>, casting a serious doubt on the origin of the other names. I do not see why the use of Kasios in a double name should point to a link with Zeus Kasios. On the contrary, just as in the Ptolemaic period Egyptians chose a Greek double name to conform themselves with the Greek leading class, the choice of Kasios - Cassius as a double name in the Roman period might point to an assimilation with the Romans. A second example of Chuvin comes from the archive of Aurelius Isidoros (Karanis, ca. 276-324 AD). Here the name (Aurelius) Kasios occurs next to the name (Aurelius) Kasianos<sup>2043</sup>, which is certainly the Latin Cassianus, and the fact that the members of the family of a certain Aurelius Kasios have Egyptian and Greek names, does not prove much, especially not since a half-brother has the Latin name Gemellos. Especially for the Roman period one has to be very careful ascribing a theophoric character to the name Kasios and its derivations. Even for the six persons with the name Kasios originating from 2nd century Pelousion and Kasion the relative popularity of this theophoric name in that cosmopolitan environment may be partly due to its similarity with the well-known Roman name Cassius.

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Thasos, cf. Bechtel, 1917, p. 535; Seyrig, 1927, p. 232-233; Chuvin, 1986, p. 55; Fraser, 1987, p. 253 s.v. *Κασίων* (who seems to doubt the reading).

<sup>2041</sup> P.Cornell, 22, 90 (early 1st century AD, Philadelphieia) [*Πανεσνεῦς Κασωτοῦς* or *Κασωης*], a man possibly from the village Sobthis in the Herakleopolites (cf. l. 73)]; in this list of residents of Philadelphieia the profession is often mentioned and since also a brickmaker and a carpenter are involved, one can wonder whether perhaps *Κασωτοῦς* was written instead of a patronymic; because no photo of the papyrus has been published, I could not check the reading for the moment.

<sup>2042</sup> P.Achm., 9, 60-76.

<sup>2043</sup> Cf. the index in P.Cair.Isid., p. 431-432.436.

## *Arab period*

### **EL-THA'AMA**

#### **Topographical situation**

The road station el-Tha'ama is only mentioned once in the 9th century AD, in the itinerary of Ibn Khurdadbeh (1) on the track between el-Arish and el-Farama. Since the author probably describes the northern road, el-Tha'ama must have been situated near the Mediterranean coast. He places the station at 18 miles or about 36 km east of el-Warrada and 20 miles or about 40 km west of el-Udhaib, but one has to assume that his distances are somewhat high. Qudama in the 10th century AD describes the same road, but only mentions the stations el-Makhlasa (near el-Warrada) and el-Qasr. It is not really possible to make a strict comparison between his figures and those of Ibn Khurdadbeh, but el-Tha'ama might have been situated somewhere between el-Makhlasa and el-Qasr.

#### **Identifications**

Hartmann thinks that el-Tha'ama is a corrupt form for el-Baqqara<sup>2044</sup>, but if one accepts a location of el-Tha'ama on the northern road along the coast, this proposal cannot be accepted.

el-Tha'ama possibly existed already in the Byzantine time under a different name, but every identification with Kasion or with some other place in the neighbourhood remains speculative.

#### **Analysis of the sources**

About 844-848 AD Ibn Khurdadbeh (1) describes the road from Rafah to el-Farama. From el-Warrada it is 18 miles (ca. 36 km) to el-Tha'ama (or el-Thaghama) and 20 miles (ca. 40 km) further on to el-Udhaib (or Umm el-Arab)<sup>2045</sup>. Maqrizi

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<sup>2044</sup> Hartmann, 1910, p. 677.

<sup>2045</sup> Ibn Khurdadbeh (translated in de Goeje, 1889, p. 58).



quotes this itinerary twice<sup>2046</sup>, but in both instances he omits probably by mistake the station of el-Tha'ama.

## **EL-QASS**

Ancient name: *Kasion*

### **Topographical situation**

The place el-Qass, attested in the 10th century AD (1-2), is probably the successor of the Byzantine city of *Kasion*. In the 13th century AD it lay in ruins and was no longer inhabited (7, 10). Ras ('cape') el-Qass, situated along the road from el-Farama to Gaza, is described as a spit of land going into sea, near which there is a fortress inhabited by the local population, who have some gardens and poor fields (2). Maqrizi calls this promontory a huge sand hill. There are salt winnings in the neighbourhood and due to some water pits it is possible to grow cucumbers (10). The place used to be famous for its cloth (7, 8, 10, cf. 3 / 6). Maqrizi's location (10) of el-Qass between el-Sawada and el-Warrada is apparently too far to the east.

### **Identifications**

The name el-Qass itself, the presence of a sand hill and the reference to the production there of fine woollen cloth, make it quite certain that the ancient *Kasion* is meant<sup>2047</sup>. On the Greek-Arab map of 1722 and on the map of Sicard of that same year *Kasion* and el-Qas / el Quas are explicitly linked and from the 18th century AD on 'el-Kas' is generally identified with mount *Kasion*<sup>2048</sup>. Clédat is probably wrong supposing that the spelling 'el-Kas' is due to a false reading of the name el-Qels,

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<sup>2046</sup> Maqrizi (translated in Bouriant, 1900, p. 528.669).

<sup>2047</sup> Cf. Jacoby, 1905, p. 47; Hartmann, 1910, p. 685.

<sup>2048</sup> Sicard, 1982 [= 1722], III, p. 180; Pococke, 1743(?) in Tzachou-Alexandri, 1995, p. 16; Robert de Vaugondy, 1757, pl. 96 in Clédat, 1910a, p. 233; d'Anville, 1766, p. 99; d'Anville, 1769, p. 193 in Clédat, 1910a, p. 212; Donne, William Bodham, s.v. Casius mons, in Smith, 1854, I, p. 558; Sepp, 1863, II, p. 534; De-Vit, 1868, II, p. 153; Boettger, 1879, p. 81; Ebers, 1881, p. 626; Müller, 1901, II, p. 682; Pape, 1911, p. 631; Rackham, 1942, II, p. 271.273; Janin, R., s.v. Casium, in DHGE, XI, 1949, col. 1299; Damsté, 1968, p. 540. The combination 'El Kas Kasaroun' in Boettger, 1879, p. 81 is probably a mistake, just as the 'Kas Bouroum' on the English Admiralty chart consulted by Chester, 1880, p. 153 and the 'Kas Burun' in Wiedemann, 1890, p. 63.

possibly influenced by the name Ras el-Qasrun, since the name most likely refers to the el-Qass of the Arab authors.

The Syrian (Djebel) Kasiun near Damascus - not to be confused with the Kasion or Djebel el-Aqra' - is mentioned in the 13th century author Abu Shama. Clédat incorrectly identified this mountain with the Egyptian Kasion<sup>2049</sup>.

### **Orthographic variants**

The oldest spelling, found in Qudama (1) and Yaqut (5, 7), is el-Qass. el-Muhallabi refers to Ras el-Qass (2). The name Qasyun, which closely follows the Greek original, occurs in Bakuwi (9). Maqrizi (10) uses the form el-Qais (or el-Qeis)<sup>2050</sup>. The spelling el-Qaş (with an 'ş') on the Greek-Arab map of 1722 is probably a mistake for el-Qass. The form el-Kas is used by scholars from the 18th century on.

### **Etymology**

The Arab name el-Qass probably reflects the Greek name Kasion<sup>2051</sup>. It is odd that Sicard and D'Anville, although accepting this identification, looked for another etymology and translated the name 'el-Kas' as 'chisel', an interpretation rejected by Clédat<sup>2052</sup>.

### **Homonyms**

The name el-Qais or el-Qeis, which is sometimes a variant spelling of the northern Sinai toponym el-Qass, indicates in most Arab sources ancient Kynon Polis in Middle Egypt<sup>2053</sup>.

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<sup>2049</sup> Abu Shama (translated in Barbier de Meynard, 1898, IV, p. 42 and V, p. 169). Clédat, 1905c, p. 606 has been corrected by Eissfeldt, 1932, p. 43, n. 1. Sepp, 1863, II, p. 535 supposes that the name Kasiun (Kasioun, Kaşjûn) is linked with the cult of Zeus Kasios, but this is denied by Baudissin, 1878, II, p. 239, n. 1; cf. also Eissfeldt, 1932, p. 38-39.

<sup>2050</sup> The form 'el-Qeis' in O'Callaghan, R. T., s.v. Madaba, in DB, Suppl. V, 26, 1953, col. 696, Avi-Yonah, 1954, p. 75 and Wilkinson, 1977, p. 165 apparently goes back on Abel, 1938, II, p. 218 (cf. 1933, I, p. 386) and is incorrectly used instead of el-Qeis.

<sup>2051</sup> Cf. Clédat, 1923b, p. 161; Hommel, 1926, p. 724, n. 1.

<sup>2052</sup> Sicard, 1982 [= 1722], III, p. 180; d'Anville, 1766, p. 99; d'Anville, 1769, p. 193 in Clédat, 1910a, p. 212; followed by Hazlitt, 1851, p. 96.

<sup>2053</sup> Cf. Timm, 1991, V, p. 2132-2140.

**Analysis of the sources**<sup>2054</sup>

Shortly after 929 AD Qudama (1) gives a list of places belonging to Lower Egypt, mentioning among others el-Arish, the unidentified Disa, el-Qass and Sa (Sais), without any apparent order<sup>2055</sup>. It is most likely that el-Qass in the northern Sinai is referred to.

About 990 AD el-Muhallabi (2), as quoted by Yaqut (7), describes how the road from el-Farama to Gaza goes along the sea from el-Farama to Ras el-Qass, a spit of land going into sea. There is a fortress inhabited by the local population, who possess gardens, orchards and poor fields extending for a mile and who have fresh water at their disposal<sup>2056</sup>.

The 13th century AD author Yaqut (5) mentions an itinerary going through the Djifar via Rafah, el-Qass, el-Za'aqa, el-Arish, el-Warrada and Qatia, places where travellers in a number of shops can buy whatever they need<sup>2057</sup>. It is clear that el-Qass is inserted on the wrong place in this list. At several instances Yaqut refers to a kind of clothes called el-Qassi, el-Qaissia or el-Qassia, which origin in his days was apparently no longer clear. He quotes several older sources on the topic, who relate these clothes to the place el-Qass in the northern Sinai. The cloth contains some silk and was therefore forbidden by the prophet, which implies that there was still a cloth production in the 7th century AD. el-Qass is called a region (sic) in the land along the coast near Egypt, where the 'el-Qaissia' clothes were made, but is also described as a ruin near the coast between el-Farama and el-Arish (7)<sup>2058</sup>. According to the 9th century AD author Ibn Zulaq (3), who is quoted by Yaqut (6), el-Arish was apparently also known as el-Qassia because 'el-Qassi' were made there<sup>2059</sup>. The production of the clothes of el-Qass was therefore apparently not limited to that place alone. In another context Yaqut refers to the city of el-Qassa in the Sharqiya province

<sup>2054</sup> According to the index of Yaqut (Wüstenfeld, 1870, VI, p. 173) el-Qass also occurs in Wüstenfeld, 1866, I, p. 505 (4), but I did not find further information about this passage.

<sup>2055</sup> Qudama (translated in de Goeje, 1889, p. 188); cf. Maspero, 1919, p. 96.181.

<sup>2056</sup> el-Muhallabi in Yaqut, *Mu'qam al-buldan* (Wüstenfeld, 1869, IV, p. 94; translated in Toussoun, 1926, I, p. 123); cf. Wüstenfeld, 1864, p. 466; Jacoby, 1905, p. 47; Hartmann, 1916b, p. 374.

<sup>2057</sup> Yaqut, *Mu'qam al-buldan* (Wüstenfeld, 1867, II, p. 90; translated in Toussoun, 1926, I, p. 101); cf. Wüstenfeld, 1864, p. 465; Gaudefroy-Demombynes, 1923, p. 6-7, n. 2.

<sup>2058</sup> Yaqut, *Mu'qam al-buldan* (Wüstenfeld, 1869, IV, p. 94; translated in Toussoun, 1926, I, p. 123); cf. Wüstenfeld, 1864, p. 466; Jacoby, 1905, p. 47; Hartmann, 1916b, p. 375. The description of el-Muhallabi (2), quoted by Yaqut in the same context, has already been discussed.

<sup>2059</sup> Ibn Zulaq in Yaqut, *Mu'qam al-buldan* (Wüstenfeld, 1868, III, p. 660; translated in Toussoun, 1926, I, p. 62). See s.v. el-Arish.

in Egypt, which is linked to the 'el-Qassia' clothes (8) and can no doubt be identified with el-Qass<sup>2060</sup>.

For Bakuwi (9), who wrote in 1402 AD but in this respect no doubt quoted an older source, the city of el-Farama lies somewhat east of Pelousion (sic), which is situated near mount Qasyun. The geographical link between Pelousion and mount Qasyun (Kasion) clearly reflects the expression so often used in ancient sources. el-Farama - and not mount Qasyun, as Clédat stated - is considered the northern end of the isthmus between the Mediterranean and the Red Sea; it takes only 23 hours to go from one end to the other<sup>2061</sup>.

According to the 15th century author Maqrizi (10) the village el-Qeis (el-Qass), which gave its name to the 'qeissiah' cloths, is in ruins. He situates the place at the coast between el-Sawada and el-Warrada and at a distance of some six 'barids' or postal stations from el-Farama. Since el-Sawada and el-Farama are never mentioned together in the same itineraries, Maqrizi here combined different sources. At el-Qeis there is a huge sand hill, which goes into the Mediterranean, where the Franks used to ambush travellers. Near that hill are salty grounds, where the Beduin extract salt, which is brought to Gaza and Ramla in Palestine. Near those grounds are water pits, used by local Beduin to cultivate some fields and to grow cucumbers<sup>2062</sup>. Although the location of el-Qeis between el-Sawada and el-Warrada rather seems to correspond with the area of el-Felusiyat, also known for its salt production, the cloth and the hill clearly refer to the Kasion. The salty grounds are probably a remainder of the former lake Serbonis near that mountain.

On a Greek-Arab map, dated in 1722 and published by Pococke in 1743, the place 'Kasios' is linked with the Arab el-Qas<sup>2063</sup>.

## **EL-QASR - DEIR EL-NASARA**

Ancient name: Kasion (?)

<sup>2060</sup> Yaqut, *Mu'qam al-buldan* (translated in Toussoun, 1926, I, p. 124).

<sup>2061</sup> Bakuwi (translated in Description, Le Père, 1822, XI, p. 369); cf. Clédat, 1909a, p. 767. It is not clear to me which Arabic toponym has been rendered as Pelousion in the translation. The actual distance of the isthmus is some 115 km (cf. Lloyd, 1988, III, p. 156), which implies an acceptable average speed of some 5 km per hour.

<sup>2062</sup> Maqrizi (translated in Bouriant, 1900, p. 520); cf. Clédat, 1923b, p. 161-162; Mouton, 2000, p. 81.131.

<sup>2063</sup> Cf. Munier, 1943, p. 60 ('Al-Ḳaiṣ') [the Arab reading is corrected by Muysers, 1946, p. 173]; in the index p. 80 the name is incorrectly listed together with the references to el-Qais ('Al-Ḳaiṣ') / Kynon Polis.

### **Topographical situation**

According to Qudama (1) el-Qasr hisn el-Nasara, 'the fortress, stronghold of the Christians', is a station on the road along the coast at 24 miles (about 48 km) west of el-Makhlasa and at 24 miles (about 48 km) east of el-Farama. Muqaddasi (2) knows a Deir el-Nasara - 'Monastery of the Christians' - also about halfway between el-Makhlasa and el-Farama and the two toponyms probably refer to the same place. Most likely the designations 'fortress' and 'monastery' refer to a fortified monastery. On the spot grow palm trees and one can find drinkable water. el-Muhallabi (3 / 4) mentions a fortress near Ras el-Qass that probably refers to the same place.

It is not clear whether the monastery actually still accommodated a Christian community in the 10th century AD. The place was certainly abandoned some time afterwards because of the decline of the coastal road.

### **Identifications**

Since el-Qasr is a Christian bastion, the place probably existed already in Byzantine times. There are several arguments for an identification with the ancient city of Kasion<sup>2064</sup>. The situation of el-Qasr near the coast at about 48 km east of el-Farama is not incompatible with the location of Kasion at some 54 km east of Pelousion. A monastery is known in Kasion from 578 to 622 AD, and still in the 10th century AD el-Muhallabi knows a monastery near Ras el-Qass (3 / 4). It does not seem unlikely that the toponym el-Qasr is at the basis of the name Ras el-Qasrun, which was used at the latest in the late 14th century AD and which corresponds with el-Qels, the site of ancient Kasion. There is the problem, however, that Qudama (1) mentions both the toponyms el-Qass and el-Qasr in his work; if one accepts that both places refer to Kasion, one has to accept that the author has used different sources for each chapter, or that he made the distinction between the cape el-Qass and the fortress el-Qasr in the neighbourhood. The name el-Qass is then a direct transposition of the Greek Kasion, whereas the names el-Qasr and Deir el-Nasara must have independently been created after the fortified monastery there.

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<sup>2064</sup> Cf. Hartmann, 1916b, p. 374; Cytryn-Silverman, 2001, p. 23.

## Homonyms

Other places named el-Qasr are known e.g. in the Wadi el-Natron, in the Bahriya Oasis, in the Farafra Oasis and in the Dachla Oasis<sup>2065</sup>, while also toponyms as 'the Fortress (el-Qasr) of NN' are quite frequent in Egypt.

## Analysis of the sources

Qudama (1), who wrote shortly after 929 AD, describes the route from Rafah to el-Farama. After the city of el-Arish the road bifurcates. The track north along the coast passes el-Makhlasa, continues to el-Qasr, which lies 24 miles (ca. 48 km) more west, and finally after another 24 miles (ca. 48 km) reaches el-Farama. el-Qasr itself is described as a fortress of the Christians where one can find drinkable water and palm trees<sup>2066</sup>. Qudama speaks of 'el-Qasr ('the fortress'), stronghold (hisn) of the Christians (el-Nasara)', and afterwards just calls the place el-Qasr, so it is clear that this was the usual name according to Qudama<sup>2067</sup>.

The road from el-Farama to el-Arish, as described by Muqaddasi (2) about 986 AD, passes by Deir el-Nasara ('Monastery of the Christians'), which is said to be on the coast, and continues to el-Makhlasa and el-Arish, each place being at one 'stage' from the other<sup>2068</sup>.

About 990 AD el-Muhallabi (3), as quoted by Yaqut (4), describes how the road from el-Farama to Gaza goes along the sea from el-Farama to Ras el-Qass, a spit of land going into sea, near which there is a fortress inhabited by the local population<sup>2069</sup>.

<sup>2065</sup> Cf. Gauthier, 1925, I, p. 174; Baines, 1981 [= 1980], p. 234 (index); LÄ, VII, 1992, p. 275 (index).

<sup>2066</sup> Qudama (translated in de Goeje, 1889, p. 167); cf. Sprenger, 1864, p. 95; Hartmann, 1916b, p. 374. Figueras, 2000, p. 55.202.231 by mistake spells 'el-Qasrun' and incorrectly ascribes this passage to Ibn Khurdadbeh.

<sup>2067</sup> Against Hartmann, 1910, p. 678, who apparently considers 'Hisn el-Nasara' as the usual name, looking for a strict parallel with the 'Deir el-Nasara' in Muqaddasi.

<sup>2068</sup> Muqaddasi (translated in Collins, 1994, p. 181); cf. Sprenger, 1864, p. 95; Hartmann, 1916b, p. 374.

<sup>2069</sup> el-Muhallabi in Yaqut, *Mu'qam al-buldan* (Wüstenfeld, 1869, IV, p. 94; translated in Toussoun, 1926, I, p. 123); cf. Hartmann, 1916b, p. 374.

## *Modern period*

### **RAS EL-QASRUN**

Ancient name: Kasion

Alternative names: Ras el-Burun - el-Qels

### **Topographical situation**

Ras (or 'cape') el-Qasrun is the headland on the strip of land north of Sabkhat Bardawil between Mahammediya and el-Felusiyat. It is dominated by a kurkar sandstone hill some 60 to 100 m high<sup>2070</sup>. The name Ras el-Qasrun is in use at least from 1318 AD (1) till now, but at some moment other names for the cape came into being<sup>2071</sup>. In most cases the names Ras el-Qasrun (Arab), Ras el-Burun (Turkish) and el-Qels (Beduin) are interchangeable<sup>2072</sup>, all three indicating the whole headland, but sometimes also the hill alone<sup>2073</sup>.

### **Identifications**

Ras el-Qasrun has been identified with Kasion since the 18th century AD<sup>2074</sup>.

### **Etymology**

Rozière looks for 'a certain analogy' between the names el-Qasrun and Kasion, but this is not very likely<sup>2075</sup>. Since Kasion was apparently named el-Qasr in some

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<sup>2070</sup> The figures differ: ca. 60 m (Ball, 1942, p. 72; Pisanty, 1981, p. 38; Oren, 1998, p. 77: 60 m above sea level); 68 m (Clédat, 1910a, p. 211 and p. 213, fig. 1; cf. Clédat, 1923a, p. 77: less than 100 m); ca. 70 m (Clédat, 1923b, p. 160; Figueras, 1988a, p. 58 and 2000, p. 174; Graf, 1998, p. 109); 82 m (Chester, 1880, p. 153: 272 feet; Fischer, 1910, pl. 7; Seibert, 1969, p. 224); 90 m (Ascherson, 1887, p. 181); 100 m (Abel, 1939, p. 212); more than 100 m (Cazelles, 1987 [= 1955], p. 191.201). For the stone, cf. Donne, William Bodham, s.v. Casius mons, in Smith, 1854, I, p. 558 (sandstone); Oren, 1993a, p. 1393 (kurkar).

<sup>2071</sup> Cf. Lipiński, Édouard, s.v. Baal-Çephôn, in Bogaert, 1987, p. 174.

<sup>2072</sup> Cf. e.g. Dothan's reports about the same archaeological survey, located at Ras el-Burun (1967, p. 279), at Mount Kasion (1968, p. 255-256) or at Ras el-Qasrun (1969a, p. 579; 1969b, p. 135-136; 1969c, p. 223-224) and the remarks of Clédat, 1910a, p. 214 about the three toponyms, which he mixes up himself rather inconsequently.

<sup>2073</sup> For Ras el-Qasrun, cf. Oren, 1993a, p. 1393 ('a prominent ridge near Katib el-Qels').

<sup>2074</sup> Cf. d'Anville, 1766, p. 99; Description, 1830, XVIII, p. 174; Guérin, 1869, I 2, p. 228.

Arab sources of the 10th century AD<sup>2076</sup>, one can wonder whether this toponym is at the basis of the name Ras el-Qasrun, which occurs for the first time in the 14th century AD (1).

### **Analysis of the sources**

The portulanus of Correr (1), made in 1318 AD, mentions - after the 'Gulffo de Risso' or Gulf of el-Arish - the toponym Rassacaxera, which probably stands for Ras el-Qasrun<sup>2077</sup>.

Marino Sanudo (2) quotes about 1321 AD a 'Descriptio ripariae marinae'<sup>2078</sup>:

a capite Staxi ad Rasagasaron versus garbinum per occidentem navigando milia sunt L. a Rasagasaron usque ad Faramiam versus garbinum per occidentem navigando milia sunt XXX.

'From the cape of Staxum to Rasagasaron it is 50 miles, sailing west-south-west. From Rasagasaron till Faramia it is 30 miles, sailing west-south-west.'

Rasagasaron is generally identified with Ras el-Qasrun<sup>2079</sup>. While the distance of 30 miles (ca. 45 km) from Rasagasaron to Faramia (el-Farama) into the direction west-south-west is acceptable, the figure of 50 miles (ca. 75 km) from the 'caput Staxi' (near el-Felusiyat) to Rasagasaron into the direction west-south-west is not trustworthy. The distance is 30 to 40 km too high and the point of the compass is in fact west-north-west and not west-south-west.

The Catalan atlas of Abraham Cresques (3), made in 1375 AD, mentions Ras Al Casero between Faramia (el-Farama) in the west and Stagnom (Sabkhat Bardawil) and Larissa (el-Arish) in the east<sup>2080</sup>.

A Greek portulanus (4), written before 1534 AD, describes the Mediterranean coast between Tamiathis and Gaza<sup>2081</sup>, but its phrasing is rather obscure. The toponym τὸ Φαραόκαστρον (Pharaokastron, 'the camp of the Pharaoh') mentioned between Tennis and Qatia is perhaps a popular etymology based upon the name Ras el-Qasrun, although a link with (el-)Fara(ma) cannot be excluded.

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<sup>2075</sup> Description, Rozière, 1824, XX, p. 516. Fontaine, 1955, p. 67, n. 1 and p. 230 considers the toponym 'Calizere' (or 'Calisere'?) between el-Salhiya and el-Farama on the map of Duval of 1672 (cf. Munier, 1929, p. 216, no. 2416) a variant spelling of the name Ras el-Qasrun, while in the index probably the same name 'Calize' is linked with Ras Straki; neither suggestion is convincing.

<sup>2076</sup> See s.v. el-Qasr / Deir el-Nasara.

<sup>2077</sup> Portulanus of Correr (mentioned in Rey, 1884, p. 346).

<sup>2078</sup> Marino Sanudo, 2, 4, 25 (Röhricht, 1898, p. 120); cf. Rey, 1884, p. 346-347. See s.v. Descriptions of the coastline.

<sup>2079</sup> Cf. Rey, 1884, p. 347; Röhricht, 1898, p. 120, n. 3; Abel, 1940, p. 60.

<sup>2080</sup> Abraham Cresques (Buchon, 1841, p. 111); cf. Fontaine, 1955, p. 59.

<sup>2081</sup> Greek portulanus (Delatte, 1947, p. 140).



## **RAS EL-BURUN**

Ancient name: Kasion

Alternative names: Ras el-Qasrun - el-Qels

### **Topographical situation**

Ras (or 'cape') el-Burun is the headland on the strip of land north of Sabkhat Bardawil between Mahammediya and el-Felusiyat. The name, which was not known to the locals in 1880<sup>2082</sup>, is certainly used from the 19th century AD on. Since the word 'burun' is probably Turkish, the name might even go back to the 16th century AD. In most cases the name Ras el-Burun is interchangeable with Ras el-Qasrun and el-Qels, all three indicating the whole headland<sup>2083</sup>, but sometimes also the hill alone<sup>2084</sup>.

### **Etymology**

'Burun' is the Turkish word for 'nose'<sup>2085</sup>. Ras Burun or 'Cape Nose' seems an acceptable name for a headland.

## **EL-QELS**

Ancient name: Kasion

Alternative names: Ras el-Qasrun - Ras el-Burun

### **Topographical situation**

The present-day narrow strip of land between Mahammediya and el-Felusiyat reaches its most northern point near the headland el-Qels, where it broadens, at some

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<sup>2082</sup> Cf. Chester, 1880, p. 153.

<sup>2083</sup> Cf. the map of Clédat, 1905c, p. 603, explicitly locating mount Kasion on Ras el-Burun. The map of Lesquier, 1918 wrongly distinguishes between Ras el-Burun (mount Kasion) and el-Qels (Ekregma?); the mention of el-Qels and its link with the Ekregma are apparently due to the articles of Clédat, while the reference to Ras el-Burun and the Kasion has not been corrected accordingly [a similar inaccuracy on the same map is the opposition Ras Straki (Ostrakine) versus el-Felusiyat].

<sup>2084</sup> Cf. Dothan, 1967a, p. 279-280 ('its peak Ras el-Burun').

<sup>2085</sup> Cf. Chester, 1880, p. 153.

## 6. Kasion

55 km east of Tell el-Farama<sup>2086</sup>, according to Ball at 31° 13' north latitude and 33° 04' eastern longitude<sup>2087</sup>. In most cases the name el-Qels is interchangeable with the older names Ras el-Qasrun and Ras el-Burun, all three indicating the whole headland. Sometimes, however, el-Qels seems to refer specifically to the hill, which dominates the cape<sup>2088</sup>, or to the settlement there<sup>2089</sup>. In 1982 this peninsula is some 3 km long and some 1,5 km broad<sup>2090</sup>. If one compares the maps of the el-Qels promontory made in 1910, 1969 and 1977<sup>2091</sup>, it is clear that the area is constantly changing, especially towards the shore of Sabkhat Bardawil. Also the boghaz or inlet made in 1909-1910 to facilitate the transport of fish from the lake to Port Said has since disappeared. The small bay (site M41), according to Oren perfectly situated to harbour shallow ships<sup>2092</sup>, does not show on the maps. In 1860 and 1910 there were two sources, one with saltish, the other with sweet water; in 1967 there were three sweet-water wells<sup>2093</sup>. The Beduin settlement, already noticed in 1880, was in 1887 and 1910 inhabited by some families from the Kharsa tribe and still existed in 1982; the people lived from fishing and some seasonal agricultural labour<sup>2094</sup>.

### Archaeological finds

Already the map of the *Description* (1799-1826) indicated a filled up cistern at the cape<sup>2095</sup>. In 1880 Chester saw near the summit of the hill a few hewn stones and fragments of ancient pottery and glass<sup>2096</sup>. In November - December 1904 Clédat visited el-Qels, but he only found some scattered blocs, which he considered probably

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<sup>2086</sup> For the distance, cf. Clédat, 1909a, p. 764-765 and Ball, 1942, p. 140.150. Clédat, 1910a, p. 209, n. 1 points out that the map of the French expedition is wrong identifying el-Qels with the mountains south of the lake (cf. also *Description*, Jacotin, 1824, XVII, p. 570); this location is probably due to the distinction between mount Kasion and the city Kasion, situated respectively north and south of the lake, as shown on *Description*, 1830, XVIII, map 1 and 2; see s.v. Kasion.

<sup>2087</sup> Ball, 1942, p. 105. The figure of 31° 10' / 33° 00' in TAVO Register, 1994, p. 1340 is only approximate.

<sup>2088</sup> Cf. *Description*, 1830, XVIII, p. 174 ('Montagnes de Gels - Gebâl el-Gels' next to cape Ras el-Qasrun).

<sup>2089</sup> Cf. the map on Dothan, 1969b, p. 48 (Katib ('sand hill') el-Qels next to el-Qels).

<sup>2090</sup> Oren, 1982a, p. 18 and 1998, p. 77. Unacceptable, therefore, is Clédat, 1920, p. 119, that the city of Kasion is situated 2 to 3 km from the Mediterranean.

<sup>2091</sup> Clédat, 1910a, p. 213, fig. 1 (cf. map A); Dothan, 1969b, p. 48, fig. 2; Ilan, 1977, p. 77.

<sup>2092</sup> Oren, 1982a, p. 18; 1993, p. 1393; 1998, p. 78.

<sup>2093</sup> Prétot, 1860, p. 96 in Clédat, 1910a, p. 211, n. 1; Dothan, 1967a, p. 280. In 1880, however, Chester, 1880, p. 153.156 could hardly find any water at el-Qels.

<sup>2094</sup> Chester, 1880, p. 153; Ascherson, 1887, p. 183; Clédat, 1910a, p. 211; 1923a, p. 152; 1923b, p. 160-161; Dothan, 1967a, p. 280; Oren, 1982a, p. 18.

<sup>2095</sup> Cf. Ebers, 1868, p.121; Fontaine, 1955, p. 95.

<sup>2096</sup> Chester, 1880, p. 153; cf. Ascherson, 1887, p. 186.

## 6. *Kasion*

Arab<sup>2097</sup>. In February 1910 he noticed some ancient remains near a small cape going into lake Bardawil and supposed that the southern part of the city was covered with water. He did not see any constructions, but bricks and some plaster were scattered around, while there were quite a lot of marble fragments. The pottery on the surface was mainly Roman or Byzantine<sup>2098</sup>.

In July - August 1967 and in October 1968 an Israeli survey discerned several sites near el-Qels. On the mountain ('site III') lay a few sherds said to be of the Early Bronze Age (ca. 3300-2200 BC), more sherds from the Iron II Age (ca. 1000-586 BC) and from the Persian period, but the majority belonged to the Hellenistic and later periods. On the northern slopes numerous coins were found, dating from the Ptolemaic period onwards and including coins of Alexandros Iannaios (103-76 BC). It was not a permanent settlement, but probably served as a caravan station. At a site south of the mountain with a surface area of some 30.000 m<sup>2</sup> ('30 dunams') ('site I') most of the sherds were said to be of the Iron Age II (ca. 1000-586 BC), with a small admixture of finds from the late Iron Age I (ca. 1200-1000 BC). The largest site, southwest of the mountain ('site II'), spreads out over an area about 1 km long and 200-300 m wide, including a range of hills near the lake. Some Byzantine and Early Arab pottery was discovered in situ and the thousands of sherds on the surface testify that it was a large settlement. The earliest finds are of the Hellenistic period. Clédat probably noticed the eastern end of this site, which therefore apparently lay close to site I. East of the mountain two sites were found with the earliest findings said to be of the Iron I Age. It seems that most of the older settlements consist of temporary dwellings in tents and huts, which did not leave many traces<sup>2099</sup>. The date of Dothan's early findings, though, has been challenged by new surveys and probe excavations, which took place in the seventies<sup>2100</sup>. Although Dothan mentions Early Bronze Age and Iron Age material, Oren claims - after 'very careful exploration' - that the oldest settlements in the area belong to the Persian period in the 5th century or the 6th century BC at the earliest. He discovered some forty-three sites. Most of them were rudimentary stations of some 1000 m<sup>2</sup>, but some permanent settlements belong to the

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<sup>2097</sup> Clédat, 1905c, p. 607 and 1909a, p. 765.

<sup>2098</sup> Clédat, 1910a, p. 209-219 (with map A and a detailed map p. 213, fig. 1); 1923a, p. 67.77; 1923b, p. 160-161.

<sup>2099</sup> Dothan, 1967a, p. 279-280; 1968, p. 255-256; 1969a, p. 579-580; 1969b, p. 47-59 (Hebrew) with fig. 1-7 and pl. 9-11 and p. 135-136 (English summary); 1969c, p. 223-224; cf. Mittmann, 1983, p. 139, n. 46; Oren, 1998, p. 77-78 and n. 17.

<sup>2100</sup> Cf. Ilan, 1977, p. 77-79 (Hebrew), with a map and six photos of some finds.

Roman and Byzantine period and can be linked with cisterns built in brick and marble columns and plates found in the area. Two sites yielded sherds typical of southern Israel in the late Iron Age and the early Persian period (6th century BC). The twenty-two sites from the Persian period (including sites M40 and M41 with mud-brick structures associated with storage and cooking installations) yielded Greek wine amphorae, black glazed Attic pottery, Phoenician pottery, fragments of alabaster vessels, a faience ointment bottle, spearheads in an Iranian-Scythian style, a silver pin decorated with the head of a cobra, other metal objects including fishing weights, Athenian coins and an Athenian coin die from the late 5th - early 4th century BC. A trial sounding at the mountain (site M36) resulted in the discovery of some scant remains of a brick wall and refuse pits full of ash, with pottery finds dating from the Persian to the Late Byzantine period. Probably because of the wall Oren considers the mountain a Persian fortified site, but this description may be somewhat hazardous<sup>2101</sup>.

During Clédat's stay Beduin offered him inscribed objects or fragments of Greek inscriptions, of which Clédat gives a facsimile and sometimes a short description. Five out of the nine inscriptions are published as SB I, 3976-3980 but in some instances the facsimile shows more than has been read in SB<sup>2102</sup>. The very fragmentary inscriptions are not dated and probably belong to the Roman and Byzantine period. The epitaphs are all written on marble.

(1) Clédat, 1910a, p. 216 and fig. 3: a white marble, Roman capital, decorated with acanthus leaves. On top there is the stonecutter's mark M E.

(2) Clédat, 1910a, p. 215.216, no. 5a: a small, square, red copper plate, inlaid in silver with a Latin monogram consisting of the letters N, O and S, with the O written on top of the N, probably from the Byzantine period.

(3) Clédat, 1910a, p. 215.216, no. 6: an amphora stamp with three Phoenician (?) characters in a circle.

(4) SB I, 3979 (Clédat, 1910a, p. 215-216, no. 5), a Greek inscription in the hollow of a black granite mortar:

1 [ .αφα ]

<sup>2101</sup> Oren, 1979b, p. 190; 1982a, p. 18.24-25; 1993, p. 1393; 1998, p. 78; 1999, p. 737; cf. Cazelles, 1987, p. 230; Davies, 1990, p. 163-166.169.

<sup>2102</sup> Clédat, 1910a, p. 214-216 with fig. 2, no. 1-6a and fig. 3; Preisigke, SB I, 1915, p. 269-270; Littmann, 1954, p. 214, n. 1 and p. 243 with n. 5 (incorrectly locating the find in Mahamediya); Carrez-Maratray, 1994, p. 165-166; Valbelle, 1999a, p. 76 (referring to some unpublished inscriptions in the archives of Clédat).

3 [ .ρη[ ]  
[ ] ]

(5) Clédat, 1910a, p. 215.216, no. 1: a marble tombstone consisting of four fragments that do not match. Fragments a and b probably belong to the upper part of the inscription, but their order is not certain. It is possibly a metric epitaph and some words seem to have epic endings (a, 2.5):

fragments b and a:

1 [ .εσαιμ[ ] ..ινητο[ ]  
[ .ζη.[ ] . ψαμάθοισιν[ ]  
[ ] .ς λέκτρων τε[ ]  
[ ἥρπ(?)]ασεν εἰς 'Αίδην[ ]  
5 [ ]θαλάμοιο .[ ]  
6 [ ] .αι.μ[ ]

'[ ] (in?) sand [ ] of beds [... he carr]ied off to Hades [ ] of (the bride-?)chamber (sc. the tomb of the deceased?) [ ]'

fragment c:

1 υἱεα[ ]  
μενοι[ ]  
νος ἕξι[ ]  
4 ...[ ]

In l. 1 perhaps υἱέα, the accusative of υἱός, 'son', can be read.

fragment d:

1 [ .ηιο.[ ]  
[ .νηιτ.[ ]  
3 [ .τε.[ ]

(6) SB I, 3976 (Clédat, 1910a, p. 215, no. 2), a marble tombstone for a person who died at the age of 29:

1 [ ] .[ ] .  
[ἀσύ(?)]νκριτε  
3 [εὐψύ]χι, (ἔτων) κθ  
'[ ] incomparable (?), be of good courage! 29 years old'

(7) SB I, 3977 (Clédat, 1910a, p. 215, no. 3), a marble tombstone; the address 'brother' (l. 2) is perhaps an indication that a metrical epitaph is involved:

1 [ ]  
ἀδελφε .[ ]  
σαντος γε.[ ]  
4 .ρες ῥυν.[ ]

(8) SB I, 3978 (Clédat, 1910a, p. 215, no. 4), a marble tombstone; the ending -ιης instead of -ιας (l. 2) is a possible indication that it was a poetic text:

1 [ ]νκ.[ ]  
[ ]ιης γο[ ]  
[ ]ναιδ[ ]  
[ ] .ωι[ ]  
5 [ ] .οσε[ ]

(9) SB I, 3980 (Clédat, 1910a, p. 215, no. 6a), a marble tombstone; the form ἦλυθ- instead of ἦλθ- (l. 2) and the ending -ρην instead of -ραν (l. 4) are possible indications that it was a poetic text:

1 [ ].....[ ]

## 6. Kasion

[ ] οης ἦλυθ[ ]  
[ ] δεκα παν.[ ]  
4 [ ] μετέστην η[ ]  
'[ ] going [ ] our [ ]'

Similar fragmentary texts, all written on marble, have been found by Clédat on the shore between el-Qels and el-Zaraniq, apparently carried away from a necropolis of el-Qels in the dunes near the sea. They are published as SB I, 3981-3987<sup>2103</sup>.

(10) SB I, 3981 (Clédat, 1910a, p. 217, no. 2)<sup>2104</sup>, a marble tombstone; the word πατρίς, 'fatherland' is often used in metric inscriptions; the name Penelope might be a Homeric reminiscence<sup>2105</sup>:

1 [ ] λατειμ.[ ]  
[ ] .ιν ἢ πατρίς [ ] ορ[ ] .ινη πατρίς [ ]  
3 [ ] Πηνελόπ[ ]  
'[ ] the fatherland [ ] Penelope [ ]'

(11) SB I, 3982 (Clédat, 1910a, p. 217, no. <1>), a marble tombstone for a priest:

1 [ ] εἰ ἱερεὺς  
[ ] ἡμε ζήσας  
[ ] τέτ[ ] κω διο[.]  
4 [ ] σαση[.]  
'[ ] priest [ ] having lived [ ] for a child (?) [ ]'

(12) SB I, 3983 (Clédat, 1910a, p. 217, no. <3>), a marble tombstone:

1 [ ] κεω[ ]  
2 [ ] ρησα.[ ]

(13) SB I, 3984 (Clédat, 1910a, p. 217, no. <4>), a marble tombstone:

1 [ ] ιδικα  
2 [ ] Διον[?]ύσιος  
'[ ] ... [Dion]ysios (?)'

(14) SB I, 3985 (Clédat, 1910a, p. 217, no. <5>), a marble tombstone for a person who died at the age of 46:

1 [ ] ἄλυπε  
[ ] (ἔτων) μξ,  
3 [ ] εὐψύχι  
'[ ] without pain [ ] 46 years old, be of good courage!'

(15) SB I, 3986 (Clédat, 1910a, p. 217, no. <6>), a marble tombstone:

1 [ ] μη[ ]  
[ ] λιχεκ.[ ]  
3 [ ] το...[ ]

(16) SB I, 3987 (Clédat, 1910a, p. 217, no. 7), a marble tombstone:

1 [ ] ἄλυπε  
[ ] ἴερο,  
3 [ ] εὐψύχι

<sup>2103</sup> Clédat, 1910a, p. 216-219 with fig. 4, no. 1-7; Preisigke, SB I, 1915, p. 270.

<sup>2104</sup> Preisigke, SB I, 1915, p. 270, no. 3981 reads in l. 3: [ ] πην ἐλογ[ ]; Willy Clarysse instead suggests the reading [ ] Πηνελόπ[ ].

<sup>2105</sup> For parallels with πατρίς in the nominative case, cf. e.g. I.Métriques (Bernard, 1969) 19, 1; 63, 6; 73, 1; for Penelope as an example of moral virtue in Greek epitaphs, cf. Peek, 1965, p. 163-164.

'[ ] without pain [ ] be of good courage!'

There are three funerary inscriptions that have a similar structure (**6**, **14**, **16**). In these texts the deceased is addressed as ἀσύγκριτε(?) (**6**) or ἄλυπε (**14**, **16**) and the inscription ends with the consolation formula ἐψύχει; the age of the deceased is mentioned at least twice (**6**, **14**). Because of the fragmentary state of the other inscriptions Carrez-Maratray is probably somewhat rash considering the use of laudative epithets and comforting formulas typical of this group of funerary texts<sup>2106</sup>. At least five inscriptions seem to have used a poetic language (**5**, **7?**, **8**, **9**, **10?**).

During the Israeli survey of 1967<sup>2107</sup> some fifteen small, mostly marble fragments of inscriptions have been found near the mountain (site III). Dothan gives for each of them a facsimile drawing. Most of them contain only a few letters and seem to be written in Greek; in some instances, however, one can wonder whether actually letters, symbols or decoration is involved. Dothan, followed by Oren, thinks that these were all dedicatory inscriptions connected with the worship of Zeus Kasion, but I see few elements that confirm this hypothesis.

(**17**) Dothan, 1969b, p. 57, p. 58, fig. 7, 1 and pl. 10, 5 - The inscription is written inside a bowl. The editor supplements [κ]αιρό[ς], but there is no specific reason to suppose a nominative case, nor even a [κ]:

1 [ ]μ  
[ ]θ[ ]  
3 [ ]αιρο[ ]

(**18**) Dothan, 1969b, p. 58, fig. 7, 2:

1 κ[ ]  
2 .[ ]

(**19**) Dothan, 1969b, p. 58, fig. 7, 3:

[ ]ρο[ ]

(**20**) Dothan, 1969b, p. 54 and p. 58, fig. 7, 4:

1 [ ].[ ]  
[ ]ος [ ]  
3 [ ]δ[ ]

The editor supplements [ Κάσι]ος in l. 2, but this seems too hazardous, especially because in a dedication one expects the form Διὶ Κασίῳ.

(**21**) Dothan, 1969b, p. 58, fig. 7, 5: two illegible letters, perhaps on two lines

(**22**) Dothan, 1969b, p. 58, fig. 7, 6:

[ ].ο[ ]

<sup>2106</sup> Carrez-Maratray, 1994, p. 166.

<sup>2107</sup> Dothan, 1967a, p. 280; 1969b, p. 54.57-59 (Hebrew) and p. 136 with fig. 7, 1-15 and pl. 10, 5-7; 1969c, p. 224; cf. Oren, 1982a, p. 25; 1993, p. 1395; 1998, p. 78.

## 6. Kasion

(23) Dothan, 1969b, p. 58, fig. 7, 7, on the outside of a vessel:

N I [ ]?

(24) Dothan, 1969b, p. 58, fig. 7, 8:

τ[ ]

(25) Dothan, 1969b, p. 58, fig. 7, 9:

[ ].α.[ ]

(26) Dothan, 1969b, p. 58, fig. 7, 10:

ιθ[ ]

(27) Dothan, 1969b, p. 58, fig. 7, 11:

[ ]υρρ[ ]

(28) Dothan, 1969b, p. 58, fig. 7, 12:

[ ]τ[ ]

(29) Dothan, 1969b, p. 58, fig. 7, 13: an illegible sign

(30) Dothan, 1969b, p. 58, fig. 7, 14 and pl. 10, 7: four (?) illegible letters on two lines

(31) Dothan, 1969b, p. 58, fig. 7, 13: the letter X or a mere scratching?

Possibly from the same place comes a fragmentary inscription found during later Israeli surveys between 1970 en 1975:

(32) Ilan, 1977, p. 77 (photo):

1 [ ]ται[ ]  
2 [ ].ω.[ ]

### Identifications

Since the position of el-Qels well matches the distances of the ancient itineraries, and the archaeological remains testify to a fixed settlement from the Hellenistic period on, there is little doubt that Kasion has to be located at cape el-Qels, an identification already suggested from the 18th century AD on. The fact that Strabon calls the Kasion a sandy hill, probably implies that the sandstone nucleus was already then covered by dunes.

Dothan thinks that site I immediately south of the mountain, which in his view yielded some material dated ca. 1200-600 BC, is connected with a local cult and he looks for a link with the Baal-Saphon of the exodus<sup>2108</sup>. An itinerary of the exodus along the coast of the northern Sinai and an identification of the Kasion and Baal-

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<sup>2108</sup> Dothan, 1967a, p. 280; 1969b, p. 135; 1969c, p. 223-224; cf. Bonnet, 1987, p. 123.



## 6. *Kasion*

Saphon has already been rejected<sup>2109</sup>; in any case one should expect New Kingdom or Late Bronze Age (ca. 1550-1200 BC), no Iron Age material at the site in order to establish any link<sup>2110</sup>.

There is no reason to identify el-Qels with the Egyptian toponym 'Qes(em)', which refers to the city of Pr-Spdw in the eastern Delta, as Griffith tentatively suggests<sup>2111</sup>.

Clédat, still locating the *Kasion* at Mahammediya, identifies el-Qels with the Ekregma of lake Serbonis<sup>2112</sup>. His arguments are not very sound: the distance of 200 stadia (ca. 37 km) as found in Strabon does not refer to the length of the narrow strip of land ending up at the Ekregma, but to the length of the lake itself, and the name el-Qels is not likely a direct translation of the Greek Ekregma. According to Ptolemaios the Ekregma of lake Serbonis lies at 3 to 10 km east of *Kasion*, so the former outlet has to be looked for east of el-Qels.

### **Etymology**

According to Chester the Beduin word for 'cape' is 'guels', while the Arab word for it is 'ras'<sup>2113</sup>; el-Qels therefore seems to be the 19th and 20th century Beduin name for the Arab toponym Ras el-Qasrun. This explanation seems me to be the most plausible. Clédat, ignoring Chester's interpretation and looking for a link with the Greek Ekregma, thinks that the expression el-qels refers to the concept of flowing over with a lot of foam ('l'humeur que l'on rejette par la bouche' - 'déborder', 'écumer')<sup>2114</sup>. Later on, however, he supposes that the name el-Qels has been derived from the Greek name *Kasion*<sup>2115</sup>, but the fact that the toponym el-Qels is also used elsewhere in the northern Sinai weakens both his statements.

### **Homonyms**

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<sup>2109</sup> See s.v. *Kasion*.

<sup>2110</sup> Cf. Oren, 1979b, p. 190.

<sup>2111</sup> Griffith, 1890, p. 70; followed by Paoletti, 1903, p. 108; rightly rejected by Clédat, 1910a, p. 212, n. 1. For the toponym *Gsm* (also *Šsm*, *Qsm*), cf. Gauthier, 1928, V, p. 145-146.178 and Gomaà, Farouk, s.v. Saft el-Henna, in *LÄ*, 1984, V, col. 351-352 and n. 17.

<sup>2112</sup> Clédat, 1910a, p. 214; followed by Lesquier, 1918, map and Kees, Hermann, s.v. Σιρβωνίς λίμνη, in *RE*, III A 1, 1927, col. 287. See s.v. Lake Serbonis.

<sup>2113</sup> Chester, 1880, p. 150.

<sup>2114</sup> Clédat, 1910a, p. 214.

<sup>2115</sup> Clédat, 1923a, p. 78 and 1923b, p. 161 (cf. Cazelles, 1987 [= 1955], p. 201, n. 80).

Instead of the modern name Mahammediya - about halfway between el-Farama and el-Qels - also the name Qels (i.e. cape) Hammediya or even just 'el-Qels' occurs<sup>2116</sup>.

## **HAPARSA**

Immediately southeast of el-Qels lies the small island Haparsa, opposite Mat Iblis<sup>2117</sup>.

## **MAT IBLIS**

### **Topographical situation**

At el-Qels the narrow strip of land between the Mediterranean and Sabkhat Bardawil is only separated some 3 km from the southern shore of the lake. That area opposite el-Qels is called Mat Iblis<sup>2118</sup>.

### **Archaeological finds**

During an Israeli archaeological expedition in 1968 two sites are found near Mat Iblis. Most of the finds were dated from the Iron II Age (ca. 1000-586 BC) onwards; some of them, however, were claimed to go back to the Iron Age I (ca. 1200-1000 BC). These settlements were apparently temporary dwellings, similar to those found in el-Qels<sup>2119</sup>. Although more recent surveys apparently did not cover the area of Mat Iblis, similar old dates for el-Qels have been refuted and the oldest

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<sup>2116</sup> Chester, 1880, p. 150-151 and the map p. 144 (Qels Hammediya); Anderson, 1887, p. 183-184 in Clédat, 1905c, p. 604 (el-Qels Mahammediya); Paoletti, 1903, pl. (only mentioning el-Qels, not Mahammediya); Clédat, 1905c, p. 604 and the map p. 603 (a region el-Qels south of Mahammediya, which sometimes results in the name el-Qels Mahammediya). Clédat, 1910a, p. 209, n. 1, on the other hand, states that this location of el-Qels is incorrect (therefore also criticizing his own map of 1905?), but the independent surveys of Chester and Paoletti prove that there was really a toponym el-Qels near Mahammediya. See s.v. Anb Diab - Qels (II).

<sup>2117</sup> Cf. the map Gon, 1983, p. 539.

<sup>2118</sup> Cf. the maps Abel, 1939, p. 532; Margovsky, 1969, p. 46; Gon, 1983, p. 539.

<sup>2119</sup> Dothan, 1968, p. 256; 1969a, p. 580; 1969c, p. 224; cf. the two sites indicated on the map Margovsky, 1969, p. 46.

settlements in the area probably belong to the Persian period in the 5th century or the 6th century BC at the earliest<sup>2120</sup>.

## **EL-ZUGBAH**

el-Zugbah is the name of the whole peninsula on the southern shore of Sabkhat Bardawil that almost reaches el-Qels. It is inhabited by Dawagrah Bedouin, a tribe of fishermen<sup>2121</sup>.

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<sup>2120</sup> Cf. s.v. el-Qels.

<sup>2121</sup> Cf. de Jong, 2000, p. 8 and the maps p. 654.656.

## 7. The coastal area between Kasion and Pelousion

### *Summary*

#### *Graeco-Roman period*

**Pentaschoinon - Aphnaion - Aphthaia / Aphthites - Gerra - Skenai (ektos Gerrous) - Chabriou Charax - Castra Alexandri**

#### *Arab period*

**el-Udhaib / Umm el-Arab**

#### *Modern period*

**el-Uqsor - Tell el-Rabia - Anb Diab / el-Qels (II) - Mahammediya - el-Kenisa / el-Mallaha / Khirba (II) - Menqa Etman - Djebel Uabra - Abu Galada**

### *Summary*

The region along the Mediterranean between Pelousion and Kasion, a track of some 54 km, has a lot of military and other settlements from the 4th century BC till the Byzantine period. Somewhat east of the Pelousiac branch Chabriou Charax has been founded by the Athenian general Chabrias, probably about 386-380 BC, as part of the defence line around Pelousion. Troops attacking Egypt usually camped on the eastern shore of the Pelousiac branch and especially the arrival of Alexander in 332 BC has been linked with the so-called Castra Alexandri in that area, if one can trust Curtius' account. Both toponyms Chabriou Charax and Castra Alexandri were known till the early Roman period.

East of Chabriou Charax, at some 15 km east of Pelousion and 39 km west of Kasion, the military settlement Gerra was created at the latest in the 3rd century BC. Ancient sources and the archaeological remains at Anb Diab / Mahammediya testify that it became quite an important place with its own bishop. From the early Byzantine period on some of Gerra's military tasks seem to be transferred to the nearby camp 'Skenai outside of Gerra', which gradually became an independent settlement, probably situated west of Gerra. There are some archaeological findings in el-Kenisa, immediately west of Mahammediya, but for the moment it is impossible to identify the site conclusively with any of the places mentioned in the sources.

Pentaschoinon, at some 30 km east of Pelousion and 24 km west of Kasion, possibly situated at the site of el-Uqsor, is known from about 300 AD on. There are no indications that there was a garrison stationed or that the place had its own bishop,

## 7. The coastal area between Kasion and Pelousion

but this road station must have had some importance because it is shown on the Medaba mosaic as a small town.

Probably somewhere between Gerra and Pentaschoinon, on the same coastal road between Pelousion and Kasion, lies Aphnaion, which is mentioned for the first time in 431 AD. Nothing is known about the origin of this place, which had its own bishop, but there is certainly no reason to link Aphnaion with the Aphthites nome mentioned by Herodotos nor with the city of Aphthaia referred to by Stephanos.

In the early Arab period the region between Tell el-Farama and el-Qels was apparently still inhabited, as it is clear from the existence of the road stations el-Udhaib and Umm el-Arab, which are, however, difficult to locate, and from some archaeological findings in Mahammediya. The fact that gradually the route south of Sabkhat Bardawil became more important than the coastal road, possibly due to changing geological conditions, explains the scarcity of settlements in this area in later Arab sources.

### *Graeco-Roman period*

#### **PENTASCHOINON**

Modern name: el-Uqsor (?)

#### **Topographical situation**

Pentaschoinon is situated on the road between Pelousion and Kasion<sup>2122</sup>. According to the *Itinerarium Antonini* (1) it lies 20 miles (ca. 30 km) west of Kasion. In P.Ryl. IV, 627 (2), however, a distance of 16 miles (ca. 24 km) is given, which is probably to be preferred<sup>2123</sup>. Because the distance on the track between Pentaschoinon and Gerra in P.Ryl. IV, 627 (2) is lost, the figure of 20 miles (ca. 30 km) between Pentaschoinon and Pelousion in the *Itinerarium Antonini* (1) cannot be checked, but it seems quite acceptable and matches a position at five schoinoi east of Pelousion<sup>2124</sup>.

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<sup>2122</sup> The maps of Ortelius, 1595 in Baines, 1981 [= 1980], p. 23 and Robert de Vaugondy, 1757, pl. 96 in Clédat, 1910, p. 233 [cf. Fontaine, 1955, p. 74] incorrectly make the distinction between the town Kasion and mount Kasion and locate Pentaschoinon between the two places Kasion.

<sup>2123</sup> Cf. also Figueras, 1988, p. 57 and 2000, p. 227.

<sup>2124</sup> See § Etymology. There is no reason to follow Abel, 1940, p. 234, n. 3, who thinks that the 20 miles between Pentaschoinon and Pelousion are a mistake for 15 miles. The distance of 20 miles

## 7. The coastal area between Kasion and Pelousion

With a distance of 10 miles (ca. 15 km) between Pelousion and Gerra, Pentaschoinon was probably situated some 10 miles (ca. 15 km) east of Gerra. The place Aphnaion is mentioned immediately west of Pentaschoinon in SB XXVI, 16607 (5), Hierokles (6) and the Medaba mosaic (10); no absolute distances are given, but Hierokles (6) is probably right situating it between Pentaschoinon and Gerra.

The Medaba mosaic (10) depicts Pentaschoinon as a very small town. On this mosaic the place seems to lie at the Mediterranean, a position confirmed by the itineraries, which apparently describe the shortest road from Pelousion to Kasion along the coast. So there is no reason to follow Noordegraaf, when she locates Pentaschoinon southeast of Pelousion, at quite a distance from the Mediterranean<sup>2125</sup>. There are no indications that the place ever had a bishop<sup>2126</sup>, or that there was any military presence<sup>2127</sup>.

### Administrative situation

Pentaschoinon, which is attested for the first time about 300 AD (1), is located by all sources in Egypt. Most likely it can be reckoned to the Kasiotis region, which started east of Gerra<sup>2128</sup>. Hierokles (6) and Georgios (11) explicitly place Pentaschoinon in the province Augustamnica I. On the Medaba mosaic (10) Pentaschoinon is somewhat smaller than Ostrakine and Kasion, and because the place has never explicitly been called a city, it was perhaps just a major road station. With regard to the ecclesiastical organisation, one can only guess whether the inhabitants of Pentaschoinon depended from the bishoprics of Aphnaion or Kasion, or had some other arrangement.

### Identifications

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between Pentaschoinon and Gerra, which Figueras, 1988, p. 57 mentions for P.Ryl. IV, 627, is probably a mistake for the (reconstructed) distance between Pentaschoinon and Pelousion

<sup>2125</sup> Noordegraaf, 1938, p. 282 and the map p. 297; followed by Thomsen, 1942, p. 124.

<sup>2126</sup> Clédat, 1920, p. 118 is wrong stating that Pentaschoinon occurs in several bishop's lists. Évieux's suggestion to identify two bishops of Pentaschoinon in the letters of Isidoros of Pelousion, and the occurrence of Pentaschoinon in the *Notitia episcopatum* (15) are discussed § Analysis of the sources.

<sup>2127</sup> The statement of Évieux, 1995, p. 33 that the place was fortified, is a mere hypothesis.

<sup>2128</sup> Cf. Jones, 1971, p. 342.492.494.

## 7. The coastal area between Kasion and Pelousion

Pentaschoinon lies at the coast, about 24 km west of Kasion and some 30 km east of Pelousion, and a lot of maps and scholars place the settlement accordingly, although without being able to identify the spot exactly<sup>2129</sup>. Oren excavated some ruins called el-Uqsor, which apparently match the position of Pentaschoinon, but further information is lacking<sup>2130</sup>.

Sicard identifies Pentaschoinon and the city of Pempte, mentioned by Stephanos of Byzantion<sup>2131</sup>, probably because both names contain the element 'five'. Nothing, however, is known about Pempte or about the Pemptites nome and the identification cannot be confirmed.

Sicard locates Pentaschoinon in Bir el-Duwaidar<sup>2132</sup>, but this well lies south of el-Farama (Pelousion), while Pentaschoinon has to be looked for east of Pelousion.

d'Anville mentions a place Belba near the Mediterranean, halfway between el-Farama and el-Qass and immediately north of Bir el-Duwaidar, in a position that more or less corresponds with that of Pentaschoinon on his map of ancient toponyms<sup>2133</sup>. d'Anville does not comment upon this unparalleled toponym, which is perhaps a faulty doublet for Bilbeis in the eastern Delta, which has often been mixed up with Pelousion.

Scholars of the French expedition identified Pentaschoinon and Qatia, an Arab road station known from the 11th century AD on<sup>2134</sup>, but since this place is not situated at the coastal road between Pelousion and Kasion, an identification becomes impossible.

Because Pentaschoinon and Gerra are the only road stations mentioned between Kasion and Pelousion in respectively the *Itinerarium Antonini* (1) and the

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<sup>2129</sup> Pococke, 1743(?) in Tzachou-Alexandri, 1995, p. 16; d'Anville, 1766, p. 1; Abel, 1940, p. 234 and pl. 7; Alt, 1943, p. 65; Jones, 1971, p. 294; Berg, 1973, map 2; TAVO B VI 15, 1983; Tsafirir, 1994, map 1; Évieux, 1995, p. 419.420.

<sup>2130</sup> Oren, 1980b, p. 124 (Hebrew), 1982a, p. 24 and 1998, p. 81; Figueras, 1988, p. 58 (and the map p. 65) and 1999, p. 212; Graf, 1998, p. 109. See s.v. el-Uqsor.

<sup>2131</sup> Stephanos of Byzantion, s.v. Πέμπτη (Meineke, 1849, p. 516) [Πέμπτη, πόλις Αιγύπτου. ὁ πολίτης Πεμπτίτης καὶ νομὸς Πεμπτίτης ('Pempte, a city in Egypt. The citizen is called Pemptites and the nome Pemptites'); cf. Sicard, 1982 [= 1722], III, p. 113.180 and the map p. 168; Ball, 1942, p. 173.

<sup>2132</sup> Sicard, 1982 [= 1722], III, p. 113; according to Sauneron and Martin, commenting at this passage of Sicard, Ball, 1942, p. 140 locates Pentaschoinon in Tell el-Farama, but they misread Ball's table.

<sup>2133</sup> d'Anville, 1766, p. 218 (cf. the map p. 1 and the comment on Pentaschoinon p. 98). Fontaine, 1955, p. 78 incorrectly calls the place 'Varadeh (Ostracine)' instead of 'Belba'.

<sup>2134</sup> Description, 1830, XVIII, p. 174 and map 1.2; followed by Schlumberger, 1906, p. 76-77; Lesquier, 1918, p. 401, n. 6; the map of Di Bernardino, 1988, p. 92; maybe also Noordegraaf's location - already discussed - southeast of Pelousion refers to Qatia. Rejected by Abel, 1940, p. 233, n. 6. See s.v. Qatia.

## 7. The coastal area between Kasion and Pelousion

*Tabula Peutingeriana*, the two places have been identified<sup>2135</sup>. Clédat even identified Pentaschoinon, Gerra, Skenai and Aphnaion and located them all at Mahammediya, some 15 km east of Pelousion. He therefore thinks that the distance of 20 miles towards Pelousion in the *Itinerarium Antonini* (1) is a mistake for 10 miles, that the accounts of Hierokles (6) and Georgios (11), which mention Pentaschoinon, Gerra and Skenai / It(r)ageros next to each other, mixed things up, and that the name Skenai is derived from (Penta)schoinon<sup>2136</sup>. The itinerary of P.Ryl. IV, 627-628 (2-3) - not yet known to Clédat - leaves no doubt, however, that Pentaschoinon and Gerra are two different places and there is no reason to assume any mistake in the sources.

Hommel identifies Pentaschoinon and Chabriou Charax<sup>2137</sup>, but although both places are situated between Kasion and Pelousion, there are no positive arguments for this identification.

### Orthographic variants

Two different nominatives are used in the sources: the neuter Pentaschoinon occurs in Hierokles (6), the Madaba mosaic (10) and Georgios (11); the masculine Pentaschoinos is found in SB XXVI, 16607 (5), which is not really trustworthy in its orthography, and in Stephanos (8-9), where it cannot be a mere mistake because he clearly lists the name in a grammatical paradigm on '-os'.

According to Honigmann the letters ΚΑΛ in Πεντάσκαλος in SB XXVI, 16607 (5) are due to a bad reading of the original ΧΟΙΝ<sup>2138</sup>.

### Etymology

The name Pentaschoinon, '(The place) at five schoinoi', is based upon the longitudinal measurement named schoinos<sup>2139</sup>. The word πεντάσχοινον as such

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<sup>2135</sup> Griffith, 1890, p. 37.

<sup>2136</sup> Clédat, 1920, p. 116-119; 1923a, p. 158; 1923b, p. 164-165.186-187; followed by Dalman, 1924, p. 47 and the map p. 42; Kees, Hermann, s.v. Pelousion, in RE, XIX 1, 1937, col. 413; Kees, Hermann, s.v. Pentaschoinon, in RE, XIX 1, 1937, col. 512; Abel, 1938, II, p. 218; Honigmann, 1939a, p. 46 and the maps p. 60 and pl. 1.4; Alt, 1954, p. 157; Donner, 1992, p. 78. The identification has been rejected by Abel, 1940, p. 62, n. 2, O'Callaghan, R. T., s.v. Madaba, in DB, Suppl. V, 26, 1953, col. 696 and Figueras, 1988, p. 58. See also s.v. Aphnaion, s.v. Gerra, s.v. Skenai and s.v. Mahammediya.

<sup>2137</sup> Hommel, 1926, p. 965. See s.v. Chabriou Charax.

<sup>2138</sup> Honigmann, 1939c, p. 647; cf. Thomsen, 1942, p. 124; Alt, 1943, p. 64.



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occurs only in Hesychios<sup>2140</sup>, while also the combinations ἡμίσχοινον, τρίσχοινον and τετράσχοινον are known.

Some scholars think that the name has been derived from the distance between Pentaschoinon and Kasion, equating the (too high) figure of 20 miles of the *Itinerarium Antonini* (1) with five schoinoi<sup>2141</sup>. According to Abel five schoinoi would equal five hours walking and at an average pace of 4 to 5 km an hour one gets a figure of 20 to 25 km, which corresponds with the actual 24 km<sup>2142</sup>. There is no reason, however, to assume that Kasion would be a point of reference for the naming of another settlement, and the unit of measure schoinos seems to refer to a specific distance, not to a vague indication of time. There is no reason either to follow Carrez-Maratray's suggestion that the name implies that Pentaschoinon was situated at five schoinoi of both Pelousion and Kasion<sup>2143</sup>.

The dimensions of the schoinos are highly variable<sup>2144</sup>, but in this case one schoinos most likely corresponds with 30 stadia (ca. 5,5 km)<sup>2145</sup>. Thus five schoinoi equalling 150 stadia (ca. 28 km) correspond quite well with the distance of some 30 km between Pentaschoinon and Pelousion<sup>2146</sup>. Since the Pelousiac mouth lay a few kilometres east of the city Pelousion itself, it is not impossible that Pentaschoinon was a road station reached at some five schoinoi after the crossing of the Pelousiac branch. Since the schoinos is - at least in origin - an Egyptian measurement<sup>2147</sup>, the place was

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<sup>2139</sup> There is no reason to follow Clédat, 1923b, p. 164-165, who thinks that schoinos is used in the meaning of 'reed' and that there is some obscure play on words with 'five'; cf. Abel, 1940, p. 233 and n. 5. Hommel, 1926, p. 965, n. 1 translates 'Fünfmeilengebiet', but Pentaschoinon is certainly a place and not an area.

<sup>2140</sup> Hesychios, Π 1404, s.v. πεντάσχοινον (Hansen, 2005, III, p. 69 no. 1404): πεντάσχοινον· στάδιον ('pentaschoinon: a stadion).

<sup>2141</sup> Lagrange, 1897, p. 179; Pape, 1911, p. 1169.

<sup>2142</sup> Abel, 1940, p. 233-234; cf. Kirsten, 1959, p. 420; Figueras, 1988, p. 57 and 1999, p. 212; Martin, 1996, p. 83-84, n. 223 (in doubt).

<sup>2143</sup> Carrez-Maratray, 2000a, p. 18.

<sup>2144</sup> For Herodotos, 2, 6, 1-3 (see also 2, 15, 1) the schoinos corresponds with 60 stadia (ca. 11 km); cf. Lloyd, 1976, II, p. 41-45.80. Eratosthenes measured with 40 stadia (ca. 7,5 km) according to Plinius, *Naturalis historia*, 12, 30, 53, who also knows schoinoi of 32 stadia (ca. 6 km) and of 30 stadia (ca. 5,5 km) (5, 11, 63; see also 6, 30, 124). For Artemidoros in Strabon, 17, 1, 24 (C 803-804) a schoinos in Middle Egypt is 120 stadia (ca. 22 km), in the Thebais 60 stadia and in the Delta 30 stadia [see also 17, 1, 41 (C 813)], while Strabon stresses that in his time also distances of 40 stadia (ca. 7,5 km) [see also Strabon, 11, 14, 11 (C 530) for Armenia] and more were in use in the Delta. Heron of Alexandria, *Geometrica*, 23, 20; 44 (Heiberg, 1912, IV, p. 402.406) equals the schoinos on different occasions with 30 and 48 stadia (ca. 9 km); cf. Mitchell, 1976, p. 121. Ptolemaios apparently used schoinoi of 30 stadia; cf. Polaschek, Erich, s.v. Klaudios Ptolemaios, in RE, Suppl. X, 1965, col. 694.

<sup>2145</sup> Cf. Abel, 1940, p. 234; Lloyd, 1976, II, p. 44.

<sup>2146</sup> Cf. Description, Rozière, 1824, XX, p. 516; Martin, 1996, p. 83-84, n. 223 (in doubt).

<sup>2147</sup> Herodotos, 2, 6, 3 explicitly calls the schoinos an Egyptian measurement (μέτρον ἑὼν Ἀλύππιον), which has double the size of a parasang. Because the length of the schoinos and the Persian parasang in some (later) sources coincides, Mitchell, 1976, p. 121-122 (followed by Graf,

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probably founded by Greek speaking people from Egypt<sup>2148</sup>; this is not surprising, since the area definitely belonged to Egypt from the late 1st century AD on.

### Homonyms

No other place with the name Pentaschoinon is known, but the element 'schoinos' is used in other toponyms. The region Dodekaschoinos, south of Philai, is known from Herodotos on, and the Triakontaschoinos, apparently an extension of the Dodekaschoinos, is attested from the 2nd century BC on<sup>2149</sup>. In Thessalia the toponym Mesoschoinion occurs in the 4th-5th centuries AD<sup>2150</sup>.

### Analysis of the sources

In the *Itinerarium provinciarum Antonini Augusti* (1), composed ca. 300 AD, Pentaschoinon is located halfway between Kasion and Pelousion, both situated at a distance of 20 miles (ca. 30 km)<sup>2151</sup>.

Cassio

Pentascino                    m.p. XX

Pelusio                        m.p. XX.

'from Cassium to Pentascinum: 20 miles; (from Pentascinum to) Pelusium: 20 miles.'

The official Theophanes travelled from Upper Egypt to Antiocheia in Syria, possibly in 322 or 323 AD (2-3). Some memoranda and accounts of this journey - both drafts and fair copies - are preserved. On 18 Pharmouthi (13 April) - his seventh stage - Theophanes came from Pelousion, travelled 10 miles (ca. 15 km), passed Gerra, and continued possibly another 10 miles (ca. 15 km)<sup>2152</sup> to Pentaschoinon,

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1998, p. 109) equals the two measurements, and considers the schoinos an originally Persian, not Egyptian measurement that got introduced all over the Persian empire. Mitchell, however, does not explain the explicit distinction between the parasang and the schoinon made by Herodotos, and I do not see any reason to doubt Herodotos' words.

<sup>2148</sup> As pointed out by Heinz Heinen in a personal communication.

<sup>2149</sup> For these regions, cf. Dietze, 1994, p. 63-110 and especially p. 98-102.

<sup>2150</sup> Cf. SEG XXXVII, 496, 10-11 [ἐπὶ τὸ | Μεσοσχοίνιον] ('in Mesoschoinion').

<sup>2151</sup> *Itinerarium provinciarum Antonini Augusti*, 152, 2-4 (Cuntz, 1929, p. 21).

<sup>2152</sup> It is not clear why Roberts, P.Ryl. IV, 1952, p. 107.120 (followed by Éviéux, 1995, p. 35, n. 21; Carrez-Maratray, 2000a, p. 18; Figueras, 2000, p. 45.191.227) supplements [ιβ], 12 miles (ca. 18 km); the only comparable distance is the 20 miles (ca. 30 km) between Pelousion and Pentaschoinon in the *Itinerarium Antonini* (1), which is perfectly acceptable, so it is better to supplement accordingly. Mitthof, CPR XXIII, 2002, p. 118 supplements [ιδ], 14 miles (ca. 21 km), apparently in order to match the global figure of 20 + 20 = 40 miles for the track Pelousion - Pentaschoinon - Kasion as given in the *Itinerarium Antonini*.

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where he spent the night. The next day he travelled 16 miles (ca. 24 km) to Kasion, which was apparently the shortest track of his journey. This itinerary is mentioned twice, both in the draft and in the fair copy<sup>2153</sup>:

|                  |    |                                      |            |
|------------------|----|--------------------------------------|------------|
| (627, draft)     |    |                                      |            |
| 230              | ζ  | ἀπὸ Πηλου[[ερ]σίου εἰς Γέρος         | μίλ(ια) ι  |
|                  |    | ἀπὸ Γέρος εἰς Πεντάσχοινον           | μίλ(ια) ι? |
| 232              | η  | ἀπὸ Πεντασχοίνου εἰς τὸ [Κάσιον      | μίλ(ια) ις |
|                  | '7 | From Pelou[[er]]sion to Geros        | milia 10   |
|                  |    | From Geros to Pentaschoin[on         | milia 10?] |
|                  | 8  | From Pentaschoinon to the [Kasion    | milia] 16' |
| (628, fair copy) |    |                                      |            |
| 5                | [ζ | ἀπὸ Π[η]λουσίου εἰς τὸ Γέρος]        |            |
|                  | [  | ἀπὸ τ[ο]ῦ Γέρος εἰς Π[εντάσχοινον]   |            |
| 7                | [η | ἀπὸ Πεντασχοίνου εἰς τὸ Κάσιον]      |            |
|                  | '7 | From P[e]lousion to [Geros]          |            |
|                  | [  | From Geros to P[entaschoinon]        |            |
|                  | [8 | From] Pentaschoinon t[o the Kasion]' |            |

On his way back from Antiocheia to Egypt Theophanes again travelled from Kasion to Pentaschoinon (4), where he bought some olives and an unidentified kind of food named 'chrysophydr( )'<sup>2154</sup>, probably in the course of 12 Mesore (5 August)<sup>2155</sup>:

|     |              |                  |         |
|-----|--------------|------------------|---------|
| 482 | ιβ           | ἐν Πεντασχοίν(ω) |         |
|     |              | τιμ(ῆς) ἐλαιῶν   | (δρ.) σ |
| 485 | χρυσοφυδρ( ) |                  | (δρ.) ρ |

'12 (Mesore). In Pentaschoinon. Price of olives: 200 dr. Chrysophydr( ): 100 dr.'

Probably in the evening of 12 Mesore he did some shopping in Pelousion, so he must have covered the whole distance Kasion - Pelousion (some 36 miles or about 54 km) in one day, apparently without stopping in Gerra, as he did in April.

On the *Tabula Peutingeriana*, a map that possibly shows the situation of the 4th century AD, not Pentaschoinon, but Gerra is mentioned as the only road station between Kasion and Pelousion. On that relatively short track, which could be perfectly covered in one or two days, one does not expect a second mansio next to Gerra, so there is no reason to suppose that the name Pentaschoinon has been lost on the map in the course of its tradition. One could suggest that this section of the map

<sup>2153</sup> P.Ryl. IV, 627, 230-232 is a draft for P.Ryl. IV, 628, 5-7.

<sup>2154</sup> On 9 Mesore Theophanes had bought in Raphia that same 'chrysophydr( )' for 300 drachmas (P.Ryl. IV, 630\*, 447); cf. Kalleris, 1953, p. 714, n. 1. The editor (p. 132.148) suggests that φυδρ( ) may be a misspelling of θυδρ(άκων), a variant of θρίδαξ, 'lettuce', which has been bought by Theophanes in Babylon in Egypt (P.Ryl. IV, 627, 151) and in Antiocheia (P.Ryl. IV, 629, 233). The expression 'gold-lettuce', however, is rather odd for a green vegetable, and if one considers φυδρ( ) a mere mistake, it is hard to explain why Theophanes made it twice. One can perhaps also think of a kind of fish, such as the sea-fish named χρύσοφρυς (gen. χρυσόφρυος), which has a golden spot over each eye.

<sup>2155</sup> P.Ryl. IV, 630\*, 482-485 [immo 633: fair copy; no draft is preserved].

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represents the northern Sinai before the foundation of Pentaschoinon, but other explanations for the absence of Pentaschoinon are possible.

Évieux identifies the bishops Theodosios and Alpheios mentioned in the correspondence of Isidoros of Pelousion as bishops from Pentaschoinon<sup>2156</sup>. There are no indications, however, that Pentaschoinon ever was a bishopric<sup>2157</sup> and Évieux's hypothesis is only based on the geographical proximity of Pelousion and Pentaschoinon.

The papyrus SB XXVI, 16607 (5), probably written in the 5th century AD, contains an itinerary of places in Egypt, Palestine and Asia Minor. Πεντάσκαλος (Pentaschoinon) is mentioned between Τ[α]φνάειν (Aphnaion) in the west and Πικασπίσω (Kasion) in the east<sup>2158</sup>.

Hierokles (6) ca. 527/528 AD mentions Pentaschoinon (Πεντάσχοινον) between Kasion and Aphnaion as one of the thirteen towns lying in the ἐπαρχία Αὐγούστα α' (province Augustamnica I)<sup>2159</sup>.

Stephanos of Byzantion (7-9) does not have an entry for Pentaschoinon, but mentions three times the ethnic 'Pentaschoinites', based upon the masculine toponym 'Pentaschoinos', as a parallel for the ethnic of the towns Magdolos (in the eastern Delta), Takompsos (in the Dodekaschoinos) and Oreos (in Euboea)<sup>2160</sup>:

(7) τὸ ἐθνικὸν Μαγδωλίτης διὰ τὸν Αἰγύπτιον τύπον, Κανωβίτης Διολκίτης Πεντασχοινίτης.

'The ethnic is Magdolites, following the Egyptian type, Kanobites, Diolkites, Pentaschoinites.'

(8) τὸ ἐθνικὸν Τακομψίτης, ὡς Κάνωβος Κανωβίτης, Πεντάσχοινος Πεντασχοινίτης.

'The ethnic is Takompsites, like Kanobos Kanobites, Pentaschoinos Pentaschoinites.'

(9) ... Πεντάσχοινος Πεντασχοίνου Πεντασχοινίτης, Δίολκος Διόλκου Διολκίτης· οὕτως Ὀρεός Ὀρεοῦ Ὀρεΐτης ...

'... Pentaschoinos Pentaschoinou Pentaschoinites, Diolkos Diolkou Diolkites, so also Oreos Oreou Oreites ...'

Lentz, the editor of the 2nd century grammarian Herodianos, reconstructs greater parts of the original text apparently not on the basis of any manuscript

<sup>2156</sup> Évieux, 1995, p. 63-67.74 (cf. p. 388.407-408).

<sup>2157</sup> Cf. Noordegraaf, 1938, p. 295; Jones, 1971, p. 494; Martin, 1996, p. 83-84, n. 223 and p. 113.

<sup>2158</sup> SB XXVI, 16607 (P.von Scherling G110), 8-10; cf. Noordegraaf, 1938, p. 274. Jones, 1971, p. 492 incorrectly gives Πεντασχαλος.

<sup>2159</sup> Hierokles, 727, 3 (Honigmann, 1939a, p. 46).

<sup>2160</sup> Stephanos of Byzantion, *Ethnica*, s.v. Μαγδωλός, s.v. Τάκομψος and s.v. Ὀρεός (Meineke, 1849, p. 424.599.709).

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tradition, but by compiling examples from Stephanos (9). He therefore also mentions Pentaschoinon and Pentaschoinites<sup>2161</sup>, but because this place is not known before the 4th century AD, I am not inclined to accept Herodianos as the earliest testimony for Pentaschoinon.

On the Medaba mosaic (10), made somewhere in the middle of the 6th century AD, τὸ Πεντάσχοι|νον (Pentaschoinon) is drawn as a small town between τὸ Κάσιν (Kasion) and τὸ Ἀφ[νάιον] (Aphnaion)<sup>2162</sup>. The use of the article for these toponyms is remarkable. The sketch of the town is somewhat smaller than that of Ostrakine and Kasion and does not show any church. It seems to be the smallest settlement in the northern Sinai preserved on the mosaic.

Georgios of Cyprus (11) ca. 591-603 AD mentions Pentaschoinon (Πεντάσχοινον) in the ἐπαρχία Αὐγουσταμνικῆς (province Augustamnica, sc. I) belonging to the dioikesis of Egypt. The order Ostrakine - Pentaschoinon - Kasion - Aphnaion is geographically not correct<sup>2163</sup>.

It is remarkable that Pentaschoinon is not listed by the 7th century Ravennas geographus between Kasion and Gerra, which he does mention twice next to each other. Noordegraaf tentatively suggests an identification with the toponym 'Bascanon'<sup>2164</sup>, but its geographical context is not clear and except for a vague phonetic resemblance there is nothing to recommend the identification.

In *Genesis*, 10, 13-14 the people of Lehab, Naphtuh and Kasluh are listed among the descendants of Mizraim [Egypt] son of Cham<sup>2165</sup>. The Aramaic *Targum* of

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<sup>2161</sup> Herodianos, Περὶ παθῶν (Lentz, 1868, II, p. 328, 2-3); Περὶ παρωνύμων (Lentz, 1868, II, p. 870, 14-15) [Πεντάσχοινος Πεντασχοίνου Πεντασχοινίτης ('Pentaschoinos Pentaschoinou Pentaschoinites')].

<sup>2162</sup> Medaba mosaic (IGLS XXI 2, 153), 130.

<sup>2163</sup> Georgios of Cyprus, 693 (Honigmann, 1939a, p. 58). Jacoby, 1905, p. 46 erroneously considers the work of Georgios and its previous edition in *Notitia episcopatum*, I (Parthey, 1866) as two different works. The list of Georgios has been copied as a list of bishoprics [ὁ Πεντασχοίνου] in *Notitia episcopatum*, B, 1, 6 (Benešević, 1927, p. 69) (15). This is the only mention of Pentaschoinon as a bishopric and it can certainly not be used to prove that the place had a bishop (against Ermoni, 1900, p. 640).

<sup>2164</sup> Ravennas geographus, 3, 2 (Pinder, 1860, p. 135, 13; Schnetz, 1940, p. 36); cf. Noordegraaf, 1938, p. 282.

<sup>2165</sup> For these people, cf. Odelain, 1978, p. 223, s.v. Kasluh; p. 230, s.v. Lehab; p. 269-270, s.v. Naphtuh.

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Pseudo-Ionathan (12), written in the 7th-8th century AD, renders their names as the Libyans, the P(e)nt(a)s(e)kinai (פִּנְטַסְכִּינַיִ) or Pentasekenites and the Pentapolitanians; the *Fragment Targum* (13) speaks of the Pentapolitanians, the Lustaneans(?) and the Pentasekenites; the scholia or marginal glosses at the *Targum Neophyti* (14) have the Pentapolitanians, the S(e)kinai (סְכִינַיִ) or Sekenites and again the P(e)nt(a)s(e)kinai (פִּנְטַסְכִּינַיִ) or Pentasekenites<sup>2166</sup>. There is no explicit link between the old and the new names, nor any geographical order in the list that can help the identification. On the basis of the marginal glosses 'Pentasekenites' has been considered a combination of 'Pentapolitanians', a name that probably refers to the area of Pentapolis in Cyrenaica, and the (unknown) 'Sekenites', and therefore a repetition of the preceding scholion<sup>2167</sup>. More often, however, the name is linked with the toponym Pentaschoinon<sup>2168</sup>. The fact that also Pelousion and the Kasiotis are named in some versions of this list, indeed supports this identification, although the exact reason for the change of name remains unclear. Figueras' suggestion that the name was mentioned because of a Jewish community in Pentaschoinon, has nothing to recommend it.

Genesis: 'Misraim fathered the people of Lud, of Anam, Lehab, Naphtuh, (14) Patros, Casluh and Caphtor, from which the Philistines came.'

(12) Pseudo-Ionathan: 'Misraim begot the Nivatitites, the Mareotians, the Lybians, and the Pentasekenites, (14) the Kasiotites, the Pentapolitanians whence came forth the Philistines, and the Cappadocians.'

(13) *Fragment Targum*: 'And Misraim begot the Lydians and the Mareotians and the Pentapolitanians and Lustaneans (?). (14) *And the Pathrusim*: And the Pilusites and the Pentasekenites, whence came forth the Philistines and the Cappadocians.'

(14) Scholia at the *Targum Neophyti*: 'And Egypt begot the Lybians and the Mareothites, the Pentapolitanians and the Sekenites, (14) and the Pilusites and the Penteseकिनites, from whence the Philistines and the Cappadocians came forth.'

## APHNAION

### Topographical situation

<sup>2166</sup> *Targum*, Pseudo-Ionathan, *Genesis*, 10, 13-14 (translated in Maher, 1992, p. 48; text in Clarke, 1984, p. 11; cf. Le Déaut, 1978, I, p. 139); *Fragment Targum V*, *Genesis*, 10, 13-14 (translated in Klein, 1980, p. 95); scholia at *Targum Neophyti*, *Genesis*, 10, 13-14 (text and translation in Díez Macho, 1968, I, p. 54-55.521, n. 5-6; cf. Le Déaut, 1978, I, p. 138, n. o). Figueras (1988, p. 58, n. 9; 1999, p. 212; 2000, p. 227.265) incorrectly states that the toponym also occurs in the *Targum Neophyti* itself.

<sup>2167</sup> Díez Macho, 1968, I, p. 521, n. 6 [cf. the Aramaic text p. 55: skinai - p(e)nt(a)skinai]; cf. Klein, 1980, p. 95, n. 30.

<sup>2168</sup> Dalman, 1924, p. 46-47; Noordeggraaf, 1938, p. 282; Alexander, 1974, p. 156 in Le Déaut, 1978, I, p. 139, n. 33; Klein, 1980, p. 95, n. 30; Figueras, 1988, p. 57-58 and n. 9, 1999, p. 212 and 2000, p. 77.227.265; Maher, 1992, p. 48, n. 28.

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In the itinerary of SB XXVI, 16607 (7) Aphnaion is situated between Pelousion and Pentaschoinon. Hierokles (8) locates the town between Gerra and Pentaschoinon. On the Medaba mosaic (9) it seems to be situated at the coast of the Mediterranean, west of Pentaschoinon. Aphnaion was therefore probably situated along the coastal road between Gerra and Pentaschoinon, but absolute distances are not mentioned in the sources. The fact that the SB XXVI, 16607 itinerary (7) apparently replaces the road station of Gerra by that of Aphnaion, might implicate that the latter lies closer to Gerra than to Pentaschoinon<sup>2169</sup>.

Because Aphnaion in the 5th century AD was a bishopric, it must have had a church<sup>2170</sup>. There are no indications of any military presence or fortification<sup>2171</sup>.

### Administrative situation

Aphnaion, which is attested for the first time in 431 AD (1-4)<sup>2172</sup>, has always been reckoned to Egypt in the sources. Most likely it was situated in the Kasiotis region, which started east of Gerra<sup>2173</sup>. In the 6th century AD Hierokles (8) and Georgios of Cyprus (10) - followed by the late *Notitia Alexandrina* (13-15) - place the town in the province Augustamnica I.

In the 7th century AD Sophronios (11) calls Aphnaion a village (κώμη); it is difficult to decide whether this implies that the 5th century bishops were actually resident in a village<sup>2174</sup>, or that the place had lost much of its status.

### Identifications

Aphnaion cannot be identified - for the moment - with any archaeological site along the coast between Mahammediya and el-Uqsor or el-Qels. An identification

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<sup>2169</sup> The fact that Aphnaion and Gerra are mentioned in the same list of the Kalchedon Council (6), cannot be used as an argument for geographical proximity; against Évieux, 1995, p. 34, n. 20.

<sup>2170</sup> Cf. Timm, 1984, I, p. 139, n. 7.

<sup>2171</sup> The statement of Évieux, 1995, p. 33 that the place was fortified, is a mere hypothesis.

<sup>2172</sup> Clédat, 1920, p. 116 incorrectly suggests that the place might have been founded in the 6th century AD by Iustinianus; it is also inapt to consider its foundation the religious work of 'une foule en délire' (Clédat, 1920, p. 118).

<sup>2173</sup> Cf. Jones, 1971, p. 342.492.

<sup>2174</sup> For this problem, cf. Worp, 1994, p. 316-317.

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with Qatia<sup>2175</sup>, Rumani<sup>2176</sup>, Oqtahia<sup>2177</sup> or Qasr Ghet<sup>2178</sup> has been proposed, but these places lie too far south to come into account for a location along the coastal road.

Clédat, locating Pentaschoinon (as well as Gerra and Skenai) at Mahammediya, looks for Aphnaion at the site of el-Kenisa, some 1,5 km west of Mahammediya<sup>2179</sup>. Since, however, Mahammediya is to be identified only with Gerra, not with Pentaschoinon, and since Aphnaion most likely lies east of Gerra, the identification of Aphnaion and el-Kenisa cannot be accepted. Clédat stresses that Aphnaion had a bishop, while Pentaschoinon did not, and he so considered Aphnaion a Christian settlement outside the walls of Pentaschoinon. Nothing is known, however, about the distance between Aphnaion and Pentaschoinon, or about the ecclesiastical arrangement of the latter.

The identification of Aphnaion with T3 ḥnm.t Ḥpn ('The well Ḥpn'), which lies next to the small fortress named T3 mktr n (Mn-m3' .t-R') ('The migdol of Men-ma'at-Ra') on the Karnak relief of Sethos I, is gratuitous and only based upon a vague phonetic similarity<sup>2180</sup>.

There is also a certain phonetic resemblance between the names Aphnaion and Daphnai, but there is no reason to identify both places, as some scholars do<sup>2181</sup>. Daphnai is situated southeast of Pelousion at the Pelousiac branch in the eastern Delta, while Aphnaion lies at the Mediterranean between Gerra and Pentaschoinon. The position of Τ[α]φνάειν in the itinerary of SB XXVI, 16607 (7) makes it clear that

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<sup>2175</sup> Abel, 1940, p. 61-62; Alt, 1943, p. 65.68; Scharff, 1943, p. 151-152; TAVO B VI 15, 1983; Évieux, 1995, p. 34; cf. Schlott-Schwab, 1981, p. 94; Timm, 1984, I, p. 138; Figueras, 1988, p. 58, n. 12; Donner, 1992, p. 78 (in doubt). See s.v. Qatia.

<sup>2176</sup> Figueras, 1987, map p. 766; 1988, p. 58, n. 12; 1999, p. 212; 2000, p. 163.244. See s.v. Rumani.

<sup>2177</sup> Évieux, 1995, p. 34 and the maps p. 419.420. See s.v. Oqtahia.

<sup>2178</sup> Carrez-Maratray, 2000a, p. 16.

<sup>2179</sup> Clédat, 1920, p. 116-119 and 1923b, p. 166; followed tentatively by Donner, 1992, p. 78 and Alliata, 1999, p. 94 (in doubt) and by Tsafirir, 1994, p. 64, who locates Aphnaion east of Gerra, but does apparently not realise that el-Kenisa lies west of Mahammediya (Gerra); rightly rejected by Abel, 1940, p. 62; cf. Timm, 1984, I, p. 138 and p. 139, n. 7; Figueras, 1988, p. 58, n. 12 and 2000, p. 162-163. See s.v. el-Kenisa.

<sup>2180</sup> Karnak, 1986, IV, p. 21-22 (F), now lost (cf. Gauthier, 1927, IV, p. 20.202); in P.Anastasi I, 27, 4 (4) the corresponding name seems to be Ḥtyn. For the identification with Aphnaion, cf. Abel, 1940, p. 61; Alt, 1943, p. 65 and n. 2; Scharff, 1943, p. 151-152 (cf. Schlott-Schwab, 1981, p. 94); Timm, 1984, I, p. 139, n. 3.

<sup>2181</sup> Vialart, 1641 in Honigmann, 1961, p. 156, n. 29; Wesseling, 1735 and Arrowsmith, 1842 in Noordegraaf, 1938, p. 281-282 and the map p. 297; Le Quien, 1740, II, col. 547-548 (tentatively); d'Anville, 1766, p. 96; Janin, R., s.v. Aphneum, in DHGE, III, 1924, col. 935; Thomsen, 1942, p. 124.128; the maps Di Berardino, 1988, p. 92.96; rightly rejected by Abel, 1940, p. 62 and Alt, 1943, p. 64-65; cf. Figueras, 1988, p. 58, n. 12.



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the name is no variant spelling for Daphnai, and that the 'T' probably stands for the article.

Alt considers Daphnai and the city of Taphnas (Tahpanhes) two different places, identifying Aphnaion only with Taphnas<sup>2182</sup>. In the Rabbinic *Pesikta rabbati* - in a passage about the five Egyptian cities that will speak the language of Canaan - Tahpanhes is identified with הוֹפֵינוֹס ([hofj(a)n(a)s], 'Hofeinos', 'Hupianas'), which Alt considers a deformation of הַפְּנִיָּס [h(a)fnjs], a name he links with Aphnaion<sup>2183</sup>. He also locates in Aphnaion the 4th century bishop Eulogios of Taphnas, mentioned in a Coptic *Vita Athanasii*<sup>2184</sup>. Even without discussing in detail the unlikely distinction between Daphnai and Taphnas, Alt's arguments to link Taphnas and Aphnaion are not convincingly based upon a hypothetical correction for the *Pesikta rabbati*<sup>2185</sup>, and in the case of bishop Eulogios he cannot sufficiently explain why the name Taphnas is given instead of the expected Aphnaion.

Because of the spelling 'Aphthaion' in Georgios (10) instead of 'Aphnaion', a link has been made with the Aphthites nome situated in the Egyptian Delta by Herodotos, and with the city of Aphthaia, mentioned by Stephanos and some other grammarians without any geographical context. There are, however, no sufficient arguments to allow an identification of these toponyms with the Aphnaion of the northern Sinai<sup>2186</sup>.

### Orthographic variants

Most sources give the neuter form Aphnaion. The masculine 'Ophaios' / 'Phnaios' in the Coptic acts of the Ephesos Council is probably a reinterpretation of the genitive Ἀφναίου in the Greek lists (1)<sup>2187</sup>. The form Τ[α]φνάειν in SB XXVI,

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<sup>2182</sup> Alt, 1943, p. 66-68; cf. Timm, 1984, II, p. 552.

<sup>2183</sup> *Pesikta rabbati*, 17, 4 (translated in Braude, 1968, I, p. 367); cf. Neubauer, 1868, p. 409 and n. 3-5; Alt, 1943, p. 68 and n. 2; Timm, 1984, I, p. 138.

<sup>2184</sup> Rossi, 1885, p. 103.163; cf. Alt, 1943, p. 68 and n. 3; Timm, 1984, I, p. 139, n. 1 and II, p. 553. The map TAVO B VI 15, 1983 (cf. TAVO Register, 1994, p. 105.1646) places Aphnaion at Qatia, but the bishopric Taphnas somewhat southwest of Gerra (in the neighbourhood of Rumani?), clearly not identical with Daphnai in the Delta; such a position for Taphnas - distinguished from both Aphnaion and Daphnai - is unacceptable.

<sup>2185</sup> Cf. Timm, 1984, I, p. 138.

<sup>2186</sup> See s.v. Aphthaia / Aphthites.

<sup>2187</sup> Cf. Timm, 1984, I, p. 139, n. 2. Munier, 1943, p. 17.20.22, however, takes the male 'Aphnaios' to be the common form.

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16607 (7) possibly stands for τ(ὸ) Ἀφνᾶι(ο)ν<sup>2188</sup>. Proper names ending in -αῖος are normally properispomena<sup>2189</sup>, but here the accentuation seems to be Ἀφνᾶιον<sup>2190</sup>. It is not clear how the switch 'Aphnaion' / 'Aphthaion' in Georgios (10) or the form 'Aphis' in the *Notitia Alexandrina* (15) are to be explained<sup>2191</sup>.

### Etymology

The etymology of Aphnaion is not clear, but because of the Coptic transliteration it seems to be a Greek name. It is unacceptable, however, to consider it the transcription of the Egyptian toponym Ḥpn already discussed. Clédat and Abel look for a link between Aphnaion and the Greek adjective ἀφνειός, 'rich', translating the toponym as 'la riche, l'opulente' or 'riche en ressources pour vivre'<sup>2192</sup>, but this is a mere hypothesis. There is most likely no link with the (Greek?) personal name Aphnas, attested in two Greek papyri and possibly in an inscription<sup>2193</sup>.

### Analysis of the sources

On the Council of Ephesos held in 431 AD Hierax (also spelled Hierakys, Hierakis, Hierakios) was bishop of Aphnaion<sup>2194</sup>:

<sup>2188</sup> Cf. Alt, 1943, p. 64-65, n. 3.

<sup>2189</sup> E.g. the name Πτολεμαῖος; cf. Clarysse, 1997, p. 181.

<sup>2190</sup> Calderini, 1966, I 2, p. 282-284 inconsequently uses the accentuation Ἀφναῖον, Ἀφναίον and Ἀφνᾶιον next to each other; Gauthier, 1935, p. 12-13 accentuates both Ἀφναῖον and Ἀφνᾶιον.

<sup>2191</sup> For Le Quien, 1740, II, col. 547-548 Aphthaion is just the mistake of a scribe, which indeed seems the most plausible solution. Abel, 1940, p. 62 thinks that the spelling Aphthaion is influenced by the toponym Aphthites (cf. Timm, 1984, I, p. 139, n. 5), but there are no reasons to assume that Georgios knew that name.

<sup>2192</sup> Clédat, 1920, p. 119; Abel, 1940, p. 62. For the toponyms Aphneion in Asia Minor, cf. Hirschfeld, Gustav, s.v. Aphnitis, in RE, I 2, 1894, col. 2722; Pape, 1911, p. 181.

<sup>2193</sup> P.Giss.Univ. III, 26, 26 [Ἀφνᾶιον] (origin unknown; 3rd century BC); P.Ryl. II, 220, p. 362 [Ἀφνᾶς] (Thmouis; ca. 134-138); Baillet, 1926, p. 52, no. 211, 1 [Ἀφναεῖ(?) ] (graffito from Thebes; date unknown).

<sup>2194</sup> *Concilium universale Ephesenum*, 33, 145; 62, 139 (Schwartz, 1927, 1, 1, 2, p. 7.60); 73, 141; 79, 144 (Schwartz, 1929, 1, 1, 7, p. 88.115); see also 95, 74 (Schwartz, 1927, 1, 1, 3, p. 35); Latin version: 11, 1, 146; 19, 11, 141 (Schwartz, 1925-1926, 1, 2, p. 30.73); 24, 1, 144; 46, 43, 146 (Schwartz, 1929, 1, 3, p. 56.138); 38, 1, 140; 38, 84, 140 (Schwartz, 1924-1925, 1, 5, 1, p. 88.114); *Concilium universale Chalcedonense*, 911, 145 (Schwartz, 1935, 2, 3, 1, p. 202); cf. Gams, 1873, p. 461; Janin, R., s.v. Aphneum, in DHGE, III, 1924, col. 935. Gelzer, 1890, p. 111, Noordegraaf, 1938, p. 281 and Calderini, 1966, I 2, p. 284 accentuate Ἀφναῖοῦ. Fedalto, 1988, p. 603 specifies that Hierax appeared in Ephesos at 22 June 431 AD. The bishop's name is also rendered by modern scholars as Hieraces. Although the name Hierax is quite common in the corpus of Isidoros of Pelousion, a bishop Hierax is not mentioned in his letters; cf. Évieux, 1995, p. 68.314 (with the unacceptable explanation that Isidoros' monastery was so close to Aphnaion that it was not necessary for Isidoros to write him a letter).

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(1, 3) Ἱέρακος (gen.) Ἀφναίου (33, 145; 73, 141) - Hierace Aphnaiu (11, 1, 146) - Hierace Aphnaei (24, 1, 144) - Hieraci Aphnau (38, 1, 140) - (1a) Ieracyo Afnaiensi (911, 145)  
'Hierax of Aphnaion'

(2) Ἱερακὺς ἐπίσκοπος τῆς Ἀφναίων (62, 139)  
'Hierakys bishop of the city of Aphnaion'

(4) Ἱέρακις ἐπίσκοπος Ἀφναίου (79, 144) - Ieracis episcopus Aphnaiu{s} (19, 11, 141) - Ieracis episcopus Aphnaiti (46, 43, 146) - Ieracis episcopus Aphau (38, 84, 140).  
'Hierakis bishop of Aphnaion'

In the Coptic lists of the Council (1) the Greek name for the town, apparently considered masculine, is transliterated rather unsuccessfully into Coptic<sup>2195</sup>:

Ἱερακιὸς ἐπίσκοπος Ἰοφναίου ('Hierakios the bishop of Ophaios') - Ἱερακος Ἰφναίου ('Hierakos in Phnaios')

The same bishop Hierax of Aphnaion appeared on the Council of Chalcedon held in 451 AD<sup>2196</sup>:

(5) Ἱέρακος (gen.) Ἀφναίου (3, 140) - Hieracy Afnaii (3, 140)  
'Hierax of Aphnaion'

(6) Ἱέρακις ἐπίσκοπος Ἀφναίων (25, 1) - Hieracus episcopus Afnaitorum (25, 1)  
'Hierakis bishop of the people of Aphnaion'

The papyrus SB XXVI, 16607 (7), probably written in the 5th century AD, contains an itinerary of places in Egypt, Palestine and Asia Minor. Τ[α]φνάειν (Aphnaion) is mentioned between Πελουσίου (Pelousion) in the west and Πεντάσκαλος (Pentaschoinon) in the east<sup>2197</sup>.

Hierokles (8) ca. 527/528 AD mentions Aphnaion (Ἀφνάιον) between Pentaschoinon and Gerra as one of the thirteen towns lying in the ἐπαρχία Αὐγούστα α' (province Augustamnica I)<sup>2198</sup>.

On the Madaba mosaic (9), made somewhere in the middle of the 6th century AD, τὸ Ἀφ[ ] is shown west of τὸ Πεντάσχο[ι]νον (Pentaschoinon), and beneath

<sup>2195</sup> Cf. Bouriant, 1892, p. 71; Kraatz, 1904, p. 65; Gerland, 1936, p. 96, no. 279; Munier, 1943, p. 17 (mixing up the two expressions); Muysier, 1946, p. 146; Timm, 1984, I, p. 137-139 (with the form Ἰοφναίου a mistake for Ἰοφναίου?).

<sup>2196</sup> *Concilium universale Chalcedonense*, 3, 140 (Gesta Chalcedone) (Schwartz, 1933, 2, 1, 1, p. 59 and Schwartz, 1935, 2, 3, 1, p. 33); 25, 1 [cf. 20] (Libellus episcoporum Aegyptiorum) (Schwartz, 1933, 2, 1, 2, p. 110 and 1936, 2, 3, 2, p. 114-115). Hierax was present during the first session at 8 October 451 AD and during the fourth session at 17 October (cf. Fedalto, 1988, p. 603).

<sup>2197</sup> SB XXVI, 16607 (P.von Scherling G110), 7-9; cf. Noordeggraaf, 1938, p. 274. Τ[α]φνάειν in Thomsen, 1942, p. 124 (cf. Alt, 1943, p. 64, n. 2) and Τ[α]φναίειν in Timm, 1984, II, p. 552 are mistakes. Because also the form 'Phnaios' is attested in Coptic sources (1), the possibility cannot be excluded that e.g. τ[ὸ] φνάειν is to be restored.

<sup>2198</sup> Hierokles, 727, 4 (Honigmann, 1939a, p. 46). Le Quien, 1740, II, col. 547-548 accentuates Ἀφναίων; Clédat, 1920, p. 116, Schwartz, 1950, p. 70 and O'Callaghan, R. T., s.v. Madaba, in DB, Suppl. V, 26, 1953, col. 696 read Ἀφναίου. Timm, 1984, I, p. 138 incorrectly gives Ἀφναίου. 'Aphthaion' in Lloyd, 1988, III, p. 191 is a mistake.

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the name the left part of a town is still preserved; then the mosaic breaks of, continuing only further west with the Pelousiac branch and the city of Pelousion at its western bank. From the general position on the mosaic it is clear that the town of Aphnaion is meant, but the exact restorations differ and the spelling τὸ Ἀφ[νάιον] is a mere hypothesis<sup>2199</sup>. The use of the article for both Pentaschoinon and Aphnaion is remarkable.

Georgios of Cyprus (10) ca. 591-603 AD mentions Aphnaion (Ἀφθαίον) in the ἐπαρχία Αὐγουσταμνικῆς (province Augustamnica, sc. I) belonging to the dioikesis of Egypt. The place is listed without much geographical order between Kasion and Hephaistos<sup>2200</sup>.

Sophronios (11), who wrote about 610-620 AD, describes how a woman, originating from the Egyptian village Aphnaion and called Anastous by her relatives, went to the grave of Kyros and Ioannes, who died in Alexandria as martyrs under Diocletianus, to get cured of a mysterious disease<sup>2201</sup>:

Ἀφναίτις δέ τις γυνή, κώμης τοῦτο τῶν κατ' Αἴγυπτον ὄνομα, ὅθεν αὕτη γεγένητο (Ἀναστοῦν αὐτὴν ἐκάλουν οἱ γνώριμοι), πάθει παραπλησίῳ δουλεύουσα ... πρὸς τοὺς μάρτυρας ἔρχεται ...

<sup>2199</sup> Medaba mosaic (IGLS XXI 2, 153), 131 (τὸ Ἀφ[νάιον]) (cf. Alliata, 1999, p. 94); cf. Lagrange, 1897, p. 179 (A.....) and p. 180 (TO A...) (cf. Clédat, 1920, p. 116 and 1923b, p. 186); Jacoby, 1905, p. 43 (TO A.....); Abel, 1940, p. 61 (TO ΑΦ...) (cf. Jones, 1971, p. 492, n. 61); Alt, 1943, p. 64 (τὸ Ἀφ.....); O'Callaghan, R. T., s.v. Madaba, in DB, Suppl. V, 26, 1953, col. 696 (TO ΑΦναιον); Avi-Yonah, 1954, p. 75 (τὸ Ἀφθαιον) (cf. Wilkinson, 1977, map 12b); Oren, 1982a, p. 23 (Aph[neion (sic)]); Donner, 1983, p. 86 (TOΑΦ[ΘΑΙΟΝ]); Timm, 1984, I, p. 138 (τὸ Ἀφ[νάιον?]); Donner, 1992, p. 78 [TO Α[ΦΝΑΙΟΝ]]; IGLS also mentions the earlier readings τὸ Αρφ[ ] and τὸ Αρ[ ]. The photos published clearly show the left half of a round letter after the initial 'A', so I prefer to follow the reading of Abel, Alt, O'Callaghan and Timm.

<sup>2200</sup> Georgios of Cyprus, 695 (Honigmann, 1939a, p. 58). The edition of Gelzer, followed by Honigmann, accentuates Ἀφθαίον, but also Ἀφθάιον - which seems to be the more correct form - occurs in another manuscript tradition, which is followed by Gelzer, 1890, p. 111 (in contradiction with his own text p. 36), Jacoby, 1905, p. 43, Abel, 1940, p. 62, Alt, 1943, p. 64, n. 3, Calderini, 1966, I 2, p. 282.284 and Martin, 1996, p. 84, n. 224. Le Quien, 1740, II, col. 547-548 accentuates Ἀφθαίον; Timm, 1984, I, p. 137.138 incorrectly gives Ἀφθαίου. Jacoby, 1905, p. 43, O'Callaghan, R. T., s.v. Madaba, in DB, Suppl. V, 26, 1953, col. 696 and Fedalto, 1988, p. 603 erroneously consider the work of Georgios and its previous edition in Notitia episcopatum, I (Parthey, 1866) as two different works. The list of Georgios has been copied as a list of bishoprics [ὁ Ἀφθαίου] in Notitia episcopatum, B, 1, 8 (Benešević, 1927, p. 69) (16).

<sup>2201</sup> Sophronios, *Miracula sanctorum Cyri et Ioannis*, 48 (Migne, PG 87, 3, 1860, col. 3604). Cf. the Latin translation of Anastasius Bibliothecarius, *Miracula sanctorum Cyri et Ioannis*, 48 (Migne, PG 87, 3, 1860, col. 3603) (12): *Aphantis autem quaedam mulier, castelli est hoc apud Aegyptum nomen, unde haec fuerat, Anastun hanc noti vocabant, quae passioni simili serviens, ...* ('A woman from Aphaion - this is the name of the village in Egypt from where she came (her relatives called her Anastus) - who suffered from a similar disease, ...'). I did not find a parallel for the personal name Anastous.

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'A woman from Aphnaion - this is the name of the village in Egypt from where she came (her relatives called her Anastous) - suffered from a similar disease, ... she went to the martyrs, ...' 'Aphnaitis' is the female ethnic based upon the name of an Egyptian village. There is no further geographical or chronological information, but - by the lack of any other candidate - most likely Aphnaion in the northern Sinai is referred to<sup>2202</sup>. This identification can be corroborated by the fact that also an inhabitant of Pelousion visited the saints at another occasion<sup>2203</sup>. One can object that the designation κώμη, 'village', is remarkable for a place that was a bishopric at least two centuries earlier, but it is always possible that a bishop could be resident in what was technically a village, and that the Aphnaion of the 5th century has to be considered a village. Neither can the possibility be ruled out that the place had lost its status and had become a village by the early 7th century AD.

The Greek *Notitia Alexandrina* (13-15), found on a map of 1722 AD, is based upon an alphabetically arranged Latin bishops' list of 1661 AD, which goes back on a not alphabetical list of 1641 AD. The bishopric Ἀφείς (Aphnaeum ... Aphnaeitarum Episcopus ... [1641] - Aphnaeitanus [1661]) is situated in the province Augustamnica I<sup>2204</sup>.

## APHTHAIA - APHTHITES

### Topographical situation

The Aphthites is mentioned by Herodotos (1) in a list of eastern and central Delta nomes without much geographical order. It is impossible to say anything with certainty about its position. Any location at the eastern border or in the northern Sinai region would only be a guess, especially because it is not even clear whether or how this border area was incorporated in the nome division of the 5th century BC.

Stephanos (2) probably quotes Herodotos (1), when he mentions the Aphthites at the end of the lemma Aphthaia. The geographical information about the latter

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<sup>2202</sup> Calderini, 1966, I 2, p. 284 does not offer an identification for the village.

<sup>2203</sup> Cf. Sophronios, *Miracula Cyri et Ioannis*, 47 (Migne, PG 87, 3, 1860, col. 3600).

<sup>2204</sup> *Notitia Alexandrina*, 30 (Honigmann, 1961, p. 156-157); cf. Gelzer, 1893b, p. 25; Clédat, 1920, p. 116; Gauthier, 1935, p. 12-13 and pl. 2; Noordegraaf, 1938, p. 281; Munier, 1943, p. 60; Schwartz, 1950, p. 70; Timm, 1984, I, p. 138. Aphis is incorrectly located in 'Marmarica prima' by Calderini, 1966, I 2, p. 282 (cf. p. 283).

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toponym has been lost, so one cannot even be certain that it belonged to Egypt. Since the ethnic Aphthites seems to be based on the (not attested) toponym \*Aphthis<sup>2205</sup>, and not on Aphthaia, there is no reason to look for any specific links between the nome and this place<sup>2206</sup>.

### Administrative situation

The Aphthites was a nome of Lower Egypt in the 5th century BC. Nothing is known about the toponym Aphthaia.

### Identifications

Both the Aphthites and Aphthaia have been linked with the city of Aphnaion in the northern Sinai, attested only from the 5th century AD on and named 'Aphthaion' by Georgios of Cyprus<sup>2207</sup>. There is no reason to assume that the spelling of Georgios is more than a mere mistake for 'Aphnaion', or that the form was influenced by the names Aphthites or Aphthaia. Georgios' accentuation 'Αφθαίον (or 'Αφθαίον) neither matches the grammatical rule of Herodianos (3) and Theognostos (4) that Aphthaia is to be accentuated proparoxytonon. **The few things that are known, therefore, about the Aphthites and Aphthaia, do not allow an identification with Aphnaion.**

A lot of other identifications have been proposed for the Aphthites, none of them decisive. Sicard locates the Aphthites in the Wadi Tumilat<sup>2208</sup>. Wiedemann

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<sup>2205</sup> Cf. Smith, Philip, s.v. Aphthites nomos, in Smith, 1854, I, p. 158; Wiedemann, 1890, p. 576; Sourdille, 1910a, p. 97-98; Spiegelberg, 1910, p. 19.79; Daressy, 1931b, p. 639; Ball, 1942, p. 17.177; Schwartz, 1950, p. 70. The suggested accentuation differs: 'Αφθίς (Meineke, 1849, p. 149; Pape, 1911, p. 180; Gauthier, 1935, p. 12); 'Αφθίς (Gauthier, 1927, IV, p. 45; Calderini, 1966, I 2, p. 282-283); the former accentuation is to be preferred, if one follows the principles of Clarysse, 1997, p. 180.182. 'Aphtis, Aphtite' in Schwartz, 1950, p. 70 is a mistake.

<sup>2206</sup> Against Pape, 1911, p. 180.

<sup>2207</sup> Cf. Jessen, Otto, s.v. Aphthaia, in RE, I 2, 1894, col. 2796; Pietschmann, Richard, s.v. Aphthaion and s.v. 'Αφθίτης νομός, in RE, I 2, 1894, col. 2796; Jacoby, 1905, p. 43; Hommel, 1926, p. 965; Gauthier, 1935, p. 12-13 and pl. 2; Jones, 1937(1), p. 482, n. 62; Ball, 1942, p. 177.190 (p. 17 inconsequently locating the Aphthites in the northern part of the Delta); Schwartz, 1950, p. 70; O'Callaghan, R. T., s.v. Madaba, in DB, Suppl. V, 26, 1953, col. 696; Timm, 1984, I, p. 138.139; Lloyd, 1988, III, p. 191 (for whom the Aphthites corresponds with the 14th nome of Lower Egypt); cf. Calderini, 1966, I 2, p. 282-283; rightly rejected by Abel, 1940, p. 62 and Jones, 1971, p. 492, n. 61. See s.v. Aphnaion.

<sup>2208</sup> Sicard, 1982 [= 1722], III, p. 168 (cf. p. 177). The name 'Phtenoti N(omos)' in Sicard, 1982 [= 1722], III, p. 180 is no better reading for Aphthites, as the editors suggest, but the name most likely refers to the 'Phthenetou' or 'Ptenethus' nome in the Delta (cf. Honigmann, 1961, p. 154-155).

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identifies the Aphthites with the 11th nome of Lower Egypt and links it with the Egyptian toponym Šdn, which he locates at the Pelousiac branch<sup>2209</sup>. Daressy corrects Ἀφθίτης into <Σ>αφθίτης, an unparalleled name, which he links with Saft el-Henna in the eastern Delta, the capital of the 20th nome of Lower Egypt<sup>2210</sup>. Kees tentatively identifies Aphthites and Sethroites<sup>2211</sup>.

In the demotic stories 'The battle for the prebend of Amon of Thebes' and 'The battle for the armour of prince Inaros', both belonging to the 'cycle' of Petoubastis, which apparently describes the Egypt of the 7th century BC, the toponym T3-ḥw.t, 'The temple' or 'The castle', often occurs together with the cities of Tanis, Mendes and Sebennytes<sup>2212</sup>. Because in the list of Herodotos (1) those three nomes are mentioned together, Spiegelberg thinks that also T3-ḥw.t can be found there and he identifies the place with the capital of the Aphthites, which immediately precedes the three nomes<sup>2213</sup>. This argument, however, is hardly valuable and T3-ḥw.t has also been identified with other places<sup>2214</sup>.

Schwartz develops a similar reasoning, linking the Tanites, Mendesios and Sebennytes with the three homonymous branches of the Nile and so locating the Aphthites at the fourth, Phatnitic branch<sup>2215</sup>. This is again hardly acceptable.

Because the name Aphthites is sometimes linked with the god Ptah - Hephaistos in Greek sources -, Berg tentatively identifies the city of \*Aphthis with Hephaistos in the eastern Delta<sup>2216</sup>, but because the latter place is only attested from the 5th century AD on, an identification is not very likely.

### Etymology

<sup>2209</sup> Wiedemann, 1890, p. 576; cf. Gauthier, 1928, V, p. 151 (Šdn) and 1935, p. 12.

<sup>2210</sup> Daressy, 1931b, p. 639 with the map and the map p. 633; followed by Yoyotte, 1963, p. 107, n. 4; Helck, 1974, p. 30.198 with p. 210, fig. 11 and s. v. Gaue, in LÄ, II, 1977, col. 401 and col. 408, n. 264; Bietak, 1975, fig. 38-39; Gomaà, Farouk, s.v. Saft el-Henna, in LÄ, V, 1984, col. 351 and n. 2; cf. Calderini, 1966, I 2, p. 283; rejected by Gauthier, 1935, p. 13 and Lloyd, 1988, III, p. 192.

<sup>2211</sup> Kees, Hermann, s.v. Tanis 1, in RE, IV A 2, 1932, col. 2176; Kees, 1944, p. 171-172.176; cf. Gauthier, 1935, p. 13.

<sup>2212</sup> P.Spiegel. 4, 10-11 (Spiegelberg, 1910, p. 18-19); P.Krall, 10, 12; 11, 28; 12, 15-16.22-23; 14, 14-15.24-25; 22, 10-11 (Bresciani, 1964, p. 52-53.58-59.62-63.68-71.98-99); cf. Depauw, 1997, p. 88-89.

<sup>2213</sup> Spiegelberg, 1910, p. 18, n. 1 and p. 84\*; followed by Gauthier, 1927, IV, p. 45 and 1929, VI, p. 28-29 (cf. 1935, p. 12); Kees, Hermann, s.v. Tanis 1, in RE, IV A 2, 1932, col. 2176-2177; Kees, 1944, p. 171-172; Schwartz, 1950, p. 70; cf. Calderini, 1966, I 2, p. 283.

<sup>2214</sup> Bresciani, 1964, p. 137 (Thmouis); Lloyd, 1988, III, p. 192 (<N3y>-t3-ḥw.t, Natho).

<sup>2215</sup> Schwartz, 1950, p. 70.

<sup>2216</sup> Berg, 1973, p. 23.48; see also § Etymology.

## 7. The coastal area between Kasion and Pelousion

Aphthites might reflect an Egyptian toponym, but its etymology is not clear. It has been suggested that the name refers to the god Ptah<sup>2217</sup>, but this is only a hypothesis. There are probably no links with the personal name Aphthaios (Aphthais), which possibly renders the Egyptian Iḥ-iw.f-dy<sup>2218</sup>.

Aphthaia, which is also an epiclesis of the Greek goddess Hekate (2), is probably a Greek name.

### Analysis of the sources

Herodotos (1) mentions the nomes where Kalasiries soldiers are stationed<sup>2219</sup>:

Καλασιρίων δὲ οἶδε ἄλλοι νομοὶ εἰσι· Θεβαῖος, Βουβαστίτης, Ἀφθίτης, Τανίτης, Μενδήσιος, Σεβεννύτης, Ἀθριβίτης, Φαρβαιθίτης, Θμουίτης, Ὀνουφίτης, Ἀνύτιος, Μυεκφορίτης.

'The Kalasiries for their part are of the following nomes: the Thebaios, the Boubastites, the Aphthites, the Tanites, the Mendesios, the Sebennytes, the Athribites, the Pharbaitites, the Thmouites, the Onouphites, the Anytios, the Myekphorites.'

Except for the Thebaios, only nomes in the eastern and central Delta seem to be listed. The Boubastites, Tanites, Mendesios, Sebennytes, Athribites and Pharbaitites are well-known, but the identification of the Aphthites, Thmouites, Onouphites, Anytios and Myekphorites is problematic<sup>2220</sup>. As the list does not seem to be ordered geographically, it is impossible to say anything for certain about the position of the Aphthites nome.

This passage of Herodotos is apparently referred to by Stephanos of Byzantion (2)<sup>2221</sup>:

Ἀφθαῖα, ... καὶ Ἀφθαῖα ἢ Ἑκάτη. ὁ Τεχνικὸς ἐνδεκάτῳ. δύναται καὶ Ἀφθαῖος εἶναι. ἔστι καὶ Ἀφθίτης νομὸς Αἰγύπτου.

'Aphthaia, ... and Aphthaia Hekate. The Technician in his eleventh book. It can also be Aphthaios. There is also Aphthites, a nome in Egypt.'

<sup>2217</sup> Smith, Philip, s.v. Aphthites nomos, in Smith, 1854, I, p. 158 [see also Pape, 1911, p. 180: Ἀφθᾶς = Φθᾶς]; see also § Identifications.

<sup>2218</sup> Apparently the same man Aphthaios is attested four times in the bilinguals P.Lille dem. I, 19, 2 (Sottas, 1921, p. 40) + SB III, 6317, 1 [gen.: Ἀφθαίου] and P.Sorbonne inv. 2301, 2 (de Cenival, 1967, p. 100-101) + SB X, 10452, 1 [gen.: Ἀφθαίου] (both Arsinoites, 22 June / 21 July 251 BC); for the demotic name, cf. Sottas, 1921, p. 40 (ḥ<sup>c</sup>-iw=f-dy-s); de Cenival, 1967, p. 101-102, n. b and p. 104, n. ad 1 (ḥ<sup>c</sup>=f-dy, 'Il se tient (debout) ici' - 'Il est présent'); DNB, I 2, 1981, p. 81 (iḥ-i.ir-dy-s (?), 'Der Mond ist es, der ihn gegeben hat'); DBL, 2005, p. 253 (Iḥ-iw.f-dy).

<sup>2219</sup> Herodotos, 2, 166, 1.

<sup>2220</sup> Cf. Wiedemann, 1890, p. 576-577; Gauthier, 1935, p. 1-28; Ball, 1942, p. 16; Helck, 1974, p. 30; Lloyd, 1988, III, p. 191-195.

<sup>2221</sup> Stephanos of Byzantion, *Ethnica*, s.v. Ἀφθαῖα (Meineke, 1849, p. 149); Meineke suggests the following emendation: Ἀφθαῖα, [πόλις Αἰγύπτου. τὸ ἐθνικὸν Ἀφθαῖος,] καὶ Ἀφθαῖα ... δύναται καὶ Ἀφθαῖαῖος ('Aphaia, [a city in Egypt. The ethnic Aphtaios,] and Aphthaia ... It can also be Aphtaiaios'); Jacoby, 1905, p. 43 reads Ἀφθαῖα καὶ Ἀφθαῖα, ἢ Ἑκάτη. ὁ Τεχνικὸς δωκαίδεκάτῳ [sic?] ('Aphthaia and Aphthaia Hekate. The Technician in his twelfth book').



## 7. The coastal area between Kasion and Pelousion

At the beginning of the lemma some words seem to have been lost in a lacuna. Every further information about the toponym Aphthaia or the epiclesis Aphthaia<sup>2222</sup> is lacking. Meineke supposes that Aphthaia is the name of an Egyptian city, which gave its name to the Egyptian nome Aphthites. The expression 'There is also Aphthites, a nome in Egypt', however, gives the impression that the preceding Aphthaia has nothing to do with Egypt, and that the Aphthites is only added because of the phonetic similarity.

For Aphthaia Stephanos quoted the work of Herodianos 'the Technician' (3), but the lemma about the accentuation of this name - as given in the edition in Lentz - is taken from Stephanos' text and does not offer an independent testimony for the name Aphthaia, nor for its location in Egypt<sup>2223</sup>:

τὰ εἰς 'α' συνεσταλμένοι μονογενῆ ὑπὲρ δύο συλλαβὰς παραλήγοντα τῇ 'αι' διφθόγγῳ προπαροξύνεται, Νίκαια ... Ἐφθαία πόλις Αἰγύπτου, Ἐφθαία δὲ ἡ Ἐκάτη, ...  
'The words with only one gender, with the 'a' pronounced short, with more than two syllables and with the diphthong 'ai' in the penultimate syllable, are proparoxytonon, (such as) Nikaia, ... Aphthaia a city in Egypt, Aphthaia Hekate, ...'

The same toponym Aphthaia probably occurs in the *Canones* of the grammarian Theognostos (4), who also comments on the accentuation and pronunciation of the word<sup>2224</sup>:

τὰ διὰ τοῦ 'αἰα' ὑπὲρ δύο συλλαβὰς προπαροξύτονα, ἐπὶ πόλεων ἢ τόπων τιθέμενα, διὰ τῆς 'αι' διφθόγγου γράφονται· οἷον, Νίκαια· ... Ἐφθαία· ...  
'The words on '-aia' with more than two syllables and proparoxytonon, when they refer to cities or places, are written with the diphthong 'ai'; like Nikaia; ... Aphthaia; ...'

According to P.Oxy. IV, 709, which is palaeographically dated about 50 AD, the praefectus Aegypti on the annual conventus in Pelousion deals with the nomes Tanites, Sethroites and Arabia, and most scholars look for the name of a fourth nome in the damaged word [..]αν<sup>2225</sup>:

3 [ὁ ἡγεμῶν τὸν ἀνάπλου ποιήσεται καὶ  
[πρῶτον?] εἰς Πηλούσιον ἀπελθὼν διαλο-  
5 [γίσηται] Τανίτην Σεθροίτην Ἀραβίαν  
6 [..]αν ἐν Μέμφει γενόμενος ...

'the praefectus sets sail and [first?] goes to Pelousion and holds the conventus for the Tanites, the Sethroites, the nome Arabia [ ] arriving in Memphis ...'

<sup>2222</sup> Cf. Jessen, Otto, s.v. Aphthaia, in RE, I 2, 1894, col. 2796: Aphthaia (Ἐφθαία) is an epiclesis of Hekate, created after her cult in Aphthaia (Ἐφθαία).

<sup>2223</sup> Herodianos, *De prosodia catholica*, 11 (Lentz, 1867, I, p. 271-272).

<sup>2224</sup> Theognostos, *Canones*, 617 (Cramer, 1835, II, p. 102-103); cf. the emendation of Meineke, 1849, p. 149, n. ad 10, Lentz, 1867, I, p. 271-273, n. ad 28 and Pape, 1911, p. 180 (with the accentuation Ἐφθαία).

<sup>2225</sup> P.Oxy. IV, 709, 4-6. See the full discussion s.v. Kasiotis.

## 7. The coastal area between Kasion and Pelousion

Jones suggested the supplement [ἸΑφθα]ἰαν, which he considered another name for Herodotos' Aphthites, but Foti Talamanca rightly pointed out that the word is too long to fit the lacuna<sup>2226</sup>.

### GERRA

Modern name: Mahammediya

#### Topographical situation

Gerra lies on the road from Pelousion to Syria, immediately east of the Pelousiac branch and the marshes of Pelousion (5, 17)<sup>2227</sup>. In the sources the absolute distances between Pelousion and Gerra differ: P.Ryl. IV, 627 (14) gives a figure of 10 miles (ca. 15 km), the *Tabula Peutingeriana* (17) has 8 miles (ca. 12 km), while Sozomenos (20) speaks of only some 50 stadia (ca. 9,25 km). Ptolemaios (8) places Gerra roughly halfway between Pelousion and Kasion, at some 20 km from the former. It is difficult to explain the differences - maybe some of the lower figures only refer to the distance between Gerra and the Pelousiac branch? -, but the 10 miles of the papyrus seem to be the most trustworthy distance. Somewhere between Pelousion and Gerra also Chabriou Charax (5) and Skenai ektos Gerrous are to be looked for, but more precise information is lacking. The first settlement east of Gerra is Aphnaion, situated at an unknown distance (23). Further to the east lies Pentaschoinon, probably at some 10 miles (ca. 15 km) east of Gerra (14). The distance between Gerra and Kasion is some 18,5 km according to Ptolemaios (8), and 23 miles (ca. 34,5 km) according to the *Tabula Peutingeriana* (17), which is too low in comparison with the combined figures of 26 miles (ca. 39 km) in the papyrus (14) and of 30 miles (ca. 45 km) in the *Itinerarium Antonini*. Again the (restored) figure based upon the papyrus seems to be the most trustworthy one.

Plinius locates Gerra at the coast (7) and since Theophilos' ship in 403 AD was drifted to Gerra (20), the place was most likely situated quite close to the sea, but

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<sup>2226</sup> Jones, 1937(1), p. 482, n. 62 (otherwise in Jones, 1971(2), p. 314, p. 479, n. 21 and p. 492, n. 61); BL III, 1958, p. 131; Calderini, 1966, I 2, p. 282; Foti Talamanca, 1974, p. 29-30, n. 62; Haensch, 1997, p. 346 and n. 106.

<sup>2227</sup> Vailhé, S., s.v. Gerra, in Catholic encyclopedia, 1909, VI, p. 530 incorrectly locates Gerra north of Pelousion.

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no actual harbour is mentioned in the sources<sup>2228</sup>. The earliest military constructions in Gerra seem to be barracks, probably wattled from reed found in the neighbourhood (29), but it is not clear how these constructions evolved. In the 5th century AD Gerra was a bishopric, so there must have been a church. Other topographical information is lacking.

### Administrative situation

Gerra was situated at the entrance of Egypt (29), so administratively it probably always belonged to that country. From a purely geographical point of view, however, things could be different. Strabon (5), who in some contexts considered the Pelousiac branch Egypt's eastern border, explicitly located Gerra in Phoenicia, and for the Ravennas geographus (27) it was a place in Judaea Palaestina. Ptolemaios (8) calls Gerra a border, but it is not clear whether he meant a political or a geographical border. In the first case he might refer to the position of Gerra at the entrance of Egypt, but then it was a border only for Egypt *stricto sensu*<sup>2229</sup> or at some point in the past, because for Ptolemaios Egypt's real political border seems to lie between Rinokoloura and Raphia. In the second case Gerra would be considered the geographical border with the Kasiotis region<sup>2230</sup>, which starts east of Gerra<sup>2231</sup>, but then it is odd that Ptolemaios only here uses the word 'border' to indicate a division between two regions. For Figueras, finally, Gerra formed an administrative border of the Pelousion region<sup>2232</sup>, but there are few arguments to support this hypothesis.

Clédât thinks that both Pelousion and Gerra belonged to the Sethroites nome<sup>2233</sup>, but there are no indications that the northern Sinai was incorporated in the Egyptian nome system. Hierokles (23) and Georgios (25) - followed by the late *Notitia Alexandrina* (34-36) - explicitly place Gerra in the province Augustamnica I, its situation in Augustamnica II in the late Greek-Coptic-Arab list of bishoprics (32) certainly being a mistake.

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<sup>2228</sup> Against Clédât, 1919a, p. 194; 1923a, p. 91.95.99.159-160; 1923b, p. 163; 1924, p. 37; Oren, 1982a, p. 23 and 1993, p. 1394; Stiernon, D. and L., s.v. Gerra 1, in DHGE, XX, 1984, col. 1045; Figueras, 1988, p. 57; BIA, 1992, VI, p. 28; Figueras, 2000, p. 19.81.194-195.

<sup>2229</sup> Cf. Stark in Müller, 1901, I 2, p. 682; see also Clédât, 1921, p. 171 and 1923a, p. 80.

<sup>2230</sup> Cf. Figueras, 1988, p. 57.

<sup>2231</sup> Cf. Abel, 1940, p. 233; against Jones, 1971, p. 342-343.492, Feissel, 1984, p. 559 and Martin, 1996, p. 39, n. 78 and p. 83-84, who consider Gerra part of the Kasiotis.

<sup>2232</sup> Figueras, 1999, p. 212 and 2000, p. 193.

<sup>2233</sup> Clédât, 1923a, p. 80.

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In the Ptolemaic and Roman period Gerra was a military settlement<sup>2234</sup> and a road station. At the latest in the 5th century AD it had become a city: for Hieronymus (18) it was an 'oppidum' and Sozomenos (20) calls it a small city (πόλις μικρά), which is rendered by Cassiodorus (24) as 'civitas'<sup>2235</sup>. The expression ἄστυ, 'town', which Sozomenos (20) also mentions, does not refer to the administrative situation of Gerra, but is used in a more general sense, indicating that Nilammon lived outside the town.

### Identifications

Gerra has been correctly identified with Anb Diab / Mahammediya from the early 19th century on<sup>2236</sup>. The toponym Gerreh, said to be in use in the 19th century<sup>2237</sup>, is probably based upon a scholarly account and does not represent a real local Arab tradition.

Brugsch states that the Egyptian word 'inb.t' or 'inbw' has the same meaning of 'wall' as the Greek γέρρον or γέρρα, and therefore identifies Gerra with 't3 inb.t' mentioned at the eastern border in the 19th dynasty P.Anastasi V<sup>2238</sup>. Later on also other 'Inbw' are identified with Gerra<sup>2239</sup>. For none of the 'Inbw', however, the identification is conclusive.

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<sup>2234</sup> The function of γεροφύλαξ ('defender of a wickerwork barrier'), which one might expect, is not known for the eastern border region. For the gerophylax at the southern border, cf. Dietze, 1995, p. 171-172.

<sup>2235</sup> Cf. Lallemand, 1964, p. 106; Jones, 1971, p. 343.

<sup>2236</sup> Cf. Description, 1830, XVIII, p. 174 and map 2. See s.v. Anb Diab / el-Qels and s.v. Mahammediya. It is most likely that also Sicard, 1982 [= 1722-1725], I, p. xxv.124 and III, p. 71.180 refers to this site when he mentions the ruins of Gerra; it is not clear, however, why he speaks of 'Gerra jadis Everagé'.

<sup>2237</sup> Barthélemy Saint-Hilaire, 1857, p. 432 (non vidi) quoted in Feissel, 1984, p. 563, n. 98 (El Ghêrreh) and in Carrez-Maratray, 1999b, p. 304 (Gerreh); Linant, 1873, p. 119.146 in Clédat, 1923b, p. 162-163 (cf. Daressy, 1931a, p. 215-216) (Gerreh - Tel Gerreh); against Feissel, 1984, p. 560, n. 76 and p. 563 and Carrez-Maratray, 1999b, p. 38, who think that there was a continuity in the toponymy. Anyway, van Senden (1851, I, p. 322) looked in vain for a trace of this name on his trip through the area.

<sup>2238</sup> P.Anastasi V, 20, 2 (Gardiner, 1937, p. 67-67a; Caminos, 1954, p. 255.258); cf. Brugsch, 1875, p. 14.27-30.34 and map; Brugsch, 1879, p. 50-55.265; Clédat, 1921, p. 196; Gauthier, 1925, I, p. 83.

<sup>2239</sup> Cf. Dümichen, 1879, p. 72.75; Ascherson, 1887, p. 186; Müller, 1901, I 2, p. 682; Budge, 1920, p. 959; Clédat, 1921, p. 196 and 1923b, p. 164; Gauthier, 1925, I, p. 81; Hommel, 1926, p. 964, n. 1; Daressy, 1931a, p. 216. See also s.v. Tcharou, a place which also has been identified with these Inbw by Clédat, 1921, p. 195-197. Certainly one of these Inbw, the Pr-Inbwy, 'House of the walls', mentioned in the Nitokris stele of 656 BC (Caminos, 1964, p. 76 and pl. 10, 25), does not belong in the eastern Delta, as Clédat, 1921, p. 197 wants, but in the western Delta; cf. Yoyotte, 1952, p. 212-213 and Caminos, 1964, p. 92. The remarkable wall drawn along the isthmus ending up in the neighbourhood of Mahammediya on the map of Ebers, 1881, p. 108, probably refers to the 'inbw ḥq3' of the story of Sinouhe; cf. Küthmann, 1911, p. 33-34; Gauthier, 1925, I, p. 82. Because 'inbw' can -

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Brugsch at the same time identifies Gerra with the biblical Schur, a name that also can be translated as 'Wall'<sup>2240</sup>. There are, however, no arguments to locate Schur in the northern Sinai<sup>2241</sup>.

In a demotic topographical onomasticon of the 4th-2nd centuries BC Daressy reads the name T3-ḥny-p3-snb, 'le lac de la muraille', in a passage which he refers to the northern Sinai. The element 'snb', 'wall', he links with the Greek γέρον, and he locates the lake immediately east of Gerra, near the ancient lake Serbonis. Zauzich, however, reads T3-ḥny-Snfr and rightly identifies the toponym with a channel or Nile branch in the Delta<sup>2242</sup>.

Further in that same onomasticon Daressy has the names Ḥny-t3-grry, 'le lac de la grenouillère', and Pr-grr, 'la maison de la grenouille'. Cazelles suggests that the element 'grr' corresponds with Gerra, but this has little to recommend it and is now definitely refuted by Zauzich's readings T3-ḥny-p3-3(h)-3rry, 'The water of the vineyard', and P3y-krr<sup>2243</sup>.

The military camp Skenai in the immediate neighbourhood of Gerra is sometimes incorrectly identified with Gerra itself<sup>2244</sup>. Also the Saite Stratopeda mentioned by Herodotos, and the military settlements Chabriou Charax and Castra Alexandri have been identified with Gerra itself or located in its neighbourhood without any positive arguments<sup>2245</sup>.

Because Pentaschoinon and Gerra are the only road stations mentioned between Kasion and Pelousion in respectively the *Itinerarium Antonini* and the *Tabula Peutingeriana* (17), the two places have incorrectly been identified<sup>2246</sup>.

Clédat identified Gerra and Kasion, supposing that Gerra referred to the original name of the place and Kasion to the Greek name<sup>2247</sup>. Later on he instead

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e.g. - just as well be rendered by the Greek word τεῖχος (cf. Abel, 1939, p. 216, n. 1), there is certainly no reason to look for an exclusive link between 'inbw' and γέρον.

<sup>2240</sup> For Schur, cf. the testimonies in Odelain, 1978, p. 355, s.v. Shur and Na'aman, 1980, p. 100-103. Cf. Brugsch, 1875, p. 14.28-29.34 and map; Brugsch, 1879, p. 50.52.265; Dümichen, 1879, p. 72; Ascherson, 1887, p. 186; Müller, 1901, I 2, p. 682; Budge, 1920, p. 959; Clédat, 1921, p. 196.

<sup>2241</sup> For the position of Schur at the southern border of Palestine, cf. Na'aman, 1980, p. 95-109.

<sup>2242</sup> P.Cairo dem. 31169, 2, 14; cf. Spiegelberg, 1908, p. 271; Daressy, 1911a, p. 161-162; Gauthier, 1927, IV, p. 29; Zauzich, 1987a, p. 84-85.88 and handout; DBL, 2005, p. 134. See s.v. Lake Serbonis.

<sup>2243</sup> P.Cairo dem. 31169, 3, 12-13; cf. Spiegelberg, 1908, p. 272; Daressy, 1911a, p. 166-167 and 1911b, p. 5-6; Müller, 1911, col. 196-197; Gauthier, 1925, p. 18; Gauthier, 1925, II, p. 137-138 and 1927, IV, p. 29; Cazelles, 1987 [= 1955], p. 214; Gomaà, 1974, p. 105; Zauzich, 1987a, p. 90 and handout; DBL, 2005, p. 135.

<sup>2244</sup> See s.v. Skenai.

<sup>2245</sup> Clédat, 1923a, p. 158 and 1923b, p. 166.187. See s.v. Stratopeda, s.v. Chabriou Charax and s.v. Castra Alexandri.

<sup>2246</sup> Griffith, 1890, p. 37.

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considered Gerra, Skenai, Pentaschoinon and even Aphnaion as different names of the same place, which he located at Mahammediya<sup>2248</sup>. The fact, however, that the toponyms are mentioned next to each other in several sources, leaves no doubt that they are all different places.

Because the Arab toponym el-Sawada according to Clédat has the same meaning as Gerra, he supposes the existence of a second place with the name el-Sawada in the northern Sinai, which would correspond with the ancient Gerra<sup>2249</sup>. All the Arab sources, however, refer to the el-Sawada between el-Warrada and Qatia, and there is no need to create a 'hypothetical' second el-Sawada near the coast.

### Orthographic variants

There is little consistency in the spelling of the name Gerra. The name is based upon the word γέρρον, rendered in the sources both in a plural (Gerra) and in a singular form (Gerron, Gerrum). The simplification of ρρ into ρ, which occurs for this name from the fourth century AD on, is a known phenomenon<sup>2250</sup>. From that same period on also the forms Geros and Geras occur, which remain invariable or have a genitive on -ους or on -ως. The form Gerasa in the *Notitia dignitatum* (19) is possibly due to a confusion with the Syrian city of Gerasa. The form Hierapolis in Cassiodorus (24) is a scribal mistake.

### Etymology

As pointed out by the scholiast on Loukianos (29), the name Gerra is derived from the Greek substantive γέρρον, which indicates anything that is made of wickerwork, in this case referring to wattled booths or barracks<sup>2251</sup>. From the

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<sup>2247</sup> Clédat, 1909a, p. 770.

<sup>2248</sup> Clédat, 1920, p. 116-119; 1923a, p. 158; 1923b, p. 164-165.186-187; followed by Kees, Hermann, s.v. Pelousion, in RE, XIX 1, 1937, col. 414; Kees, Hermann, s.v. Pentaschoinon, in RE, XIX 1, 1937, col. 512 Abel, 1938, II, p. 218. The identification has been rejected by Abel, 1940, p. 61, p. 62, n. 2 and p. 233, O'Callaghan, R. T., s.v. Madaba, in DB, Suppl. V, 26, 1953, col. 696 and Figueras, 1988, p. 58. See also s.v. Pentaschoinon, s.v. Aphnaion, s.v. Skenai and s.v. Mahammediya.

<sup>2249</sup> Clédat, 1923b, p. 166. See s.v. el-Sawada.

<sup>2250</sup> Cf. Gignac, 1976, I, p. 154-157; Rea, P.Oxy. L, 1983, p. 186.

<sup>2251</sup> Cf. Lesquier, 1918, p. 401, n. 5; Clédat, 1923a, p. 158 and 1923b, p. 164-166; Hommel, 1926, p. 964, n. 1; Abel, 1940, p. 234-235; Cazelles, 1987 [= 1955], p. 222 (extremely inaccurate); Dietze, 1995, p. 172. There is no reason to assume that this is just a popular etymology, as suggested by Graf, 1998, p. 108.

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expression 'the so-called Gerra' (τὰ Γέρρα καλούμενα) it is clear that also for Eratosthenes (1-2) the name was Greek, since 'so-called' is often added to indicate that a well-known substantive is specifically used as a toponym<sup>2252</sup>. Maybe a similar explanation comes into account for the use of the article (τὸ Γέρος) in P.Ryl. IV, 628 (15). Some scholars suggests that the variant Geras came into being because it has the more prestigious meaning of 'gift of honour, privilege'<sup>2253</sup>, but this does not explain the variant Geros, and both forms are probably mere phonetic deformations of the name Gerra.

Abel suggested that Gerra could have been founded by traders from the Arabian city of Gerra - a toponym with an Arab, not a Greek origin - and that the name of the mother city was copied<sup>2254</sup>, but this etymology has nothing to recommend it. There is also no reason to follow Évieux's suggestion that Gerra is a deformation of the name Chabrias, the eponym of the military settlement Chabriou Charax<sup>2255</sup>.

The Coptic translation of the name Gerra as 'The city of the old age' in a 14th century Greek-Coptic-Arab list (32) is only secondary and apparently based upon a confusion of γέρας and γήρας.

### Homonyms

The name Gerra is also used for two places in Syria. Polybios mentions a Ptolemaic fortress Gerra in northern Koile Syria, which probably can be located in the Biqaa valley, in the region of Antiocheia<sup>2256</sup>. In the Batanaia region, south of Damaskos, lies another Gerra, mentioned by Ptolemaios<sup>2257</sup>. The best-known Gerra, however, is the city in Arabia on the southern shore of the Persian Gulf<sup>2258</sup>.

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<sup>2252</sup> Cf. e.g. the expressions 'the so-called Pits (Barathra)' (Polybios, 5, 80, 2; Diodoros, 1, 30, 4; 20, 73, 3), 'the so-called Outlet (Ekregma)' (Diodoros, 19, 64, 8; Strabon, 16, 2, 32 (C 760)).

<sup>2253</sup> Feissel, 1984, p. 561, n. 86 and p. 563; Hussein, 1996, p. 205.

<sup>2254</sup> Abel, 1940, p. 235; followed by Graf, 1998, p. 108-109 (incorrectly referring to Figueras, 1988, p. 57, n. 7).

<sup>2255</sup> Évieux, 1995, p. 33, n.16. See s.v. Chabriou Charax.

<sup>2256</sup> Polybios, 5, 46, 1; 5, 61, 7 [Γέρρα]; cf. Chabot, 1899, I, p. 30\* (index); Benzinger, Immanuel, s.v. Gerra 1, in RE, VII 1, 1910, col. 1270; Pape, 1911, p. 247, s.v. Γέρρα 3; Dussaud, 1927, p. 354.400-402; Goldstein, 1983, p. 469; Stiernon, D. and L., s.v. Gerra 1, in DHGE, XX, 1984, col. 1045.1046; TAVO Register, 1994, p. 579; Grainger, 1997, p. 713.723.

<sup>2257</sup> Ptolemaios, 5, 14, 20 (Müller, 1901, I 2, p. 986) [Γέρρα]; cf. Pape, 1911, p. 247, s.v. Γέρρα 2; Dussaud, 1927, p. 326.354.401; Jones, 1928, p. 155.

<sup>2258</sup> Cf. Tkač, Jaroslav, s.v. Gerra 2, in RE, VII 1, 1910, col. 1270-1272; Pape, 1911, p. 247, s.v. Γέρρα 1; Abel, 1940, p. 235; Calderini, 1973, II 1, p. 83; P.L.Bat. XXI, 1981, p. 482; Graf, 1990, p. 144.

### Analysis of the sources

*Gerra in the Ptolemaic period*

*Gerra in the Roman period*

*Gerra in the Byzantine period*

#### *Gerra in the Ptolemaic period*

A passage in Loukianos, which mentions an oblong shield called γέρρον, is commented upon by a scholiast, who quotes several classical parallels for this word (29). Tents and fences are called 'gerra' by Demosthenes. For that same meaning the scholiast also refers to the 'gerron' near Pelousion, which was named after the tents in which the men stayed who guarded the entrance to Egypt<sup>2259</sup>:

Δημοσθένης δὲ ἐπὶ τῶν σκηνωμάτων καὶ τῶν περιφραγμάτων οἶον "καὶ τὰ γέρρα ἐνεπίμπρασαν". καὶ παρ' Αἰγυπτίους δὲ τὸ κατὰ τὸ Πηλούσιον καλούμενον διὰ τοῦτο ὠνομάσθη, ἐπεὶ σκηνώματά ἐστιν, ἐν οἷς παραφυλάττοντες τὰς εἰσόδους διατρίβουσιν.

'Demosthenes refers to the tents and fences as follows: 'and they burned the "gerra"'. Also in Egypt the place near Pelousion is called like that, because there are tents in which men live who guard the entrance.'

Gerra, the first settlement on the road to Syria east of the Pelousiac branch, can be considered the entrance to Egypt even in periods when the borderline of the territory under Egyptian control lay more to the east, so it is difficult to determine when the tent camp was created and received the name Gerra.

The 3rd century geographer Eratosthenes (1), quoted in Strabon (3), states that Egypt in ancient times was covered by the sea as far as the marshes near Pelousion, mount Kasion and lake Serbonis, so that the area of the Kasion and of the so-called Gerra was covered with shoal water and that the Mediterranean was connected with the Red Sea<sup>2260</sup>:

... τὴν τε Αἴγυπτον τὸ παλαιὸν θαλάττη κλύζεσθαι μέχρι τῶν ἐλῶν τῶν περὶ τὸ Πηλούσιον καὶ τὸ Κάσιον ὄρος καὶ τὴν Σιρβωνίδα λίμνην ... ὡς ἂν τεθαλαττωμένης τῆς χώρας καὶ τοῦ τόπου παντὸς τοῦ περὶ τὸ Κάσιον καὶ τὰ Γέρρα καλούμενα τεναγίζοντος, ὥστε συνάπτειν τῷ τῆς Ἐρυθρᾶς κόλπῳ.

<sup>2259</sup> Arethas (?), Scholion at Loukianos, *Anacharsis*, 32 (Rabe, 1906, p. 170).

<sup>2260</sup> Strabon, 1, 3, 4 (C 50); Eratosthenes, F I B 15 (Berger, 1880, p. 60-61). There is no reason to consider Gerra here the name of the region itself and not the name of a settlement, as Aujac, 1969, I 1, p. 147.207 does. For the discussion whether the fragment comes from Eratosthenes himself or from Straton of Lampsakos (before 268 BC) quoted by Eratosthenes, see s.v. Lake Serbonis. See also the 'summary' of Eratosthenes' theory made by Strabon, 1, 3, 13 (C 55) (4) [= Eratosthenes, F I B 19 (Berger, 1880, p. 68-69) (2)]: ... ὅτι δοκοίη καὶ τὸ Κάσιον ὄρος περικλύζεσθαι θαλάττη καὶ πάντα τὸν τόπον, ὅπου νῦν τὰ καλούμενα Γέρρα, καθ' ἕκαστα τεναγίζειν συνάπτοντα τῷ τῆς Ἐρυθρᾶς κόλπῳ, συνελθούσης δὲ τῆς θαλάττης ἀποκαλυφθῆναι ('(he adds his opinion) that mount Kasion was once washed by the sea, and also that all the region where the so-called Gerra now is, was in every part covered with shoal-water since it was connected with the gulf of the Red Sea, and that it became uncovered when the seas came together').



## 7. The coastal area between Kasion and Pelousion

'... and that in ancient times Egypt was covered by the sea as far as the bogs about Pelousion, mount Kasion, and lake Sirbonis; ... and the whole region round mount Kasion and the so-called Gerra had once been covered with shoal water, so that it connected with the gulf of the Red Sea.'  
The area of Gerra probably lay near the marshes of Pelousion mentioned in the first clause, and one can only notice that, while Pelousion, Kasion and lake Serbonis are listed from west to east, the order Kasion - Gerra in the second clause is apparently not strictly geographical.

In a fragmentary papyrus about military provisions, palaeographically dated to the 3rd century BC, the place 'Ptolemais that lies near the [ ]rra (or '[ ]rroi?')' is mentioned, but every geographical context is lacking<sup>2261</sup>:

1 [ ] κρέως (ταλ.) ν[ ]  
[ ] .οις διατρι...ωδετα[ ]  
[ ] .σμεθ.ητορ.ς ἐκ Πτολεμαίδος τῆς πρὸς τοῖς ...].ρροις ἀνακ.[ ]  
4 [ ] .σι.[ ] Γ και ἀκολουθοῦσι Ἄφ δεῖ χορηγῆθῆναι τοῖς] .....[ ]  
'[ ] of flesh, 5[.] talents [ ] from Ptolemais that lies near the [ ]rra [ ] 3000 and 1500 follow - one has to bear the expenses for the [ ]'

Bingen tentatively supplemented ἐκ Πτολεμαίδος τῆς πρὸς τοῖς Γέ]ρροις, 'from Ptolemais that lies near the Barracks (Gerra)', and indeed a military settlement Πτολεμαῖς ἡ ἐν Πηλουσίῳ, 'Ptolemais in Pelousion', is possibly mentioned in a letter of 29 May 146 BC<sup>2262</sup>. 'Gerra', however, seems to be too short to fill the lacuna - as already noticed by Bingen himself -, while the name Ptolemais is widely spread in Egypt and abroad. I therefore do not see sufficient arguments to link this passage with Gerra in the northern Sinai.

In 162 BC the Seleucid king Antiochos V left Hegemonides as strategos over an area that extended from the Ptolemais in Syria till the city of the Gerrenoi, which apparently was considered the southern border of Palestine<sup>2263</sup>:

κατέλιπεν στρατηγὸν ἀπὸ Πτολεμαίδος ἕως τῶν Γερρηνῶν Ἡγεμονίδην.  
'He left Hegemonides as strategos from Ptolemais till the Gerrenoi.'  
Some scholars think that Gerra in the northern Sinai is referred to<sup>2264</sup>, or Gerra in northern Koile Syria<sup>2265</sup>, but probably the city of Gerara (Γέραρα) in southern Palestine is meant, which possibly lies somewhat south of Gaza<sup>2266</sup>.

<sup>2261</sup> P.Alex. 1, 1-4; cf. Bingen, 1966, p. 185; Calderini, 1973, II 1, p. 82; Rea, P.Oxy. L, 1983, p. 186; Feissel, 1984, p. 560; Figueras, 1988, p. 57; Daris, 1994a, p. 191 and 1994b, p. 193; Calderini, 1996, Suppl. 2, p. 178; Schubert, P.Gen. III, 1996, p. 108; Rupprecht, SB XX, 1997, p. 672; Graf, 1998, p. 112, n. 20; Figueras, 2000, p. 191 (who accepts the reading Gerra, but locates the place in Syria); Hagedorn, 2005, p. 197, n. 11.

<sup>2262</sup> P.Gen. III, 131, 3-4. See s.v. Ptolemais in Pelousion.

<sup>2263</sup> *II Maccabaei*, 13, 24 (Rahlfs, 1935, I, p. 1133); cf. Goldstein, 1983, p. 453.468-470.

<sup>2264</sup> Hölscher, 1903, p. 56; Abel, 1949, p. 456; Odelain, 1978, p. 149, s.v. Gerréniens; Tsafirir, 1994, p. 134.

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A similar ethnic 'Gerrenos' occurs in an inscription of the early second century AD, found in Gerasa in the Jordanian Dekapolis. It mentions a certain Titus Flavius Gerrenos (l. 5: Τίτον Φλάουιον Γερρημόν), who is a member of a prominent family in Gerasa<sup>2267</sup>. Tsafirir tentatively suggests that the Egyptian Gerra is referred to<sup>2268</sup>, but there is no reason to look for an Egyptian context here. For Jones Gerrenos is a geographical cognomen that indicates that the family of Titus Flavius came from the Gerra in Syria which is mentioned by Ptolemaios<sup>2269</sup>, but perhaps also here the city of Gerara is meant.

### *Gerra in the Roman period*

In his description of Phoenicia Strabon (5) mentions Gerra, the so-called Camp of Chabrias and the Barathra swamps near Pelousion, next to each other on the track of the road between mount Kasion and Pelousion<sup>2270</sup>:

εἰθ' ἢ ἐπὶ Πηλούσιον ὁδός, ἐν ἣ τὰ Γέρρα καὶ ὁ Χαβρίου λεγόμενος χάραξ καὶ τὰ πρὸς τῷ Πηλουσίῳ βάραθρα, ἃ ποιεῖ παρεκχεόμενος ὁ Νεῖλος, φύσει κοίλων καὶ ἐλωδῶν ὄντων τῶν τόπων.

'Then comes the road to Pelousion, on which lie Gerra and the camp of Chabrias, as it is called, and the Barathra near Pelousion. These pits are formed by side-flows from the Nile, the region being by nature hollow and marshy.'

Iuba (6), quoted in Plinius (7), describes three roads from the Mediterranean across the isthmus to Arsinoe at the Red Sea. The first road goes from Pelousion, the second from the neighbourhood of mount Kasion and the third from Gerra, which is called Agipsum, passing along the Arab tribe of the Autaioi; it is 60 miles (ca. 90 km) shorter [?], but rough and mountainous, and there is no water<sup>2271</sup>:

nihilominus iter totum terreno frequentatur, a mari Aegyptio, quod est triplex: unum a Pelusio ...; alterum ultra Casium montem, quod a LX p. redit in Pelusiacam viam - accolunt Arabes Autaei; tertium a Gerro, quod Agipsum vocant, per eosdem Arabas LX propius, sed asperum montibus et inops aquarum. eae omnes viae Arsinoen ducunt ...

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<sup>2265</sup> Goldstein, 1983, p. 468-469.

<sup>2266</sup> Hitzig, Stark and Grimm in Hölscher, 1903, p. 56; Kutsch, Ernst, s.v. Gerara, in KP, 1967, II, col. 759; Kasher, 1990, p. 90, n. 111. Figueras, 1988, p. 57, n. 7 thinks that Gerra in Arabia is referred to, but this is not very likely.

<sup>2267</sup> SEG VII, 825, [1].5; cf. Jones, 1928, p. 153-156, no. 14.

<sup>2268</sup> Tsafirir, 1994, p. 134.

<sup>2269</sup> See § Homonyms.

<sup>2270</sup> Strabon, 16, 2, 33 (C 760). The index of Jones, 1949, p. 340 incorrectly identifies this Gerra with the homonymous place in Arabia.

<sup>2271</sup> Plinius, *Naturalis historia*, 6, 33, 166-167; Iuba, FGrHist no. 275, F 34. Clédat, 1924, p. 37-39 (against his earlier view expressed in 1923a, p. 96) incorrectly thinks that the roads lead to the Gulf of Aqaba; cf. Tsafirir, 1982, p. 213; Rokéah, 1983, p. 95.

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'Nevertheless the whole journey from the Egyptian sea is constantly performed by land, there being three routes: one from Pelusium ...; another route beyond mount Casium, after 60 miles rejoining the road from Pelusium - along this route dwell the Arab tribe of the Autaei; and a third starting from Gerrum, which is called Agipsum, passing through the same Arab tribe, which is 60 miles shorter but rough and mountainous, as well as devoid of watering-places. All these routes lead to Arsinoe ...'

The clause 'quod Agipsum vocant' raises problems<sup>2272</sup>. Rackham and Tsafrir think that the antecedent of the relative pronoun is '(iter) tertium' translating 'a third starting from Gerra, called the Agipsum route', but most scholars correctly link the clause with Gerra. The editions usually give the form Agipsum<sup>2273</sup>. Clédat translates the name as 'la ville du gypse', apparently linking it with the Greek word γύψος, which stands for chalk, gypsum or cement<sup>2274</sup>. He had noticed that in some sites in the northern Sinai such as Mahammediya and Qasr Ghet blocks of gypsum were used as building material, instead of the limestone in use at other sites in the neighbourhood. In this case the initial element 'a-' has to be understood as an alpha copulativum or intensivum ('with a lot of gypsum')<sup>2275</sup>. Abel, on the other hand, thinks that Agipsum can be translated - with an alpha privativum - as 'bâti sans plâtre', referring to the barracks in Gerra made of reed and not of stone. Also some emendations have been proposed instead of Agipsum: With 'Adipsum' or 'Adipson' Gerra is considered 'The not thirsty (place)'<sup>2276</sup>, while the emendation 'Dipsium' reflects the opposite interpretation. The suggested 'quod alii Gisium vocant', with Gisium or γ(ε)ἰσιον a synonym for γέρον, would imply an explanatory note on the etymology of the name Gerra. None of these emendations is really convincing, and it seems most likely that

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<sup>2272</sup> Cf. Thesaurus, 1900, I, col. 1327; Müller, 1901, I 2, p. 682; Detlefsen, 1904, p. 164; Mayhoff, 1906, I, p. 499; Clédat, 1923a, p. 73 and 1924, p. 37; Calderini, 1935, I 1, p. 10; Abel, 1940, p. 235-236; Jacoby, FGrHist, 3.A, 1940, no. 275, p. 140; Rackham, 1942, p. 462-463; Calderini, 1973, II 1, p. 83; Tsafrir, 1982, p. 213; Feissel, 1984, p. 560; Stiernon, D. and L., s.v. Gerra 1, in DHGE, XX, 1984, col. 1045; Daris, 1994a, p. 191; see also the map Ortelius, 1595 in Baines, 1981, p. 23 (cf. Fontaine, 1955, p. 63).

<sup>2273</sup> The manuscripts give a gipsum, agypisium, agipisium, agipsium, agypsius, agypsum, egippiseū.

<sup>2274</sup> The adjective ἄγυψος, attested once, is used for wine that is not clarified by gypsum, a meaning hardly relevant in this context.

<sup>2275</sup> One could also think of a Latin construction ('a gypso') which indicates the material out of which something is made (cf. 'statua ex aere facta'), but normally only the prepositions 'ex' or 'de' are used in this sense (cf. Ernout, 1972, p. 85, § 108, 2).

<sup>2276</sup> This word ἄδῖψος also seems to be used with regard to the northern Sinai in a completely different context: after translating Dionysios Periegetes, 260-264 (Müller, 1861, II, p. 116), where Pelousion and the region east of the Nile are described, Priscianus, 248-249 (Van de Woestijne, 1953, p. 51) adds two verses about a tree which grows near the Nile and whose thirst satisfying fruit is called 'adipsos': Nili, quem circum floret mirabilis arbor | extinguitque sitim pomo cui nomen adipsos ('the Nile, where a remarkable tree grows and quenches thirst with his fruit that is called adipsos').

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the name Agipsum refers to the gypsum used as construction material in Gerra, as suggested by Clédat<sup>2277</sup>.

It is not clear why Plinius omits Gerra between Chabriou Charax and Kasion, when he describes the western part of the northern Sinai, which he calls Arabia<sup>2278</sup>. In another context, however, Plinius mentions a city Gerra in Arabia, where the walls and houses are made of blocks of salt cemented with water<sup>2279</sup>:

Gerris Arabiae oppido muros domosque e massis salis faciunt aqua feruminantes. invenit et iuxta Pelusium Ptolomaeus rex, cum castra faceret. quo exemplo postea inter Aegyptum et Arabiam etiam squalentibus locis coeptus est inveniri detractis harenis.

'At Gerra, a town in Arabia, the walls and houses are made of blocks of salt cemented with water. Also near Pelusium king Ptolomaeus found salt, when he was making a camp. This example led afterwards even in the rough tracts between Egypt and Arabia to the discovery of salt by digging away the sand.'

Plinius discusses blocks of salt found in India, in Cappadocia, at Gerra, near Pelousion, between Egypt and Arabia, and in the oasis of Siwa. It has been stated that Gerra in the northern Sinai is referred to<sup>2280</sup>, but other scholars correctly identify the place with the city of Gerra in Arabia on the southern shore of the Persian Gulf<sup>2281</sup>. Some arguments indeed strengthen the latter point of view. When Plinius in the same context mentions that blocks of salt have been found by digging away the sand on desolate spots between Egypt and Arabia, one gets the impression that not Arabia Petraea adjacent to Egypt is referred to, but rather Arabia Felix. Decisive, however, is Plinius' description of Gerra at the Persian Gulf as a town that has towers made of squared blocks of salt<sup>2282</sup>:

sinus Gerraicus, oppidum Gerra V p. amplitudine; turres habet ex salis quadratis molibus.

'The bay of Gerra, the town of Gerra, which measures five miles (ca. 7,5 km) round; it has towers made of squared blocks of salt.'

It is clear that Plinius twice describes the same phenomenon, and there is no reason to suppose that Gerra in the northern Sinai is referred to. The phrase, therefore, about the camp next to Pelousion built by a king Ptolemaios is just part of the enumeration and has no implications for the position of Gerra in Arabia previously mentioned. The nature and the exact position of this camp next to Pelousion are not clear. It might have been a temporary camp built outside the city of Pelousion, where for instance

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<sup>2277</sup> There is no reason to follow Figueras, 2000, p. 195 that gypsum might have been a source of income for the inhabitants.

<sup>2278</sup> Cf. Plinius, *Naturalis historia*, 5, 14, 68.

<sup>2279</sup> Plinius, *Naturalis historia*, 31, 39, 78.

<sup>2280</sup> Clédat, 1909a, p. 769-770 and 1923a, p. 73; Carrez-Maratray, 1999b, p. 430.

<sup>2281</sup> Cf. Tkač, Jaroslav, s.v. Gerrha 2, in RE, VII 1, 1910, col. 1270-1272; Abel, 1940, p. 235, n. 1 (who explicitly rejects the identification of Clédat).

<sup>2282</sup> Plinius, *Naturalis historia*, 6, 32, 147. A similar description is found in Strabon, 16, 3, 3 (C 766). Clédat, 1923a, p. 73, 1923b, p. 164, n. 3 and p. 165 and n. 1 incorrectly ascribes also this passage to Gerra in the northern Sinai.

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troops were gathered for an expedition into Syria, or it might refer to a more permanent settlement - like Gerra - incorporated in the defence line of the eastern border.

On 20 June 142 AD the merchant Potamon (?) son of Potamon sold an Arabian camel to Tesenouphis (Thesenouphis) son of Tesenouphis from Soknopaiou Nesos in the Arsinoites<sup>2283</sup>:

- 1 [Ποταμων]n(?) Ποτάμωνος  
 [.....]τος .ερου Πη-  
 [.....] Θεσενουπις  
 [Θεσενουπις] από Νήσου  
 5 [του] Ἀρσινοείτου χαίρειν.

...  
 P.Gen.: '[ ]n son of Potamon grandson of [ ] priest (ἱεροῦ) of Pe[ ] to Thesenouphis son of Thesenouphis (read: Θεσενουπι [Θεσενουπι]κ<ο>ς) from Nesos in the Arsinoites, greetings.'

Messeri Savorelli: '[Potamo]n son of Potamon, priest of [Isi]s (?) (ἱστῆς Ἰσι)τος ἱεροῦ, read: ἱερέως) to Pe[nouphis] son of Thesenouphis grandson of Thesenouphis (Πη[νουπει] Θεσενουπι<ο>ς [Θεσενουπι]κ<ο>ς) from Nesos in the Arsinoites, greetings.'

Hagedorn: '[Potamo]n son of Potamon [from Ek]tos Gerou of Pe[lousion] (ἀπό ἐκ]τὸς Γέρου Πη[λουσίου]) to Thesenouphis son of Thesenouphis (read: Θεσενουπι [Θεσενουπι]κ<ο>ς) from Nesos in the Arsinoites, greetings.'

Unfortunately the beginning of the papyrus is seriously damaged, and especially the reading and interpretation of l. 2-4 varies. Several options have been suggested for the lacunae in l. 2-3: (1) the grandfather's name of the seller (P.Gen.), (2) the function of the seller (P.Gen.; Messeri Savorelli), (3) the place of origin of the seller (Hagedorn), and (4) the first name of the buyer (Messeri Savorelli). The document can be linked to P.Gen.(2) I, 29, where a certain Asanis from Terenouthis in de Delta sold an Arabian camel to Panouphis son of Tesenouphis grandson of Tesenouphis in 137 AD. Messeri Savorelli suggests that both buyers are identical and therefore restores the name Pe[nouphis]; this way the repetition of the form Θεσενουπις is fully explained, but one has to accept another 'mistake', sc. Pe[nouphis] instead of the expected Pa[noup(h)is]. Hagedorn, on the other hand, reads [ ]τος γερου in l. 2, instead of the [ ]σοτέρου or [ ]τος ἱεροῦ of the previous editors, and he wants to restore [ἀπό ἐκ]τὸς Γέρου Πη[λουσίου], '[Potamo]n(?) son of Potamon [from Ek]tos Gerou of Pe[lousion]'. Ektos Gerou he then identifies with Skenai ektos Gerrous, known in the sources only from the 4th century AD on (cf. **13**, **16**, **19**, **23**), and he looks for a parallel with the name Itrageros attested in Georgios (**26**), which I prefer to consider a mere deformation of Skenai ektos Gerrous. For the remarkable expression 'Ektos Gerou of Pelousion'

<sup>2283</sup> P.Gen.(2) I, 30, 1-5; cf. Nicole, P.Gen. I, 1906 [1900], p. 41-42, no. 30; Messeri Savorelli, 2003, p. 385-386; Hagedorn, 2005, p. 195-198.

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Hagedorn points to the possible parallel 'introitu Gerri Pelusi' ('in the entrance of Gerrum of Pelusium') in P.Oxy. XLI, 2951 (10), whose precise meaning, however, is also puzzling. Moreover, the form Γέρου is not yet attested, while the spelling with a single ρ occurs only from the 4th century AD on. Without further evidence, therefore, I am not really convinced by the restoration suggested.

Ptolemaios (8) places Γέρρον ὄριον ('Gerron, border') at 63° 30' - 31° 15', at some 18,5 km west of Kasion and some 20 km east of Pelousion<sup>2284</sup>. Müller suggests that the word ὄριον is used here in the meaning of τεῖχοςμα, 'wall, fort'<sup>2285</sup>, but there is no reason to abandon its normal meaning of 'border'<sup>2286</sup>.

A Latin military account (9), probably drawn up in 193-196 AD, mentions the financial situation of 'Iu[ ]', an auxiliary soldier of an unknown unit; a second hand added the name of Gerra, probably an indication of the place where the man was stationed<sup>2287</sup>.

2 [145] [ COS(ULIBUS)]

[G]erro Iu[ ]  
I[er]ric- in dep(ositis) ]

5 [148] a[ccepit stipendi]  
[ex eo collatio]  
[reliquos tulit]

8 [151] h[abet in dep(ositis)]

'[Consulate of ...] At [G]errum. Iu[ ]. In the strongbox: on deposit, [ ]. Received of his pay [ ]. [From that, contribution, ... Took the rest, ... Has on deposit ...].'

In another, very fragmentary Latin military account (11), palaeographically dated to the 3rd century AD, Rinokoloura, Ostrakine and Gerra are probably some of the places where soldiers of an unknown unit are staying<sup>2288</sup>:

20 [ ].te  
[ Rin]ocuroris

<sup>2284</sup> Ptolemaios, 4, 5, 5 (Müller, 1901, I 2, p. 682). Ball, 1942, p. 105 transposes 63° 30' - 31° 15' into the 'Greenwich system' as 32° 55' - 31° 15'; cf. Ball, 1942, pl. 2.3.

<sup>2285</sup> Cf. Hesychios, O 1220, s.v. ὄριον (Latte, 1966, II, p. 775) [ὄριον· τεῖχοςμα. φραγμόν ('horion: wall; fortification')].

<sup>2286</sup> Cf. Lesquier, 1918, p. 385; Clédat, 1921, p. 171, 1923a, p. 80 and 1923b, p. 166; Ball, 1942, p. 105; Carrez-Maratray, 1989, p. 55. This suggestion is also in contradiction with Müller's own translation 'terminus' and with his own view, expressed a few lines higher, which considered ὄριον a synonym for ἀρχή. Other 'descriptions' commonly added by Ptolemaios are κώμη (village), μητρόπολις (capital), φρούριον (garrison), λιμὴν (harbour), ὄρμος (harbour), ἄκρον (cape), ὄρος (mountain), but I did not find a parallel for the use of ὄριον in Ptolemaios in this sense.

<sup>2287</sup> ChLA X, 410, 6866 B, frag. g, 2-8 [145-151]; cf. Marichal, 1945, p. 68; Fink, Rom.Mil.Rec., 1971, p. 262; De Kuyffer, 1989, p. 937, all with other interpretations for the toponym; Daris, 1994a, p. 191-192 rightly suggests the supplement [G]erro (cf. Carrez-Maratray, 1999b, p. 38, n. 106 and p. 411, n. 543). See also s.v. Rinokoloura and s.v. Ostrakine for other entries of the same papyrus.

<sup>2288</sup> ChLA XI, 479, 20-23; for the supplements, cf. Daris, 1994a, p. 189-191.

## 7. The coastal area between Kasion and Pelousion

[ Ostra]çine  
23 [ ] Cerro  
' [ ] at Rinocurora. [ ] at Ostracine. [ ] at Cerrum.'

A bilingual Latin - Greek document (10) of 26 May 267 AD, drawn up in the winter quarters of the legio II Traiana in Alexandria preserves the arrangements for the sale of a slave girl. The seller, a certain Marias Barsimes, salaratos / salariarius of a unit of cataphracts, son of Barsimes Bassus, who is a decurio in the same ala, has handed over some documents to the buyer, the optio Aurelius Apollonios, in Pelousion somewhere in the year 265/266 AD (l. 10-11). The Semitic name of the seller suggests that he was a mercenary of Mesopotamian origin. It is not clear who are Gaius Iulius Iulianus and Nemesion also called Serenus, or why they are mentioned (l. 12). Other documents seem to have been handed over on 1 September 265 AD at the entrance of Gerrum of Pelousion (?) (l. 13-14)<sup>2289</sup>:

10 edidit i[de]m venditor emptori s(upra) s(cripto) pristina  
strumenta in nomine [.].ta in Pelusio de anno xiii Gallieno  
a... [ ca. 15 ]de Gai Iuli Iuliani Nemesioni q(ui) e(t) Sereni  
a..a.....[...]......ranum introitu Gerri Pelusi de tradito  
14 anno mense Thoth die iiii, et alia pristina strumenta.

'The seller has also handed over to the aforesaid buyer the previous documents in the name [ ] at Pelusium in the year 13 of (?) Gallienus [ ] of Gaius Iulius Iulianus to Nemesion also called Serenus [ ] in the entrance of Gerrum of Pelusium in the aforesaid year, the 4th day of the month Thoth, and (has handed over) other previous documents.'

The expression 'introitu Gerri Pelusi' is puzzling<sup>2290</sup>. Most likely Gerra east of Pelousion is referred to. The military context of the document makes it likely that 'Gerrum' is an army camp, but it is odd that the entrance (introitus) of this 'Gerrum' is indicated as place of the transaction, while in l. 11 for a similar action apparently just 'in Pelousion' is stated. In any case the seller and the buyer stayed in or in the neighbourhood of Pelousion about 265 AD, probably both in military service.

A fragmentary papyrus from unknown origin, palaeographically dated to the second half of the 3rd century or the beginning of the 4th century AD, apparently

<sup>2289</sup> P.Oxy. XLI, 2951, 10-14. For the mercenary army units involved, cf. Speidel, 1987, p. 195-198.

<sup>2290</sup> Cf. the remarks of Rea, P.Oxy. L, 1983, p. 186 ('in the entrance to Gerrum at Pelusium'); Feissel, 1984, p. 561; Carrez-Maratray, 1999b, p. 187, no. 372 and p. 409 ('à l'entrée de Gerrum de Pelusium'); Carrez-Maratray, 2000a, p. 22 and n. 100 (with the suggested supplement (vete?)ranum); Figueras, 2000, p. 43.314 ('in the entrance to Gerra of Pelousion', referring to the city gate of Pelousion where the road to Gerra started).

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refers to Gerra, but the nature of the text is not clear. Perhaps it is a receipt for some services delivered to the praetorium at this place (12)<sup>2291</sup>:

- 1 Αὐρήλιοι Σαραπίων Κασίου γυμνασιαρχήσας καὶ Κάσιος (?) ± 9 ]  
γυμνασιαρχήσας καὶ Ἱέρων Νείλου καὶ Ἰσίδωρος ± 18 ]  
ἐπισπουδασταὶ πραιτωρίου καὶ Πτολεμαῖος [ ± 20 ]  
καὶ Ψέγκογχος Ποσιδωνίου πανταρχήσας καὶ ± 18 ]  
5 λιος καὶ Φιλὰδ[δ]ελφος Κασίου `..κληροὶ τῆς δικαστίας ..αφ.. [ ] ἐπιμεληταὶ τοῦ  
αὐ[τοῦ] πραιτωρίου ± 5 ]  
[ ± 5 ]ος Γέρρου διὰ τῶν παρόντων Κασί[ου] καὶ ± 17 ]  
7 [ ± 20 ]..απ.[ ± 3 ]αντ...[ ± 17 ]

'The Aurelii Sarapion son of Kasios the former gymnasiarchos [and Kasios (? - cf. l. 6) son of NN] the former gymnasiarchos and Hieron son of Neilos and Isidoros [son of NN ...], epispoudastai of the praetorium, and Ptolemaios [son of NN ...] and Psenkonchos son of Posidonios the former pantarchos and [NN son of ...]lis (?) and Philadelphos son of Kasios, candidates for the lottery (?) for the office of judge [ ], epimeletai of the same [praetorium ...] of Gerron, represented by the present Ka[si]os and [ ]'

The text raises many questions and problems. In Roman Egypt a praetorium was a building used by higher military officers or officials, or - outside a military context - by travelling officials who could stay there. Since Gerra was a military settlement from the Ptolemaic period on, the praetorium mentioned might belong to the military camp at this place. Because of the lacuna in l. 5-6, however, one cannot be certain that actually the praetorium of Gerra is referred to. The editor Mitthof for that matter also suggests a second interpretation, with the alternative restoration: ἐπιμεληταὶ τοῦ αὐ[τοῦ] πραιτωρίου Σκηναίων | τῶν ἐκτ[ὸς] Γέρρου or τοῦ αὐ[τοῦ] πραιτωρίου τοῦ ἐν Σκη|ναίς ἐκτ[ὸς] Γέρρου ('epimeletai of the same [praetorium of Skenai ekto]s Gerrou'). Skenai ekto Gerrou ('Tents outside of Gerra') is a military camp attested from the early 4th century AD on in the immediate neighbourhood of Gerra<sup>2292</sup>; if the restoration is correct, this passage provides the oldest attestation for that place, but for the time being it seems too hazardous to jump to any conclusions.

The maintenance of a praetorium was part of several leitourgical duties, in this case apparently assigned to two commissions of each four persons, the epispoudastai ('those who urge on a thing') and the epimeletai ('those who have charge of a thing'). It is not clear, however, what was the specific task for each commission. Mitthof suggests that the epispoudastai were responsible for the organisation of the praetorium and the epimeletai for the supplies.

The persons involved had some importance in their city: Sarapion son of Kasios and possibly a man named Kasios were former gymnasiarchoi, while Psenkonchos son Poseidonios was a former pantarchos; the (former?) office of Ptolemaios, Isidoros and

<sup>2291</sup> CPR XXIII, 19; the editor Mitthof, CPR XXIII, 2002, p. 111-119 gives a thorough analysis of all the titles and institutions mentioned in the text; cf. Kramer, 2003, p. 278-279.

<sup>2292</sup> See s.v. Skenai ekto Gerrou.



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[ ] son of [ ]lis? is perhaps lost in the lacunae; for Hieron son of Neilos and Philadelphos son of Kasios no title was mentioned. The title of pantarchos is rare, and in Egypt the office is only attested in Pelousion (ca. 160-200 AD)<sup>2293</sup> and in Ombos in Upper Egypt (in 214 AD). There is some discussion about its precise meaning; for Mitthof the title was given to a man who combined (most of) the important offices at a place at the same time in one person, but this hardly seems likely for a city the size of Pelousion. The four epimeletai perhaps were candidates for the office of judge, which might be a rare reference to a kind of city court that is apparently not subordinate to the general administration in Alexandria. For Mitthof these eight men were citizens of Gerra<sup>2294</sup>, but it is surprising to find such offices and titles in the relatively small city of Gerra (and a fortiori in Skenai ekto Gerrou) and I rather suspect them to be citizens of Pelousion who are responsible for the provisions for the military camp in Gerra, which no doubt was part of the military defence zone round Pelousion. The fact that the function of pantarchos is attested in that city, strengthens this point of view. The personal name Kasios, which occurs no less than three times in this text, is attested in an epitaph found in Mahammediya (Gerra), but also occurs in Pelousion, Kasion and Ostrakine and seems to be typical for the whole northern Sinai, where the cult of Zeus Kasios was especially popular<sup>2295</sup>.

In the 2nd-3rd centuries AD the usual spelling of the name Gerra (both in Greek and in Latin) seems to be Gerron, while from the early 4th century AD on the names Ger(r)os (genitive Gerrou) or Ger(r)as seem to be more common. The spelling Γέρρου in this text therefore perhaps favours a date in the 3rd, rather than in the 4th century AD. The number of attestations for Gerra, however, is too small to be sure.

### *Gerra in the Byzantine period*

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<sup>2293</sup> For this inscription, cf. Abd el-Maksoud, 1988a, p. 97-103; Abd el-Maksoud, 1989, p. 135, n. 4; Carrez-Maratray, 1989, p. 54.58; AE, 1988 [= 1991], p. 291-292, no. 1059; SEG XXXVIII, 1988 [= 1991], p. 528, no. 1839; Bingen, BE, 1989, p. 470-471, no. 808; Abd el-Maksoud, 1992a, p. 85; Abd el-Maksoud, 1994, p. 100, n. 6; Carrez-Maratray, 1995, p. 149; Carrez-Maratray, 1996c, p. 207; Carrez-Maratray, 1999b, p. 231-234, no. 397 and photo p. 230; Bingen, 2000b, p. 374; Mitthof, CPR XXIII, 2002, p. 114.

<sup>2294</sup> In this matter Mitthof, CPR XXIII, 2002, p. 115-116 follows the opinion of Jones, 1971, p. 342-343 that the cities of the northern Sinai had a special administrative arrangement at the latest from the early 4th century AD on, but this a hypothesis still to be proven.

<sup>2295</sup> See s.v. Kasion.

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In an Oxyrynchos papyrus, written about 314-318 AD, the place 'Skenai outside of Gerra' (ἀπὸ [Σ]κηνῶν τῶν | ἐκτὸς Γέρρου) is mentioned (13)<sup>2296</sup>. A similar expression occurs in another papyrus from Oxyrynchos, written after 324 AD, which knows the 'Camp of Skenai outside of Gerra' (κ(άστρα) Σκηνῶν ἐκτὸς Γέρρου) (16)<sup>2297</sup>. In the early 5th century *Notitia dignitatum* the name is inaccurately rendered as 'Scenas extra Gerasa' (19)<sup>2298</sup>. Some of Gerra's military functions seem to be transferred to a nearby camp, which gradually became an independent settlement<sup>2299</sup>.

The official Theophanes travelled from Upper Egypt to Antiocheia in Syria, possibly in 322 or 323 AD (14-15). Some memoranda and accounts of this journey - both drafts and fair copies - are preserved. On 18 Pharmouthi (13 April) - his seventh stage - Theophanes came from Pelousion, travelled 10 miles (ca. 15 km), passed Gerra, and continued possibly another 10 miles (ca. 15 km)<sup>2300</sup> to Pentaschoinon, where he spent the night. This itinerary is mentioned twice, both in the draft and in the fair copy<sup>2301</sup>:

|                  |     |                                    |             |
|------------------|-----|------------------------------------|-------------|
| (627, draft)     |     |                                    |             |
| 230              | ζ   | ἀπὸ Πηλου[ε]ρ]σίου εἰς Γέρος       | μίλ(ια) ι   |
| 231              |     | ἀπὸ Γέρος εἰς Πεντάσχοινον         | μίλ(ια) ι?] |
|                  | '7  | From Pelou[[er]]sion to Geros      | milia 10    |
|                  |     | From Geros to Pentaschoin[on       | milia 10?]  |
| (628, fair copy) |     |                                    |             |
| 5                | [ζ  | ἀπὸ Π[η]λουσίου εἰς τὸ Γέρος]      |             |
| 6                | [   | ἀπὸ τ[ο]ῦ Γέρος εἰς Π[εντάσχοινον] |             |
|                  | '[7 | Fro]m P[e]lousion to [Geros]       |             |
|                  | [   | Fro]m Geros to P[ent]aschoinon]    |             |

The article in the fair copy (τὸ Γέρος) is remarkable, because - except in the case of (mount) Kasion - the article is not used for the other toponyms in the itinerary. Apparently Theophanes still recognized the original meaning of Gerra and considered 'the barrack' more appropriate as a name than 'Barrack'.

<sup>2296</sup> P.Oxy. L, 3574, 4-5.

<sup>2297</sup> P.Oxy. L, 3580, 1.

<sup>2298</sup> *Notitia dignitatum*, 28, 29 (Seeck, 1876, p. 59). Pinder, 1860, p. 83, followed by Miller, 1916, col. 813, gives the form 'Gerrae', which is not listed in the apparatus criticus of Seeck. The location of the Ala I Aegyptiorum in Gerra - as stated in Alston, 1995, p. 190 - is a mistake.

<sup>2299</sup> For the sources mentioning Skenai ektos Gerrous, cf. the discussion s.v. Skenai.

<sup>2300</sup> It is not clear why Roberts, P.Ryl. IV, 1952, p. 107.120 (followed by Évioux, 1995, p. 35, n. 21) supplements [ιβ], 12 miles (ca. 18 km); the only comparable distance is the 20 miles (ca. 30 km) between Pelousion and Pentaschoinon in the *Itinerarium Antonini*, which is perfectly acceptable, so it is better to supplement accordingly. Mitthof, CPR XXIII, 2002, p. 118 supplements [ιδ], 14 miles (ca. 21 km), apparently in order to match the global figure of 20 + 20 = 40 miles for the track Pelousion - Pentaschoinon - Kasion as given in the *Itinerarium Antonini*.

<sup>2301</sup> P.Ryl. IV, 627, 230-231 is a draft for P.Ryl. IV, 628, 5-6. For the reading Γέρος in 628, 6 (instead of the Γέρας of the editor), cf. Rea, P.Oxy. L, 1983, p. 186 (BL VIII, 1992, p. 297).

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On 12 Mesore (5 August), on his way back from Antiocheia to Egypt, Theophanes travelled in one day from Kasion via Pentaschoinon to Pelousion (some 36 miles or about 54 km), apparently without stopping in Gerra, as he did in April<sup>2302</sup>.

On the *Tabula Peutingeriana* (17), a map that possibly shows the situation of the 4th century AD, 'Gerra' is situated at 23 miles (ca. 34,5 km) west from Kasion and 8 miles (ca. 12 km) east from Pelousion. Between Gerra and Pelousion the road crosses a branch of the Nile<sup>2303</sup>. The distance between Gerra and Kasion is rather short and perhaps the figure of XXIII is a mistake for XXVIII (ca. 42 km)<sup>2304</sup>.

On a white marble plate found in 1947 under the floor of the Basilica degli Apostoli in Milano a bilingual Greek - Latin metric epitaph is written, palaeographically dated in the 4th-5th centuries AD, for a Christian physician named Dioskoros son of Dioskoros, who originates from 'sacred Egypt'<sup>2305</sup>:

9 τοῦνομα πατρὸς ἔχων | Διόσκορος· ἦν δ' ἀπὸ πατρὸς |  
10 Αἴγυπτου ζαθέης, ἡ δὲ πόλις τὸ γέρας.

'he has the name of his father Dioskoros; he came from the sacred fatherland Egypt; the city (dedicated) the honorary present.'

The last clause has been interpreted in different ways. Most scholars give the plausible interpretation 'the city (of Mediolanum) (dedicated) the honorary present (sc. the inscription)', reflecting an opposition between the old (l. 9b-10a) and the new fatherland (l. 10b) of Dioskoros. Feissel, however, - followed by Carrez-Maratray - reads ἡ δὲ πόλις τὸ Γέρας, '(his) city (of origin) (is) Geras'. Indeed the form 'Geras' does occur as a variant spelling for Gerra in the northern Sinai in the early 5th century AD, but it is difficult to prove that this city is meant here. Gerra must have been hardly known outside of Egypt, so one expects at least an 'epitheton ornans' or a few words of comment on that place, and also the use of the article (τὸ Γέρας) is rather surprising. I am therefore not inclined to abandon the first interpretation, which gives a nice ending for the Greek part of the inscription.

<sup>2302</sup> Cf. P.Ryl. IV, 630\*, 482-490 [immo 633: fair copy; no draft is preserved].

<sup>2303</sup> *Tabula Peutingeriana* (Miller, 1916, col. 813-814), with a drawing of this section of the *Tabula* col. 857-858 - for Gerra, see section IX 5 - and the data transposed to a modern map col. 813-814.

<sup>2304</sup> Müller, 1901, I 2, p. 682.683 - comparing with the distances in the *Itinerarium Antonini* - suggests that XXXIII miles (ca. 49,5 km) should be read, but this figure seems to be too high for the estimated distance of 36 miles (ca. 54 km) between Kasion and Pelousion in P.Ryl. IV, 627-628. Abel, 1940, p. 234 suggests a figure of XXVII miles (ca. 40,5 km).

<sup>2305</sup> Guarducci, 1978, p. 505-508, l. 9-10; cf. Robert, BE, 1951, p. 213-214, no. 249; Peek, 1955, p. 583, no. 1907; Feissel, 1984, p. 558-563; Feissel, BE, 1987, p. 382, no. 539; Carrez-Maratray, 1999b, p. 253, no. 423.

## 7. The coastal area between Kasion and Pelousion

In the early winter of 403/404 AD bishop Theophilus of Alexandria, returning from Constantinopolis to Alexandria, was driven to Gerra, a small town some fifty stadia (ca. 9,25 km) from Pelousion (20)<sup>2306</sup>:

(19, 3) καὶ Θεόφιλος δὲ αὐτίκα μηδὲν ἀναβαλλόμενος ἤδη τοῦ χειμῶνος ἀρχομένου ἅμα Ἰσαακίῳ τῷ μοναχῷ ἀπέπλευσεν εἰς Ἀλεξάνδρειαν. ἀπὸ δὲ τοῦ πελάγους ὧδε συμβάν κατῆρεν εἰς Γέρας, πόλιν μικρὰν ἀμφὶ πεντήκοντα στάδια τοῦ Πηλουσίου ἀφεστῶσαν.  
'Theophilus, also, fled the city at the commencement of the winter; and, in company with Isaakios the monk, sailed for Alexandria. A wind arose which drove the vessel over sea to Geras, a small city about fifty stadia from Pelousion.'

There the bishop had died and the inhabitants had chosen Nilammon as his successor. This anchorite lived outside the city in a house of which the door was blocked with stones. Because he refused to become bishop, Theophilus went over to him, and Nilammon finally yielded to his authority. The bishop came back the next day and Nilammon asked him to pray together first. During that prayer the anchorite passed away, and when the stones were removed from the door, his body was found. The people gave him a public burial, and a house of prayer was built next to his tomb. Until the time of Sozomenos they remarkably celebrate the day of his death.

(19, 4) τελευτήσαντος δὲ τότε τοῦ ἐνθάδε ἐπισκόπου οἱ μὲν πολῖται, ὡς ἐπυθόμην, ἐψηφίσαντο Νιλάμμωνα προστατεῖν τῆς αὐτῶν ἐκκλησίας, ἀνδρα ἀγαθὸν καὶ μοναχικῆς φιλοσοφίας εἰς ἄκρον ἐλθόντα. ὧκει δὲ πρὸ τοῦ ἄστεως, ἐν οἰκίῳ καθείρξας ἑαυτὸν καὶ λίθοις τὴν θύραν ἀποφράξας. ἀποφεύγοντα δὲ τὴν ἱερωσύνην, ἐλθὼν πρὸς αὐτὸν Θεόφιλος συνεβούλευε καταδέχεσθαι τὴν παρ' αὐτοῦ χειροτονίαν. (19, 5) ὁ δὲ πολλάκις παραιτησάμενος, ὡς οὐκ ἔπειθεν, "αὔριον εἰ σοι φίλον", ἔφη, "πρᾶξον, ὦ πάτερ, ὥστε με σήμερον τὰ κατ' ἑμαυτὸν διαθεῖναι". ἐπεὶ δὲ τῇ ἰσπεραία κατὰ τὰ συγκείμενα ἦλθε καὶ τὴν θύραν ἀνοίγειν ἐκέλευσεν, "ἄγε δὴ πρότερον", ὁ Νιλάμμων ἔφη, "εὐξώμεθα". καὶ Θεόφιλος ἐπαινέσας ἠΰξαστο· Νιλάμμων δὲ ἐν τῷ εὐχέσθαι τὴν ἐνθάδε κατέλιπε βιοτήν.

<sup>2306</sup> Sozomenos, *Historia ecclesiastica*, 8, 19, 3-7 (Bidez, 1960, p. 375); cf. the translation of Hartranft, 1891, p. 411; the manuscripts give both the forms Γέρας (followed by Nikephoros Kallistos (31), Le Quien, 1740, II, col. 551; Seeck, 1876, p. 59; Müller, 1901, I 2, p. 682; Feissel, 1984, p. 561 and n. 89; Van Nuffelen, 2004, p. 69, n. 384) and Γεράν (followed by Bidez); Cassiodorus (24) renders the name as 'Hierapolim'. Because the female Γερά is not known in other sources, the form 'Geras' is probably to be preferred. Martin, 1996, p. 83 dates the events in 403 AD, but on p. 76.96 inconsequently refers to 402 AD. Cf. Cassiodorus, *Historia ecclesiastica tripartita*, 10, 14, 16-17 (Hanslik, 1952, p. 608) (24) with a very shortened account: *interea cum Theophilus navigio in Hierapolim advenisset, mortuo eius civitatis episcopo Nilammonem monachum elegerunt cives. at ille cum crebro refugeret, ei Theophilus suadebat, ne sacerdotium refutaret. tunc ille promisit dicens: 'cras, quod domino placet, implebitur.' altera vero die venientes ad cellam eius cogebant eum. tunc Nilammo: 'prius', inquit, 'oremus!' quod dum Theophilus laudasset, simul orabat; Nilammon autem repente terminum vitae cum illa oratione suscepit* ('Meantime, when Theophilus arrived by ship in Hierapolis, after the death of their bishop the people of the city elected the monk Nilammon as their new bishop. But he refused repeatedly, and Theophilus tried to persuade him not to refuse the priestly office. Then the monk promised: "Since it pleases the lord, tomorrow there will be weeping". The next day they came to his cell and tried to force him. Then Nilammon asked: "Let us first pray"; Theophilus consented and prayed together with him; Nilammon, however, suddenly died when he ended his prayer'); Nikephoros Kallistos, *Ecclesiastica historia*, 13, 17 (Migne, PG 146, 1865, col. 989-992) (31): Θεόφιλος δὲ σύναμα Ἰσαακίῳ τῷ μοναχῷ, ἀρχομένου χειμῶνος, τὴν Ἀλεξάνδρου κατέλαβε. συμβάν δ' οὕτως, ἐκ πελάγους εἰς Γέρας κατῆρε· πόλις δὲ αὕτη μικρὰ, ἀμφὶ στάδια πεντήκοντα τοῦ Πηλουσίου κατωκισμένη ... ('Theophilus sailed for Alexandria in company with Isaakios the monk at the commencement of the winter. A wind arose which drove the vessel over sea to Geras; this small lies city about fifty stadia from Pelousion ...').

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(19, 6) τοῦτο δὲ τὰ μὲν πρῶτα ἠγνοεῖτο Θεοφίλῳ καὶ τοῖς ἀμφ' αὐτὸν ἕξωθεν ἐστῶσιν. ἀναλωθείσης δὲ λοιπὸν τῆς ἡμέρας, ὡς πολλάκις γεγωνότερον καλούντων οὐχ ὑπήκουε, καταβαλόντες τοὺς πρὸς τῇ θύρᾳ λίθους εὗρον τὸν ἄνδρα νεκρὸν· καὶ περιστείλαντες ἦ ἔδει δημοσίας ἠξίωσαν ταφῆς· καὶ εὐκτίριον οἶκον περὶ τὸν αὐτοῦ τάφον ὠκοδόμησαν οἱ ἐπίχωροι, καὶ ἐπισημότατα εἰσέτι νῦν τὴν ἡμέραν τῆς αὐτοῦ τελευτῆς ἄγουσι. (19, 7) ὁ μὲν δὴ Νιλάμμων ὧδε τέθνηκεν, εἴ γε δεῖ θάνατον καλεῖν ὃν ὑπομεῖναι ἠὔξατο πρὶν ἐπιτραπῆναι τὴν ἱερωσύνην, ἧς ἀνάξιος εἶναι διὰ μετριότητα τρόπων ἠγείτο.

'The bishop of this city died, and the inhabitants, I have been informed, elected Nilammon to preside over their church; he was a good man, and had attained the summit of monastic philosophy. He dwelt outside the city, in a cell of which the door was built up with stones. He refused to accept the dignity of the priesthood; and Theophilus, therefore, visited him in person, to exhort him to receive ordination at his hands. Nilammon repeatedly refused the honour; but, as Theophilus would take no refusal, he said to him: "Tomorrow, my father, you shall act as you please; today it is requisite that I should arrange my affairs". Theophilus repaired, on the following day, to the cell of the monk, and commanded the door to be opened; but Nilammon exclaimed, "Let us first engage in prayer". Theophilus complied and began to pray. Nilammon likewise prayed within his cell, and in the act of prayer he expired. Theophilus, and those who were standing with him outside the cell, knew nothing at the time of what had occurred; but, when the greater part of the day had passed away, and his name had been loudly reiterated without his returning any answer, the stones were removed from the door, and the man was found dead. They honoured him with a public burial after they had clothed him in the necessary vestments, and the inhabitants built a house of prayer about his tomb; and they celebrate the day of his death, in a very marked way, until this day. Thus died Nilammon, if it can be called death to quit this life for another, rather than accept a bishopric of which, with extraordinary modesty, he considered himself unworthy.'

In the *Martyrologium Romanum* (33), which probably goes back to the account of Sozomenos, this anchorite Nilammon from Gerra in Egypt is celebrated on 6 January<sup>2307</sup>:

Geris, in Aegypto, sancti Nilammonis reclusi, qui, dum ad episcopatum traheretur invitus, in oratione spiritum Deo reddidit.

'In Gera, in Egypt, the day of the holy recluse Nilammon, who was made bishop against his own will and sent his soul back to God while praying.'

In his Easter letter of 404 AD (18) the same Theophilus announces that in the 'oppidum of Geras' bishop Eudaimon has been replaced by bishop Pirozos (or Pisosos)<sup>2308</sup>:

et hoc nosse debetis: pro defunctis episcopis in locis singulorum constitutos. ... in oppido Geras pro Eudemone Pirozum; ...

'Vous devez aussi savoir qu'à la place des évêques défunts nous avons institué dans leurs localités respectives: ... dans la ville de Geras, au lieu d'Eudemone, Pirozus; ...'

<sup>2307</sup> *Martyrologium Romanum*, 6 Ianuarius (*Martyrologium*, 1922, p. 6). According to Stiernon, D. and L., s.v. Gerra 1, in DHGE, XX, 1984, col. 1046 the form 'Geris' corresponds with the nominative 'Gerae' (f. pl.), but a nominative 'Gera' (n. pl.) seems more likely. Nilammon has only been incorporated in martyrologies from 1586 AD on; cf. Delehay, 1940, p. 8-9 and Sauget, Joseph-Marie, s.v. Nilammon, in BS, 1967, IX, col. 994-995.

<sup>2308</sup> Hieronymus, *Epistulae*, 100 (*Epistula paschalis (III) Theophili*), 18 (Labourt, 1955, p. 91). The manuscripts give the reading 'Pisozum' (cf. Hilberg, 1996 [= 1912], p. 232; Labourt, 1955, p. 91; Van Gucht, 1982, p. 126) while the older editions and most scholars apparently prefer the form 'Pirosum' (cf. Le Quien, 1740, II, col. 551; Gams, 1873, p. 461; Stiernon, D. and L., s.v. Gerra 1, in DHGE, XX, 1984, col. 1046) or 'Pirozum' (cf. Gelzer, 1890, p. 113; Abel, 1940, p. 236; Munier, 1943, p. 12; Sauget, Joseph-Marie, s.v. Nilammon, in BS, 1967, IX, col. 995; Feissel, 1984, p. 561; Worp, 1994, p. 298.314; Évieux, 1995, p. 63; Martin, 1996, p. 83). Feissel, 1984, p. 561-562, n. 90 rejects the unparalleled Pisosos and links the name Pirozos with the Iranian name 'Peroz', but this identification is hardly conclusive. Worp, 1994, p. 314, n. 165 tentatively suggests that Pirozos was a variant of the name Piroous > Proous > Praous.

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It is likely therefore that Eudaimon is identical with the bishop who had died in Sozomenos' story, and that after the death of Nilammon Pirozos has been elected bishop of Gerra<sup>2309</sup> early in 404 AD<sup>2310</sup>.

A bishop Leontios is the addressee of some letters of Isidoros of Pelousion, sometimes mentioned together with Hermogenes of Rinokoloura and Lampetios of Kasion<sup>2311</sup>. Évieux suggests to consider Leontios the bishop of Gerra, who precedes bishop Stephanos, but despite his very sophisticated argumentation this is a mere hypothesis.

Bishop Stephanos of Gerra participated at the Council of Chalcedon (21-22) held in 451 AD<sup>2312</sup>:

Στεφάνου Γέρως (3, 155) - Stephano Geros (3, 155)  
'Stephanos of Geros'

Στέφανος ἐπίσκοπος Γεριτῶν (25, 10) - Stephanus episcopus Geritum (25, 10)  
'Stephanos bishop of the people of Geros'

Hierokles (23) ca. 527/528 AD mentions Γέρας (Gerra) and Σκέννα (Skenai) between Aphnaion and Pelousion as two of the thirteen towns lying in the ἐπαρχία Αὐγούστα α' (province Augustamnica I)<sup>2313</sup>.

The 6th century Medaba mosaic unfortunately breaks off between Aphnaion and Pelousion, and does therefore not yield any information on Gerra or the nearby Skenai.

In 586/587 AD Petros of Antiocheia, who was in dispute with Damianos of Alexandria, wrote a letter to some men in Alexandria in which he explained the events involved. In this letter he described how he had heard that Damianos had sent

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<sup>2309</sup> Migne, PG 26, 1887, col. 1413, n. 77 incorrectly links this Geras with the see of Geryathis in Libye, mentioned ca. 339 in Athanasios' *Epistula ad Serapionem* (Syriac version) (translated in Migne, PG 26, 1887, col. 1414) and called Geras in the *Itinerarium provinciarum Antonini Augusti*, 71, 9 (Cuntz, 1929, p. 10); for this Libyan see, cf. Lesquier, 1918, p. 403, n. 4; Martin, 1996, p. 63-64.66.

<sup>2310</sup> Against Évieux, 1995, p. 62-63, who states that Nilammon succeeded Pirozos.

<sup>2311</sup> Cf. Évieux, 1995, p. 62-67 (cf. p. 399).

<sup>2312</sup> *Concilium universale Chalcedonense*, 3, 155 (Gesta Chalcedone) (Schwartz, 1933, 2, 1, 1, p. 59 and Schwartz, 1935, 2, 3, 1, p. 33); 25, 10 [cf. 20] (Libellus episcoporum Aegyptiorum) (Schwartz, 1933, 2, 1, 2, p. 111 and 1936, 2, 3, 2, p. 114-115). Stephanos was present during the first session at 8 October 451 AD and during the fourth session at 17 October (cf. Stiennon, D. and L., s.v. Gerra 1, in DHGE, XX, 1984, col. 1046).

<sup>2313</sup> Hierokles, 727, 5-6 (Honigmann, 1939a, p. 46).

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some envoys to Syria, and how he himself therefore sent some men to Gerra to inform the holy monasteries there of their coming. Maspero thinks that Gerra in the northern Sinai is referred to, but Chabot and Stiernon, pointing out that Gerra occurs in a Syrian context, identify the place with the Gerra in the region of Antiocheia<sup>2314</sup>.

Georgios of Cyprus (25-26) ca. 591-603 AD mentions Γέρος (Gerra) and Ἴτ(ρ)άγερως, a deformation of '(Skenai ex)tra Geros', in the ἐπαρχία Αὐγουσταμνικῆς (province Augustamnica, sc. I) belonging to the dioikesis of Egypt<sup>2315</sup>. The two places are listed without much geographical order between Panephrisis and Tenesos.

In a papyrus from 677 AD found in Nessana a person named Gerraskos occurs. According to Figueras this name, for which I did not find any parallels, might be related to Gerra in the northern Sinai, but there are few arguments to support such a hypothesis<sup>2316</sup>.

In the 7th century AD the Ravennas geographer (27-28) mentions Gerra twice. First it is listed as 'Gera' in 'Iudee Palestine' after Ostrakine and Kasion. In a second list mentioning places from Libya to Syria 'Gerra' is placed between Pelousion and Kasion<sup>2317</sup>.

In an Egyptian context without much geographical order 'Gausio' and 'Archa' are mentioned next to each other<sup>2318</sup>. Müller tentatively links Archa with the Greek word ἀρχή and so looks for a parallel with the expression Γέρρον ὄριον in Ptolemaios (8). This is hardly convincing, but every link with Gerra in the northern

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<sup>2314</sup> The letter of Petros is quoted by Dionysios of Tell el-Mahare, who is excerpted by Michael Syrius, *Chronicon*, 10, 22 (Syriac) (translated in Chabot, 1904, II 3, p. 368). For the identification of Gerra, cf. Chabot, 1899, I, p. 30\* (index) and Stiernon, D. and L., s.v. Gerra 1, in DHGE, XX, 1984, col. 1046 against Maspero, 1923, p. 312-313.

<sup>2315</sup> Georgios of Cyprus, 698-699 (Honigmann, 1939a, p. 58). Fedalto, 1988, p. 605 erroneously considers the work of Georgios and its previous edition in *Notitia episcopatum*, I (Parthey, 1866) as two different works. The list of Georgios has been copied as a list of bishoprics [ὁ Γέρος - ὁ Τραγέρας] in *Notitia episcopatum*, B, 1, 11-12 (Benešević, 1927, p. 69) (37-38).

<sup>2316</sup> P.Ness. III, 66, 7 [Γερασκό(υ)]; cf. Figueras, 2000, p. 195.

<sup>2317</sup> Ravennas geographer, 2, 14 (Pinder, 1860, p. 83, 10; Schnetz, 1940, p. 25); 5, 7 (Pinder, 1860, p. 356, 5; Schnetz, 1940, p. 90), quoted by Guido, 93 (Pinder, 1860, p. 524, 7; Schnetz, 1940, p. 133) (30).

<sup>2318</sup> Ravennas geographer, 3, 2 (Pinder, 1860, p. 128, 12-13; Schnetz, 1940, p. 35); cf. Müller, 1901, I 2, p. 682; Schnetz, 1943, p. 22-23.

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Sinai certainly disappears if one accepts Schnetz's hypothesis that Archa ('Arc-ha') corresponds with the Egyptian expression 'rq-ḥḥ, 'necropolis'.

In a Greek-Coptic-Arab list of bishoprics of the 14th century AD (32) the Greek Γερασ, situated in 'the fourth part' (i.e. the province Augustamnica II), is identified with the Coptic ⲠⲃⲀⲚⲒ (or ⲃⲀⲚⲒ) ⲈⲧⲖⲈⲗⲗⲔ, which can be translated as '(The) city of the old age'<sup>2319</sup>. The location in Augustamnica II is a mistake. The Coptic scribe also apparently mixed up 'Geras' with the Greek word γῆρας, 'old age', and translated accordingly. The Coptic name, therefore, can hardly be considered the original Egyptian name of the city of Gerra.

The Greek *Notitia Alexandrina* (34-36), found on a map of 1722 AD, is based upon an alphabetically arranged Latin bishops' list of 1661 AD, which goes back on a not alphabetical list of 1641 AD. The bishopric Γέρρα (Gerrum ... Stephani Episcopi Geritarum seu Geruntis ... [1641] - Geruntis [1661]) is situated in the province Augustamnica I<sup>2320</sup>.

## SKENAI (EKTOS GERROUS)

### Topographical situation

The name Skenai ektos Gerrous, 'Tents outside of Gerra' points to a location in the immediate neighbourhood of the town of Gerra. As Hierokles (5) mentions Skenai between Gerra and Pelousion, it may have been situated to the west of the former place. There are no indications about the exact distance between the two places or about its position with regard to the Mediterranean or to the main road between

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<sup>2319</sup> Cf. De Rougé, 1891, p. 157 and n. 4 ('la vieille ville'); Amélineau, 1893, p. 510.572.576; Daressy, 1894, p. 206.208 (who instead looks for a link with respectively cape Ἰαγίου Κέρας and 'ancient' Taua in the western Delta); Clédat, 1923b, p. 165 ('la ville du vieillard' or 'la ville vieille'); Maspero, 1923, p. 312, n. 2; Munier, 1943, p. 44.49.56; Sauget, Joseph-Marie, s.v. Nilammone, in BS, 1967, IX, col. 995; Kosack, 1971, p. 27.35.57 ('(die) Altstadt'); Feissel, 1984, p. 562 ('la ville vieille'); Stiernon, D. and L., s.v. Gerra 1, in DHGE, XX, 1984, col. 1045; Martin, 1996, p. 38-39, n. 78; Figueras, 2000, p. 193 (who incorrectly supposes that the Coptic name represents a real tradition).

<sup>2320</sup> *Notitia Alexandrina*, 33 (Honigmann, 1961, p. 156-157); cf. Gelzer, 1893b, p. 25.



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Pelousion and Gerra, but most likely it lay maximum a few kilometres from each of them<sup>2321</sup>.

### Administrative situation

The military camp (κάστρα) Skenai ekto Gerrou has been built at the latest in the early 4th century AD (2). At first it was probably an extension of the town of Gerra<sup>2322</sup>, but possibly from the early 4th (1) and certainly from the 6th century on (4-6) the two are considered different places<sup>2323</sup>. About 314-318 AD Skenai probably belonged to the province of Aegyptus Herculia (1), in the early 5th century AD possibly to the Egyptian province Augustamnica (3), and in the 6th century AD certainly to the province Augustamnica I (4-5). With regard to the ecclesiastical organisation, the inhabitants of Skenai no doubt depended from the bishopric of Gerra.

### Identifications<sup>2324</sup>

It is impossible to identify Skenai conclusively with el-Kenisa, el-Shoada or any other archaeological site in the neighbourhood of Mahammediya (Gerra).

Redford identifies Skenai with the toponym Ḥṭyn in the New Kingdom northern Sinai itinerary of P. Anastasi I because of the alleged geographical proximity, but this is a mere conjecture<sup>2325</sup>.

Some scholars identify Skenai and Gerra, and Clédat even translated 'Scenas extra Gerasa' as 'Skenné, sous réserve Gerra', which is unacceptable. It seems more correct always to distinguish between the camp near Gerra and the town of Gerra

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<sup>2321</sup> Cf. the map Abel, 1940, pl. 7. Évieux, 1995, p. 419.420, locating Skenai quite south of the Mediterranean, possibly follows Abel, 1940, p. 237, who suggests that Skenai has to be looked for in the tells to the southwest of Mahammediya.

<sup>2322</sup> Cf. Mitthof, CPR XXIII, 2002, p. 119. According to Figueras, 2000, p. 191 Gerra originated as a development of Skenai ekto Gerrou, but this does not make sense.

<sup>2323</sup> Against the doubts expressed by Feissel, 1984, p. 562, n. 96.

<sup>2324</sup> For the possible identification of Skenai ekto Gerrou with one of the other Skenai mentioned in the sources, see § Homonyms.

<sup>2325</sup> P. Anastasi I, 27, 4 (5); Redford, 1998, p. 46, n. 9 and p. 49, n. 22.

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itself. Arguments to identify the place with either Pentaschoinon or Aphnaion<sup>2326</sup> are also lacking.

Some scholars identify Skenai with Chabriou Charax, a military settlement of the 4th century BC, whose name was known at least till the 1st century AD<sup>2327</sup>. Figueras also suggests that Skenai might correspond with Castra Alexandri and (a part of) Stratopeda<sup>2328</sup>. Except for a vague geographical proximity there is nothing to recommend these identifications.

### Orthographic variants

The use of the accusative 'Scenas' (3), which is also the common form for similar toponyms in the *Itinerarium Antonini* and in the *Notitia dignitatum*, has probably been derived from formulas as ἐξερχόμενος εἰς Σκηναῖς ('leaving for Skenai') - followed by a specific name -, as we find them in Rom.Mil.Rec., 76, a papyrus of 179 AD.

The form 'Skenna' (Σκέσσα) (4), female singular or neuter plural, seems to be a deformation of 'Skenai'<sup>2329</sup>. According to Honigmann the 'i' in Itrageros (5) is a remnant of the article ἡ<sup>2330</sup>, which presupposes an expression as ἡ (Σκηνη?) (ἔξ)τρα Γέρους; the use of the Latin preposition 'extra' can be explained as an influence from the local army administration, which was partially kept in Latin.

### Etymology

According to some scholars the name 'Skenai' or 'Tents' came into being because of the association with the tent-camps of the Arabs<sup>2331</sup>, but tents were

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<sup>2326</sup> Cf. Pieper, Max, s.v. Gerrha, in RE, VII 1, 1910, col. 1273; Miller, 1916, col. 813-814; Clédat, 1920, p. 116.119 and 1923b, p. 164; Van Berchem, 1952, p. 63; Price, 1976, p. 147; rejected by Abel, 1940, p. 62 and p. 237, n. 5.

<sup>2327</sup> Abel, 1940, p. 237; Cazelles, 1987 [= 1955], p. 222; Carrez-Maratray, 1998, p. 88; Redford, 1998, p. 46, n. 9; Figueras, 2000, p. 179.245; cf. Berg, 1973, map 2 and p. 28, with the expression Skenai Chabriou. See s.v. Chabriou Charax.

<sup>2328</sup> Figueras, 2000, p. 161.245.249. See s.v. Castra Alexandri and s.v. Stratopeda.

<sup>2329</sup> Also the place Skenai Mandrai (see § Homonyms) appears in a singular form as Σκήνη (sic) Μανδρῶν in the *Notitia Alexandrina*, 50 (Honigmann, 1961, p. 159). For the gemination of the ν, cf. Gignac, 1976, I, p. 154-155.158; for the switch η / ε before a nasal, cf. Gignac, 1976, I, p. 242-234.

<sup>2330</sup> Honigmann, 1939a, p. 50 [ἡ(ῆ)τράγερος], in contradiction with his interpretation ἡ(ῆ)τράγερος on p. 58.

<sup>2331</sup> Altheim, 1971, p. 368, n. 82; Altheim, Franz - Stiehl, Ruth, s.v. Araber in Ägypten, LÄ, I, 1975, col. 360; Shahîd, 1984, p. 57, n. 28; Winnicki, 2000, p. 171.

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commonly used in the Roman army, and there is no reason to look for a specific Arab link.

Clédat suggests that Skenai, which he spells as Σχέσσα (instead of Hierokles' Σκέσσα (4)), is a short form for Pentaschoinon<sup>2332</sup>, but there is no reason to look for a link between the two places.

### Homonyms

The name Skenai is fairly common in Palestine and Lower Egypt. A place Skenai, probably in Palestine, is mentioned in the Zenon archive about 259 BC<sup>2333</sup>. The biblical Sukkot in Palestine is translated as Skenai by Christian authors<sup>2334</sup>. In the eastern Memphites lie the village Skenai Arabon<sup>2335</sup>, known from the 3rd century BC on, and the garrison Skenai Mandrai<sup>2336</sup>, known from the 2nd century AD on. The garrison Scenae Veteranorum<sup>2337</sup>, known from about 300 AD on, is situated in the southeastern Delta, and a Skenai<sup>2338</sup>, mentioned in 183 AD, possibly lies in the Arabia nome. In a papyrus of 179 AD the garrisons Skenai Megalai, Skenai Mikrai and three Skenai without specification occur; they probably lie in Lower Egypt, but it is impossible to locate them more precisely or to identify them with certainty with one of the known Skenai in Egypt<sup>2339</sup>.

### Analysis of the sources

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<sup>2332</sup> Clédat, 1923b, p. 164. Van Berchem, 1952, p. 64, n. 2 made - independently? - a similar suggestion.

<sup>2333</sup> P.Col.Zen. I, 2, 6; P.Lond. VII, 1930, 34. Cf. Westermann, P.Col.Zen. I, 1934, p. 7-8; Skeat, P.Lond. VII, 1974, p. 10; P.L.Bat. XXI, 1981, p. 497; Calderini, 1986, IV 3, p. 289. Tsafir, 1982, p. 214, n. 12 incorrectly locates this Skenai in the Sinai.

<sup>2334</sup> Eusebios, *Onomasticon*, s.v. Σκηναί (Klostermann, 1904, p. 152), followed by Hieronymus, *Liber de situ et nominibus locorum Hebraicorum*, s.v. Scenae (Klostermann, 1904, p. 153). Cf. Odelain, 1978, p. 364, s.v. Sukkot.

<sup>2335</sup> Cf. Calderini, 1986, IV 3, p. 290 and IV 4, p. 338-339.

<sup>2336</sup> Cf. Kees, Hermann, s.v. Scenae 2, in RE, II A 1, 1921, col. 367; Calderini, 1986, IV 3, p. 290.

<sup>2337</sup> *Itinerarium provinciarum Antonini Augusti*, 163, 3 and 169, 4 (Cuntz, 1929, p. 22.23); *Notitia dignitatum*, 28, 17.30 (Seeck, 1876, p. 59). Cf. Kees, Hermann, s.v. Scenae 3, in RE, II A 1, 1921, col. 367; Calderini, 1986, IV 3, p. 290-291.

<sup>2338</sup> P.Oxy. LX, 4066, 25. Cf. Calderini, 1996, Suppl. 2, p. 194.

<sup>2339</sup> Rom.Mil.Rec., 76, passim. For this document, see also s.v. Laura. Cf. Calderini, 1986, IV 3, p. 290; Alston, 1995, p. 35.169. Meyer, P.Hamb. I 2, 1913, p. 179 and Lesquier, 1918, p. 392, n. 3 and p. 393 suggest that Skenai Mikrai or one of the other Skenai could be identical with Skenai ektos Gerrous.



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of money on behalf of Saeibas from Skenai ekτος Gerrous to Didymos son of Perdikas from Boubasthos, but since the former would not make payment, ...'  
 In the petition an argument between Malchos and Didymos is described, but Saeibas is no longer mentioned. The man, whose patronymic is omitted, originated from Skenai ekτος Gerrous, but further information is lacking and also the name Saeibas is not known elsewhere. His name, which does not seem to be Egyptian, and his connexions with Malchos son of Ionathes, who has a Semitic name and stayed in Syria, might lead to the hypothesis that he came from Syria or from the Arab world. The praeses of Aegyptus Herculia is probably addressed because Boubastis fell under his jurisdiction; most likely also Skenai ekτος Gerrous belonged to that Egyptian province, which is often considered to include the territory of the later province Augustamnica.

In another papyrus from Oxyrynchos, written in the 4th century somewhere after 324 AD, at least 39 soldiers (l. 2-40) are listed under the entry 'Camp of Skenai ekτος Gerrous' (2)<sup>2343</sup>. The list starts with centurio Paesis and decurio Asklas; for the other persons no title or function is mentioned. Each name is preceded by Flavius, the 'nomen' of the house of Constantinus, while the preserved names are Egyptian or Greek. It is not known to which army unit they belong:

col. 1

|    |                                 |                                   |
|----|---------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1  | κ(άστρα) Σκημῶν ἐκτὸς Γέρουσ    | Camp of Skenai ekτος Gerrous      |
|    | Φλ(άουιος) Παῆσις (ἐκατοντάρχη) | Flavius Paesis centurio           |
|    | Φλ(άουιος) Ἀσκλᾶς (δεκαδάρχη)   | Flavius Asklas decurio            |
|    | Φλ(άουιος) Πετε..νσις           | Flavius Pete..nsis (Petechonsis?) |
| 5  | Φλ(άουιος) Πετε..ιρις           | Flavius Pete..iris                |
|    | Φλ(άουιος) Φθιάους              | Flavius Phthiaous                 |
|    | Φλ(άουιος) Παῆσις               | Flavius Paesis                    |
|    | Φλ(άουιος) Μουσής               | Flavius Mouses                    |
|    | Φλ(άουιος) Φθιάους              | Flavius Phiaous                   |
| 10 | Φλ(άουιος) Πιατίλις             | Flavius Piatilis                  |
|    | Φλ(άουιος) Ἀνουβίων             | Flavius Anoubion                  |
|    | Φλ(άουιος) Ἱερακίων             | Flavius Hier<a>kion               |
|    | Φλ(άουιος) Κροῦρ                | Flavius Krour                     |
|    | Φλ(άουιος) Ὠρίων                | Flavius Horion                    |
| 15 | Φλ(άουιος) Ἀπίων                | Flavius Ap<i>on                   |
|    | Φλ(άουιος) Ἐλουρίων             | Flavius Elourion (Ailourion)      |
|    | Φλ(άουιος) Ἡρων                 | Flavius Heron                     |
|    | Φλ(άουιος) Ματόεις              | Flavius Matoeis (Matois)          |
| 19 | Φλ(άουιος) Ἀνουβίων             | Flavius Anoubion                  |

col. 2

|    |                         |                            |
|----|-------------------------|----------------------------|
| 20 | Φλ(άουιος) Πιμούεις     | Flavius Pimoueis (Pimouis) |
|    | Φλ(άουιος) Παλίβις      | Flavius Palibis            |
|    | Φλ(άουιος) Τιθοῆς [ ]   | Flavius Tithoes            |
|    | Φλ(άουιος) .....σις [ ] | Flavius .....sis           |

<sup>2343</sup> P.Oxy. L, 3580, 1-40.

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|    |                           |                              |
|----|---------------------------|------------------------------|
|    | Φλ(άουιος) Ἰσίδωρος [ ]   | Flavius Isidoros             |
| 25 | [Φλ(άουιος) ..[ ]         | [Flavius ]                   |
|    | [Φλ(άουιος) ]             | [Flavius ]                   |
|    | [Φλ(άουιος) ]             | [Flavius ]                   |
|    | Φλ(άουιος) ..[ ]          | Flavius ..[ ]                |
|    | Φλ(άουιος) .[ ]           | Flavius .[ ]                 |
| 30 | Φλ(άουιος) .[ ]           | Flavius .[ ]                 |
|    | Φλ(άουιος) .[ ]           | Flavius .[ ]                 |
|    | Φλ(άουιος) .[ ]           | Flavius .[ ]                 |
|    | Φλ(άουιος) .[ ]           | Flavius .[ ]                 |
|    | Φλ(άουιος) .[ ]           | Flavius .[ ]                 |
|    | Φλ(άουιος) ]              | Fl[avius ]                   |
| 35 | Φλ(άουιος) .[ ]           | Flavius .[ ]                 |
|    | Φλ(άουιος) Ἀρφάτ (vac.)   | Flavius Harphat              |
|    | Φλ(άουιος) Ψόεις (vac.)   | Flavius Psoeis (Psois)       |
| 38 | Φλ(άουιος) Φίλιπος (vac.) | Flavius Philipos (Philippos) |
|    | col. 3                    |                              |
| 39 | Φ[λ(άουιος) ]             | F[lavius ]                   |
| 40 | Φ[λ(άουιος) ]             | F[lavius ]                   |
|    | [ ]                       |                              |

The *Notitia dignitatum* (3) - composed ca. 395-430 AD - mentions seven cavalry units in the province Augustamnica<sup>2344</sup>, including the ala prima Herculia stationed at 'Scenae extra Gerasa'<sup>2345</sup>:

Ala prima Herculia, Scenas extra Gerasa  
'The first cavalry unit Herculia, at Scenae extra Gerasa'

There is little doubt that 'Gerasa' is a mistake and that Skenai near Gerra is referred to.

Évieux identifies the bishops Theodosios and Alpheios mentioned in the correspondence of Isidoros of Pelousion as bishops from Pentaschoinon or Skenai, the bishop Asklepios as coming from Daphnai or Skenai<sup>2346</sup>. There are no indications, however, that Skenai ever was a bishopric, and so I am not convinced by Évieux's hypothesis, which is only based on the geographical proximity of Pelousion and Skenai.

Hierokles (4) ca. 527/528 AD mentions Γέρρας (Gerra) and Σκέννα (Skenai) between Aphnaion and Pelousion as two of the thirteen towns lying in the ἐπαρχία Αὐγούστα α' (province Augustamnica I)<sup>2347</sup>.

<sup>2344</sup> If we accept the insertion of l. 37-39 before l. 26, as suggested by Price, 1976, p. 145.152 and adjusted by Worp, 1991, p. 291. Two other alae of the same province are located in 'Scenas Mandrorum' (28, 26) and 'Scenas Veteranorum' (28, 30); see § Homonyms.

<sup>2345</sup> *Notitia dignitatum*, 28, 29 (Seeck, 1876, p. 59). Carrez-Maratray, 1999b, p. 409-411 suggests that this ala was stationed at Gerra after the usurpation of Lucius Domitius Domitianus in 297-298 AD.

<sup>2346</sup> Évieux, 1995, p. 63-67.74 (cf. p. 388.390.407-408).

<sup>2347</sup> Hierokles, 727, 5-6 (Honigmann, 1939a, p. 46).

## 7. The coastal area between Kasion and Pelousion

Georgios of Cyprus (5) ca. 591-603 AD mentions Γέρος (Gerra) and Ἰτράγερος in the ἐπαρχία Αὐγουσταμνικῆς (province Augustamnica, sc. I) belonging to the dioikesis of Egypt<sup>2348</sup>. The two places are listed without much geographical order between Panephrisis and Tenesos. The element '-tra-' seems to be a deformation of the Latin preposition 'extra' followed by a variant of the toponym Gerra. There is no reason to follow Jones, who considers Itrageros a dittography for Geros and Skenna in Hierokles a corruption of Tenesos<sup>2349</sup>, nor to follow Honigmann, when he considers '-tra-' a deformation of the preposition 'intra' and so creates an unparalleled 'Scenae intra Gerra' next to a more important 'Scenae extra Gerra', which he identifies with Gerra itself<sup>2350</sup>.

Pinder and Parthey link the toponym 'Itavenis' in the 7th century Ravennas geographus with the 'It(r)ageros' of Georgios<sup>2351</sup>, but neither the orthography nor the geographical context of 'Itavenis' allow an identification with Skenai ekto Gerrou.

## CHABRIOU CHARAX

### Topographical situation

Strabon (1) locates Chabriou Charax - 'Chabrias' Camp' - on the road to Syria, between Pelousion and Gerra<sup>2352</sup>. Since both places are situated at the coast, also Chabriou Charax was most likely not very far from the Mediterranean<sup>2353</sup>. It lies east

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<sup>2348</sup> Georgios of Cyprus, 698-699 (Honigmann, 1939a, p. 58). The manuscripts give both Ἰτράγερος and Ἰτάγερος, of which the former seems to be more correct (cf. Honigmann, 1939a, p. 50). The list of Georgios has been copied as a list of bishoprics [ὁ Γέρωσ - ὁ Τραγέρας] in *Notitia episcopatum*, B, 1, 11-12 (Benešević, 1927, p. 69) (6). This is the only mention of Skenai as a bishopric and it can certainly not be used to prove that the place had a bishop (against Ermoni, 1900, p. 639).

<sup>2349</sup> Jones, 1971, p. 344.549 and p. 493, n. 65; cf. also Figueras, 2000, p. 61-62, n. 86; rejected by Honigmann, 1939a, p. 46 and Martin, 1996, p. 81, n. 211 and p. 83, n. 221.

<sup>2350</sup> Honigmann, 1939a, p. 58; cf. Lallemand, 1964, p. 103; Jones, 1971, p. 493, n. 65; Évieux, 1995, p. 40; followed by Hagedorn, 2005, p. 197; rejected by Martin, 1996, p. 83, n. 221.

<sup>2351</sup> Ravennas geographus, 3, 2 (Pinder, 1860, p. 127, 2; Schnetz, 1940, p. 34); cf. the (sceptical) remarks of Gelzer, 1890, p. 113; Kees, Hermann, s.v. Scenae 1, in RE, II A 1, 1921, col. 367; Honigmann, 1939a, p. 58.

<sup>2352</sup> Cf. the map Jones, 1949, map 14. Against Ball, 1942, p. 63 and p. 79, n. (cf. the map p. 69) [followed by Évieux, 1995, p. 33 and n. 16], whose statement that Chabriou Charax lies 200 stadia from the sea to the east of Pelousion, is apparently due to a confusion with the dimensions of lake Serbonis given by Strabon in that same context.

<sup>2353</sup> Cf. Pape, 1911, p. 1659.

## 7. The coastal area between Kasion and Pelousion

of the Barathra swamps of Pelousion and the Pelousiac branch<sup>2354</sup> and was probably created in the early 4th century BC as a kind of outpost east of Pelousion, which was part of the great line of defence put up around that city during the 29th and 30th dynasty.

### Administrative situation

In the 4th century BC Chabriou Charax was certainly an Egyptian military settlement. For Strabon (1) and Plinius (2) in the 1st century AD the Pelousiac branch was Egypt's geographical eastern border, which leaves Chabriou Charax at the Phoenician or Arabian side. It is not clear whether it had then become a mere benchmark along the main road or still served as a military camp.

### Identifications

In the New Kingdom northern Sinai itinerary of P.Anastasi I occurs the toponym '(r?) Ḥ-b-r-t'. Hommel thinks - apparently because of a vague phonetic similarity - that the name of this place 'dem Feldherrn Chabrias zu Liebe' has been changed into Chabriou Charax<sup>2355</sup>, but this is not based upon any evidence. Redford, on the other hand, identifies Chabriou Charax with Ḥtyn, another toponym in that papyrus, because of the alleged geographical proximity, but this is a mere conjecture<sup>2356</sup>.

Clédat considers the Stratopeda of Herodotos, Chabriou Charax and Castra Alexandri as successive names of the same camp, which he locates near Gerra<sup>2357</sup>. There are no reasons, however, to identify the three camps, nor to locate them close to Gerra.

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<sup>2354</sup> There is no reason to assume a position at the Pelousiac branch south of Pelousion, as in Pococke, 1743(?) in Tzachou-Alexandri, 1995, p. 16.

<sup>2355</sup> P.Anastasi I, 27, 7 (12); cf. Hommel, 1926, p. 964, n. 3.

<sup>2356</sup> P.Anastasi I, 27, 4 (5); Redford, 1998, p. 46, n. 9 and p. 49, n. 22.

<sup>2357</sup> Clédat, 1923a, p. 158 and 1923b, p. 166.186-187. Cf. also Abd el-Maksoud, 1992a, p. 88, Valbelle, 1995b, p. 31 and Figueras, 2000, p. 179.245, who identify Chabriou Charax and Castra Alexandri. See s.v. Stratopeda and s.v. Castra Alexandri.



## 7. The coastal area between Kasion and Pelousion

Probably west of Gerra lies the military settlement Skenai or 'Tent camp', which some scholars identify with Chabriou Charax<sup>2358</sup>. Except for a vague geographical proximity there is nothing to recommend this identification.

Hommel suggests an identification of Chabriou Charax and Pentaschoinon<sup>2359</sup>, but this is unacceptable since the first settlement lies west of Gerra and the second one east of that same place.

In a fragmentary Roman ostrakon found in the northwestern Sinai settlement Qasr Ghet the expression ἐἷς κάστρον, 'to (the) camp', occurs<sup>2360</sup>. Rokéah makes 'e.g.' a link with 'Castrum (sic) Chabriae', but because the Greek name is (Χαβρίου) χάραξ, there is hardly any reason to look for an identification.

Abd el-Maksoud tentatively locates Chabriou Charax in el-Shoada, somewhat southwest of Mahammediya (Gerra), because of a late 4th - 3rd century BC funerary inscription found on the spot mentioning 'Hegesandros son of Artemidoros', which he considers a soldier stationed in the camp<sup>2361</sup>. As long as no archaeological remains of a nearby military camp have been found, however, this identification remains a mere hypothesis.

The *Description*, identifying Pelousion and el-Tina, locates Chabriou Charax at el-Farama<sup>2362</sup>. The position somewhat east of Pelousion matches, but because Pelousion is identical with el-Farama, both identifications are unacceptable.

On the map of Pococke the name 'Chabriae' (?) (said to be mentioned by Strabon and situated near the Pelousiac branch), is apparently linked with the unidentified toponym 'Berelles' (said to be mentioned on the 'Tabula nautica')<sup>2363</sup>.

### Etymology

The Greek word χάραξ, which is here translated in Latin as 'castra', indicates a palisaded camp<sup>2364</sup>. It has probably been founded by the Athenian general Chabrias,

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<sup>2358</sup> Abel, 1940, p. 237; Cazelles, 1987 [= 1955], p. 222; Carrez-Maratray, 1998, p. 88; Redford, 1998, p. 46, n. 9; cf. Berg, 1973, map 2 and p. 28, with the expression Skenai Chabriou. See s.v. Skenai.

<sup>2359</sup> Hommel, 1926, p. 965.

<sup>2360</sup> Rokéah, 1983, p. 96, l. 5; cf. p. 96, n. 16. For the ostrakon, see s.v. Qasr Ghet.

<sup>2361</sup> Abd el-Maksoud, 1992a, p. 88. See s.v. el-Shoada.

<sup>2362</sup> *Description*, 1830, XVIII, p. 174 and map 2.

<sup>2363</sup> Pococke, 1743(?) in Tzachou-Alexandri, 1995, p. 16. The same toponym Berelles occurs on the same spot on the map of the inner cover of Baines, 1981 [= 1980].

<sup>2364</sup> Le Quien, 1740, II, col. 551-552 incorrectly speaks of 'Chabriae ager'; Smith in Griffith, 1890, p. 74 translates 'charax' as 'ditch', which has rightly been corrected by Griffith.

## 7. The coastal area between Kasion and Pelousion

who was in Egyptian service in the periods ca. 386-380 and ca. 361-359 BC, fighting against the Persians for the kings of the 29th and 30th dynasty. During his first stay he made the war preparations for the kings Hakoris and Nektanebis (I), while he later on organised Tachos' expedition abroad against the Persians. Because the foundation of a military camp at the eastern border fits better with his first range of activities, it is most likely that Chabriou Charax has been created ca. 386-380 BC<sup>2365</sup>.

Évieux, who apparently does not know the Athenian Chabrias, suggests that the name 'Chabrias' might be a deformation of 'Gerra'<sup>2366</sup>, but in Strabon (1) Chabriou Charax and Gerra are mentioned side by side. There is no reason therefore to look for an etymological link.

### Homonyms

The element 'charax' is often used in toponyms in and outside Egypt<sup>2367</sup>.

Between the western Nile branch and lake Mareotis Strabon knows a lot of villages, including the so-called Village of Chabrias<sup>2368</sup>. It is not unlikely that the village is another settlement of the Athenian general Chabrias, this one in the western border region.

### Analysis of the sources

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<sup>2365</sup> Cf. Judeich, 1892, p. 159; Kirchner, Johannes, s.v. Chabrias 1, in RE, III 2, 1899, col. 2018.2020; Clédat, 1923a, p. 158; Schur, 1926, p. 280; Abel, 1940, p. 237; Kienitz, 1953, p. 85-89.96-97; Kiechle, Franz, s.v. Chabrias, in KP, I, 1964, col. 1120. Against Hommel, 1926, p. 964, n. 3, Yoyotte, 1997, p. 118 and Litinas, 1999, p. 191, who prefer the second period. Litinas also suggest a possible link with the Egyptian pharaoh Chabryes, mentioned in Diodoros, 1, 64, 1-6, but he rightly prefers to link the place with the Athenian Chabrias.

<sup>2366</sup> Évieux, 1995, p. 33, n. 16. See s.v. Gerra.

<sup>2367</sup> Cf. Sicard, 1982 [= 1722], III, p. viii.178-179 and the map p. 168 (with p. 179 'Chabriae vallum' incorrectly listed next to 'Chabriou vicus' in the neighbourhood of Alexandria); RE, III 2, 1899, col. 2121-2122, s.v. Charax 1-18; Pape, 1911, p. 1669; Bengtson, 1978, R 5 (index); Calderini, 1987, V, p. 110-113 and 1996, Suppl. 2, p. 236; TAVO Register, 1994, p. 338. For Charax in the western Delta, see the discussion § Analysis of the sources.

<sup>2368</sup> Strabon, 17, 1, 22 (C 803) [ἡ Χαβρίου κώμη καλουμένη ('the so-called Village of Chabrias')]; cf. Judeich, 1892, p. 159; Kirchner, Johannes, s.v. Chabrias 1, in RE, III 2, 1899, col. 2018; Sethe, Kurt, s.v. Χαβρίου 2, in RE, III 2, 1899, col. 2021; Abel, 1940, p. 237; Ball, 1942, p. 63; Kienitz, 1953, p. 85, n. 1; Calderini, 1987, V, p. 105 and Suppl. 1, p. 161; Litinas, 1999, p. 191.

## 7. The coastal area between Kasion and Pelousion

In his description of Phoenicia Strabon (1) mentions Gerra, the so-called Camp of Chabrias and the Barathra swamps near Pelousion next to each other on the track of the road between mount Kasion and Pelousion<sup>2369</sup>:

εἶθ' ἢ ἐπὶ Πηλούσιον ὁδός, ἐν ἧ τὰ Γέρρα καὶ ὁ Χαβρίου λεγόμενος χάραξ καὶ τὰ πρὸς τῷ Πηλουσίῳ βάραθρα, ἃ ποιεῖ παρεκχεόμενος ὁ Νεῖλος, φύσει κοίλων καὶ ἐλωδῶν ὄντων τῶν τόπων.

'Then comes the road to Pelousion, on which lie Gerra and the camp of Chabrias, as it is called, and the Barathra near Pelousion. These pits are formed by side-flows from the Nile, the region being by nature hollow and marshy.'

Plinius (2), describing 'Arabia', mentions the same road in the opposite direction and locates Chabrias' Camp between Pelousion and mount Kasion<sup>2370</sup>:

a Pelusio Chabriae castra, Casius mons ...

'After Pelousion (come) the camp of Chabrias, mount Kasion, ...'

According to the so-called Invocation of Isis (P.Oxy. XI, 1380; composed in the 1st century AD) the goddess is worshipped 'at Charax' as Selene<sup>2371</sup>:

ἐπὶ Χάρακος [Σε]λήνην  
'at Charax Selene'

The preceding toponyms mentioned in the papyrus can all be situated in the western Delta or in the neighbourhood of Alexandria (l. 60-72) and also the following Plinthine (l. 73) belongs to that region, so there is no reason to follow Grenfell, who thinks that this Charax is identical with the Chabriou Charax near Pelousion.

Grenfell also tentatively considers the toponym 'Chara' listed in the 7th century Ravennas geographus a mistake for 'Charax'<sup>2372</sup>, but even if this is correct, the context does not allow an identification with either Charax in the western Delta or with Chabriou Charax in the northern Sinai.

## CASTRA ALEXANDRI

### Topographical situation

If one trusts Curtius' account (1), Alexander arrived in a region of Egypt, which is afterwards called Castra Alexandri - 'Alexander's Camp' -, from where he sent troops to Pelousion and was able to embark on the Nile. This points to a location

<sup>2369</sup> Strabon, 16, 2, 33 (C 760).

<sup>2370</sup> Plinius, *Naturalis historia*, 5, 14, 68.

<sup>2371</sup> P.Oxy. XI, 1380, 72-73; cf. Grenfell, P.Oxy. XI, 1915, p. 207.213; Lafaye, 1916, p. 60-61.83 ('la Digue'); Van Groningen, 1921, p. 64; Manteuffel, 1928, p. 162 and 1930, p. 75 (who establishes the reading [Σε]λήνην); Bricault, 1995 (draft), p. 32.

<sup>2372</sup> Ravennas geographus, 3, 2 (Pinder, 1860, p. 127, 6; Schnetz, 1940, p. 34).

## 7. The coastal area between Kasion and Pelousion

on the eastern shore of the Pelousiac branch, somewhere in the neighbourhood of Pelousion<sup>2373</sup>. With the city of Pelousion in the 4th century BC on the western shore of that branch, the camp might be situated immediately east of Pelousion or somewhat more to the south.

### Administrative situation

Alexander's encampment in 332 BC was apparently situated on Egyptian soil, but it is not clear which status the so-called *Castra Alexandri* had in the early Roman period.

### Identifications

Clédat considers the *Stratopeda* of Herodotos, Chabriou Charax and *Castra Alexandri* as successive names of the same camp, which he locates near Gerra<sup>2374</sup>. There are no reasons, however, to identify the three camps, nor to locate them close to Gerra.

Abel tentatively supposes that Antigonos Monophthalmos, who camped in 306 BC at a distance of some 2 stadia (ca. 370 m) from the Pelousiac branch, stayed on the same spot as Alexander did in 332 BC<sup>2375</sup>, but this is impossible to prove.

Andréossy locates *Castra Alexandri* in Qatia because this was in 1799 the only major oasis in the neighbourhood. Clédat confirms that he saw in Khirbet el-Mard, northwest of Qatia, a large enclosure, surrounded by the remains of a reed palisade and containing some mud brick structures. Clédat concludes that the camp probably extended over a distance of some 15 km from Mahammediya (Gerra) to Qatia<sup>2376</sup>. Both identifications - Qatia and Khirbet el-Mard - are, however, unacceptable.

### Etymology

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<sup>2373</sup> Cf. Abel, 1940, p. 237. The indication 'at an unknown place not far from Port Said' in Bardon, 1961, I, p. 71, n. 3 is only approximate.

<sup>2374</sup> Clédat, 1923a, p. 158 and 1923b, p. 166. Cf. also Abd el-Maksoud, 1992a, p. 88, Valbelle, 1995b, p. 31 and Figueras, 2000, p. 179.245, who identify Chabriou Charax and *Castra Alexandri*. See s.v. *Stratopeda* and s.v. Chabriou Charax.

<sup>2375</sup> Abel, 1940, p. 237. See s.v. *Itineraries*.

<sup>2376</sup> Description, Andréossy, 1822, XI, p. 550; Clédat, 1923a, p. 158-159. See s.v. Qatia and s.v. Khirbet el-Mard.

## 7. The coastal area between Kasion and Pelousion

The name 'Castra Alexandri' - 'Alexander's Camp' - used by Curtius is perhaps a translation of a Greek expression as ἡ 'Αλεξάνδρου Παρεμβολή.

### Homonyms

Ptolemaios knows a place called ἡ 'Αλεξάνδρου Παρεμβολή in the Ammoniake region in the Egyptian western desert, which probably corresponds with one of the oases in the neighbourhood of the Siwa Oasis<sup>2377</sup>.

### Analysis of the sources

In November - December 332 BC Alexander marched by land across the northern Sinai, while his fleet went ahead<sup>2378</sup>. According to Quintus Curtius Rufus a large crowd had gathered in Pelousion, apparently to welcome Alexander, because he would free them from the Persians. The king arrived after a march of seven days in a region in Egypt, which in Curtius' days was called Alexander's Camp. He sent his troops to Pelousion, while he embarked on the Nile with a chosen group and headed for Memphis<sup>2379</sup>:

igitur ingens multitudo Pelusium, qua intraturus videbatur, convenerat. atque ille septimo die postquam a Gaza copias moverat, in regionem Aegypti quam nunc Castra Alexandri vocant, pervenit. deinde pedestribus copiis Pelusium petere iussis, ipse cum expedita delectorum manu Nilo amne vectus est.

'Therefore a vast multitude of them had assembled at Pelusium, where they thought that (Alexander) would enter the country. And in fact on the seventh day after moving his forces from Gaza he came to that part of Egypt which they now call Alexander's Camp. From there he ordered the infantry forces to go to Pelusium, and he himself with a light-armed band of elite troops sailed up the river Nile.'

There are some particularities in Curtius' phrasing. Alexander arrives in a region in Egypt (*regio Aegypti*)<sup>2380</sup>, which is called Alexander's Camp. One does not expect,

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<sup>2377</sup> Ptolemaios, 4, 5, 14 (Müller, 1901, I 2, p. 698); cf. Ball, 1942, p. 114.

<sup>2378</sup> It is not known how many troops Alexander had with him in Egypt, but 14000 men seems a reasonable estimate; cf. Seibert, 1985, p. 84-85, n. 33.

<sup>2379</sup> Quintus Curtius Rufus, 4, 7, 2-3.

<sup>2380</sup> One can wonder whether 'in *regionem Aegypti*' has to be translated instead as 'in the region of Egypt', just as Curtius' expression 'in *regionem Mediae transiit*' (5, 7, 11) is to be understood as 'he crossed into the region of Media'; in that case, however, the following relative clause has to be considered a later interpolation, because it is hardly understandable why the whole of Egypt should be named Alexander's Camp.

## 7. The coastal area between Kasion and Pelousion

however, a region to be called a camp<sup>2381</sup>. Furthermore, there are no indications in Curtius' account that Alexander actually built a real camp at his arrival in Egypt, since his troops seem to be sent immediately to Pelousion and he himself embarked for Memphis. This might be combined with the fact that Curtius states that the region in his days was called Alexander's Camp (*nunc ... vocant*), not that it had that name till his own time. Therefore, one gets the impression that the clause 'which they now call Alexander's Camp' does not belong to the original tradition of the Alexander historians, but is possibly an addition of Curtius or of one of his sources. This addition perhaps indeed represents a local tradition, but the possibility cannot be ruled out that the whole parenthesis in fact has nothing to do with the Pelousion area. In any case, the account of Arrianos does not dwell on this item: Alexander arrived in Pelousion and found his ships anchored there; he left a garrison in the city, sent his ships towards Memphis and followed himself on the eastern shore of the (Pelousiac) Nile branch<sup>2382</sup>. The route followed from Pelousion to Memphis is in contradiction with Curtius, where Alexander leaves most of his troops in Pelousion and sets off by ship with a small group, a scenario that seems less plausible.

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<sup>2381</sup> A parallel expression for the whole does occur in 3, 4, 1: *in regionem quae Castra Cyri appellatur, pervenerat* ('he had arrived in an area which is called the Camp of Cyrus') (cf. Mützell, 1841, p. 53-54.259-260), but in this case the naming is explained in the following lines.

<sup>2382</sup> Arrianos, *Anabasis Alexandri*, 3, 1, 1.3. Pelousion is not even mentioned by Diodoros, 17, 49, 1, who gives no details on the march to Egypt. Cf. Abel, 1939, p. 215, n. 1 for the differences between the accounts. See also s.v. Itineraries.

## *Arab period*

### **EL-UDHAIB - UMM EL-ARAB**

#### **Topographical situation**

According to Ibn Khurdadbeh (1) el-Udhaib is a road station at 20 miles (about 40 km) west of el-Tha'ama and 24 miles (about 48 km) east of el-Farama, probably along the coast, though his distances are somewhat high. Yaqut (3) situates it rather vaguely in the neighbourhood of el-Farama.

The place el-Udhaib is most likely in some way connected with Umm el-Arab, which is situated by Maqrizi (8) at the Mediterranean coast, somewhere in the area between Qatia and el-Warrada. Yaqut (6 / 7), on the other hand, locates the place in the neighbourhood of el-Farama. In the 15th century AD the place was no longer inhabited.

#### **Identifications**

The itinerary of Ibn Khurdadbeh (1) is quoted twice by Maqrizi. Once he (or his source) replaced el-Udhaib with el-Ghurabi, a place situated more south and known from the 13th century AD on (5); this is possibly a misleading 'actualisation' of the itinerary, or just due to an incorrect reading of the name<sup>2383</sup>. In another context Maqrizi (8) replaced el-Udhaib with Umm el-Arab<sup>2384</sup>. The description of Umm el-Arab that he adds, might correspond with el-Udhaib and maybe Maqrizi incorrectly replaced this name with the name of a site in the neighbourhood that was more familiar to him. It cannot be ruled out, on the other, that Umm el-Arab was just another name for el-Udhaib<sup>2385</sup>.

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<sup>2383</sup> The variant spellings [el-ʿrib] and [el-ʿzib] for [el-ʿdib] in Ibn Khurdadbeh can easily be confused by Maqrizi with the form [el-grib]; cf. de Goeje, 1889, p. 80, n. f.

<sup>2384</sup> Clédat, 1910a, p. 237, n. 1 and 1920, p. 118, n. 1, apparently ignoring the original itinerary of Ibn Khurdadbeh, therefore incorrectly identifies el-Ghurabi and Umm el-Arab.

<sup>2385</sup> Again the switch can be due to a palaeographical problem since [el-ʿrb] is quite similar to [el-ʿrib] or [el-grib].

## 7. The coastal area between Kasion and Pelousion

Clédat and Hartmann suggest that el-Udhaib is to be identified with el-Baqqara<sup>2386</sup>. Indeed both el-Udhaib (in Ibn Khurdadbeh (1)) and el-Baqqara (in Qudama) are situated at 24 miles or about 48 km west of el-Farama, but the distances in Ibn Khurdadbeh are probably somewhat high and the fact that both places are probably situated on different roads, makes an identification impossible.

Ibn Khurdadbeh (1) apparently adapted a Byzantine itinerary, which implies that the place most likely existed already in Byzantine times under a different name. This is confirmed by Maqrizi (8) who adds that people in Umm el-Arab were digging for silver coins. Clédat identifies Umm el-Arab and Kasion<sup>2387</sup>, but the distance of about 48 km (which is probably even too high) points to a location some 5 to 10 km west of Kasion. An identification with the ancient Pentaschoinon, Aphnaion or Gerra<sup>2388</sup> seems more likely.

### Etymology

The etymology of the name el-Udhaib is not clear to me.

According to some Arabic sources (6 / 7), Hagar, the mother of Ismael, was born in Umm el-Arab ('Mother of the Arabs'), which therefore at some point must have been named after her.

### Homonyms

A place el-Udhaib is also known in Palestine<sup>2389</sup>.

### Analysis of the sources

Ismael, the son of Abraham and his Egyptian slave Hagar, is considered the ancestor of the Arabs. According to the 8th century author Ibn Lahia (6), as quoted by Yaqut (7), Hagar originated from the Egyptian village Umm el-Arab ('Mother of the

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<sup>2386</sup> Clédat, 1910a, p. 237, n. 1 and 1923b, p. 161, discussed s.v. el-Baqqara; Hartmann, 1910, p. 675.677 (in conflict with his own identification of el-Tha'ama and el-Baqqara).

<sup>2387</sup> Clédat, 1923b, p. 161.

<sup>2388</sup> Cf. Figueras, 2000, p. 56.

<sup>2389</sup> Cf. Wüstenfeld, 1870, VI, p. 149 (index Yaqut); de Goeje, 1889, p. 166 (Qudama); Marmardji, 1951, p. 153 (Yaqut).



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Arabs') in the neighbourhood of el-Farama. Yaqut, however, also lists other places that claim that honour<sup>2390</sup>.

About 844-848 AD Ibn Khurdadbeh (1) probably describes the coastal road from el-Arish to el-Farama. From el-Tha'ama it is 20 miles (ca. 40 km) to el-Udhaib in the sand and further on to el-Farama another 24 miles (ca. 48 km)<sup>2391</sup>.

This itinerary is twice quoted by the 15th century author Maqrizi<sup>2392</sup>, but with some major differences. The station el-Tha'ama and the indication 'in the sand' have dropped out, apparently by mistake. Instead of el-Udhaib the first time a place called el-Gharib (el-Ghurabi) is listed (5) and the second time a place called Umm el-Arab (8). Maqrizi gives some more information about Umm el-Arab: the place is situated at the Mediterranean coast, somewhere in the area between Qatia and el-Warrada, and in his own time was ruined; people were digging there for large, heavy, pure silver coins<sup>2393</sup>.

el-Muhallabi (2), as quoted by Yaqut (4), describes the problems in el-Farama to get drinkable water. He adds, however, that one can find salty water below the sands that cover the city, in very deep pits and that this is called 'water of el-Udhaib'<sup>2394</sup>. The meaning of this expression is not clear to me.

Yaqut (3), who wrote in the 13th century AD, but probably refers to an older source, knows the place el-Udhaib in the neighbourhood of el-Farama<sup>2395</sup>.

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<sup>2390</sup> Ibn Lahia in Yaqut, *Mu'qam al-buldan* (translated in Toussoun, 1926, I, p. 164); cf. Hartmann, 1910, p. 677; Clédat, 1920, p. 118, n. 1.

<sup>2391</sup> Ibn Khurdadbeh (translated in de Goeje, 1889, p. 58); cf. Marmardji, 1951, p. 103, who incorrectly gives a distance of 12 miles between el-Tha'ama and el-Udhaib.

<sup>2392</sup> Maqrizi (translated in Bouriant, 1900, p. 528.669); cf. de Goeje, 1889, p. 58 and p. 80.290 (Arabic).

<sup>2393</sup> Maqrizi (translated in Bouriant, 1900, p. 670); followed by Ibn Iyas (translated in von Kremer, 1850a, p. 78; cf. Hartmann, 1910, p. 677) (9).

<sup>2394</sup> el-Muhallabi in Yaqut, *Mu'qam al-buldan* (Wüstenfeld, 1868, III, p. 883; translated in Toussoun, 1926, I, p. 87).

<sup>2395</sup> Yaqut, *Mu'qam al-buldan* (Wüstenfeld, 1868, III, p. 626; mentioned in Hartmann, 1910, p. 677 (?)). It is not impossible that the description ascribed by Figueras, 2000, p. 56 to the author Ibn Hauqal, actually comes from Yaqut.

## *Modern period*

### **EL-UQSOR**

Ancient name: Pentaschoinon (?)

#### **Topographical situation**

According to Oren local Arabs point out a spot (site S32) with ruins called el-Uqsor, 'The castles', on the littoral between el-Qels (Kasion) and Mahammediya (Gerra)<sup>2396</sup>, but he does not give any precise distances. These ruins have apparently not been noticed by previous travellers or archaeologists, although the place might correspond with the broadening of the strip of land shown on some maps<sup>2397</sup>. According to Figueras some maps indicate a similar spot with the name of el-Kidwa<sup>2398</sup>. On some aerial photographs one notices a dike of some 100 m long, which possibly served as a breakwater<sup>2399</sup>.

#### **Archaeological finds**

el-Uqsor has been excavated<sup>2400</sup>, but so far no detailed reports are published. The site has a surface of 5 ha and is covered with many sherds of Greek and Phoenician pottery, mainly amphorae, which can be dated to the 5th-4th centuries BC. Also buildings made in stone and in mudbrick, and some hearths were found. According to Oren it was a centre or warehouse in the Persian period from where wine and oil were sent to the Greek mercenaries and merchants living in the region.

#### **Identifications**

According to Oren el-Uqsor is to be identified with Pentaschoinon. If the location of this place on the map of Figueras at some 25 km west of el-Qels

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<sup>2396</sup> Oren in Figueras, 1988, p. 58.

<sup>2397</sup> E.g. Clédat, 1910a, map A.

<sup>2398</sup> Figueras, 2000, p. 228 (without further references).

<sup>2399</sup> Oren, 1998, p. 81.

<sup>2400</sup> Oren, 1982a, p. 24; Oren, 1998, p. 81.

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corresponds with the site of el-Uqsor<sup>2401</sup>, this figure indeed matches the distance between Kasion and Pentaschoinon in the itinerary of Theophanes. No archaeological remains, however, of the expected Byzantine period have yet been published.

### Etymology

The Arab name el-Uqsor, 'The castles', is quite acceptable for ancient constructions, although it is rather odd that ruins that have not been mentioned before Oren's survey and that therefore must be hardly noticeable, were not just named with a more 'humble' and common indication as 'khirba', the Arab word for 'ruin', which is often used as a toponym.

### Homonyms

Another el-Uqsor is the well-known 'Luxor' in Upper Egypt, named after the Roman camps near the New Kingdom temple<sup>2402</sup>.

## TELL EL-RABIA

Somewhat southeast of Mahammediya, near Sabkhat Bardawil, Clédat knows the place Tell el-Rabia<sup>2403</sup>, but further information about this site is lacking.

## ANB DIAB - EL-QELS (II)

Modern name: Mahammediya

### Topographical situation

At the western end of Sabkhat Bardawil, on the spot where maps from the early 20th century on have the name Mahammediya, the *Description* gives the Arab

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<sup>2401</sup> Oren in Figueras, 1988, p. 58 and the map p. 65; cf. Oren, 1982a, p. 24.

<sup>2402</sup> Cf. Barguet, Paul, s.v. Luxor, in LÄ, III, 1980, col. 1104.

<sup>2403</sup> Clédat, 1909a, p. 766; Clédat, 1910a, map A. Its location corresponds more or less with the so-called el-Qels region of Clédat, 1905c, p. 604 and the map p. 603 (see s.v. Anb Diab / el-Qels).

## 7. The coastal area between Kasion and Pelousion

name Anb Diab. At the place some ruins were visible<sup>2404</sup>. In 1880 Chester gives the name 'Gelse (i.e. Cape) Hemdeyeh' to that same spot, where he also noted some archaeological remains<sup>2405</sup>. Ascherson renders the name as 'El-Guels Mehamediyeh' or 'El-Guels Mohamediyeh', stating that it is usually pronounced 'Hamdyieh'<sup>2406</sup>. The toponym is apparently abbreviated by Paoletti as el-Qels<sup>2407</sup>. Clédat is the only one to distinguish 'Mahemdiah' from a region el-Qels, which he situates somewhat more to the south<sup>2408</sup>; this distinction is rather odd because one expects a cape to be situated near the sea, not more inland, and perhaps Clédat actually refers to the 'Montagnes de Gels' that occur on the map of the *Description* along the track between Ras el-Qasrun and Anb Diab, south of Sabkhat Bardawil<sup>2409</sup>.

### Identifications

Clédat thinks that all the spelling variants of Anb Diab in fact are derived from the wrongly interpreted toponym Mahammediya<sup>2410</sup>, but the fact that the name Anb Diab is definitely attested before Mahammediya makes one suppose the opposite. That not two places in each other's immediate neighbourhood are meant, but really the same spot, is clear from the description of the archaeological remains of both Anb Diab and Mahammediya, and already the *Description* rightly supposed that this was the site of the ancient Gerra<sup>2411</sup>.

The itinerary of Bonaparte as noted down by his adjutant Detroye mentions a place called 'Amoudiab' at some 15 'lieues' (ca. 60 km) east of Bir el-Abd and 4 'lieues' (ca. 16 km) west of el-Arish<sup>2412</sup>. Clédat thinks that the name 'Amoudiab', which he identifies with Anb Diab / Mahammediya, is incorrectly used by Detroye to indicate a place in the central northern Sinai. If the name is indeed a mistake, the place referred to cannot be identified with el-Felusiyat, as Clédat does, but must have been situated in the neighbourhood of Abu Mazruh, el-Meidan or Abu Hawidat.

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<sup>2404</sup> *Description*, 1830, XVIII, p. 174 and map 2; Clédat, 1905c, p. 604 and 1924, p. 44, n. 1.

<sup>2405</sup> Chester, 1880, p. 150-151 and the map p. 144.

<sup>2406</sup> Ascherson, 1887, p. 176.183.186; cf. Clédat, 1905c, p. 604.

<sup>2407</sup> Paoletti, 1903, pl.

<sup>2408</sup> Clédat, 1905c, p. 604 and the map p. 603.

<sup>2409</sup> *Description*, 1826, Atlas, pl. 33.

<sup>2410</sup> Clédat, 1923b, p. 164.

<sup>2411</sup> *Description*, 1830, XVIII, p. 174 and map 2; cf. Miller, 1916, col. 814. See also s.v. Mahammediya.

<sup>2412</sup> De la Jonquière, 1904, IV, p. 184 in Clédat, 1924, p. 44-45, n. 1.

### Orthographic variants

It is difficult to figure out how the spelling of the name evolved from Anb Diab into (Ma-/Mo-)hemmediya<sup>2413</sup>. Already the *Description* and Prétot, who both describe the situation during Napoleon's expedition, gave the forms Anb Diab and Amadiyah next to each other. Because the *Description* adds the Arabic spelling, Anb Diab is perhaps the original form and Amadiyah only secondary; 'Am(a)' can quite easily be derived from 'Anb' and for 'Diab' versus 'Diah' the only hypothetic explanation I can imagine is that the 'b' is misread for a 'h'. Daressy thinks that the plant's name Enab diab, which occurs in the region, has been listed incorrectly as a toponym<sup>2414</sup>; such a confusion, however, would be odd. Each of the names had its own further history in the 19th century till the moment that Amadiyah / Hemdeyeh for unknown reasons was spelled Mohammediya / Mahammediya, and that name afterwards was generally copied.

### Etymology

I did not find any etymology for the Arab name Anb Diab. Linant translates the variant toponym 'Tell Am-Diab' as 'Hauteur des loups', but leaves the presence of the wolves unexplained<sup>2415</sup>, while Daressy looks for a link with the plant 'Enab diab', i.e. the 'Nitravia setusa' or 'raisin de loup'<sup>2416</sup>.

### Homonyms

The place el-Qels at the western end of Sabkhat Bardawil is not to be confused with cape el-Qels north of that same lake, the site of the ancient Kasion<sup>2417</sup>.

## MAHAMMEDIYA

Ancient name: Gerra

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<sup>2413</sup> Cf. the doubts expressed by Ascherson, 1887, p. 186-187.

<sup>2414</sup> Daressy, 1931a, p. 216-217.

<sup>2415</sup> Linant, 1873, p. 163 in Clédat, 1923b, p. 164 and Gauthier, 1925, I, p. 81. Cf. Wehr, 1979, p. 354, s.v. di'b, 'dieb, jackal; wolf'.

<sup>2416</sup> Daressy, 1931a, p. 217. See also § Identifications.

<sup>2417</sup> See s.v. el-Qels.

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19th century name: Anb Diab - el-Qels

### Topographical situation

Mahammediya is situated some 40 km west of el-Qels<sup>2418</sup>, some 15 km northwest of Qatia<sup>2419</sup> and possibly some 15 km east of Tell el-Farama<sup>2420</sup>, according to Ball at 31° 03' north latitude and 32° 41' eastern longitude<sup>2421</sup>. It lies on a sand hill with a maximum height of some 13 m<sup>2422</sup>, next to the Mediterranean. Because of the shallow water near the coast it is very difficult for larger ships to land at Mahammediya, although it was not completely impossible to do so about 1800<sup>2423</sup>. Erosion caused by the waves of the Mediterranean has destroyed a great part of the site and flooded its northern end, creating along the coastline a kind of cliff that clearly shows the stratigraphy of the site<sup>2424</sup>.

Immediately east of Mahammediya starts Sabkhat Bardawil, while the western end of the lake is also called Sabkhat Mahammediya<sup>2425</sup>. According to Clédat Ascherson knew in 1887 a communication between the Mediterranean and Sabkhat

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<sup>2418</sup> Cf. Clédat, 1909a, p. 765; Cook, 1925, II 2, p. 985; Eissfeldt, 1932, p. 45; Abel, 1940, p. 234; Hussein, 1996, p. 205. Littmann, 1954, p. 214 gives 29 miles (ca. 46,5 km), which is too much. The location of Mahammediya next to Kasion (el-Qels) in LÄ, VII, 1992, map 1 and - vice versa - the location of el-Qels (Kasion) near Mahammediya in Lloyd, 1976, II, p. 42 is not correct.

<sup>2419</sup> Cf. Clédat, 1923a, p. 159.

<sup>2420</sup> The distances given differ: 10 km [Clédat, 1923b, p. 162; Damsté, 1968, p. 540 (inconsequently naming the place 'El Kas')]; 12 km [Clédat, 1920, p. 117; Cazelles, 1987 [= 1955], p. 222; Abd el-Maksoud, 1992a, p. 86; Hussein, 1996, p. 205 - the last two apparently giving the distance from Tell el-Makhzan on]; 12-14 km [Kees, Hermann, s.v. Pelousion 1 and s.v. Pentaschoinon, in RE, XIX 1, 1937, col. 413.512]; 13 km [Cazelles, 1987 [= 1955], p. 202, n. 89]; ca. 14,5 km (9 miles) [Littmann, 1954, p. 214; Schwabl, Hans, s.v. Zeus. I. Epiklesen, in RE, X A, 1972, col. 321; Sage, 1987, p. 163]; 15 km [Clédat, 1905c, p. 603; 1909a, p. 764; 1913a, p. 85; Roussel, 1916, p. 97; Salač, 1922, p. 166; Cook, 1925, II 2, p. 985; Eissfeldt, 1932, p. 39; Stummer, 1935, p. 48; Ball, 1942, p. 82, n.; Noth, 1947, p. 181; Colpe, Carsten, s.v. Kasion, in KP, III, 1969, col. 141; Seibert, 1969, p. 224; Gese, 1970, p. 127; Helck, 1971, p. 450, n. 30; Ebach, Jürgen, s.v. Kasion, in LÄ, III, 1980, col. 354; Orth, 1993, p. 103]. The 21 km in Hommel, 1926, p. 963 is probably a mistake for 12 km. On the maps of Valbelle, 1993b, p. 20 and Wagner, 1993a, p. 1 the place is located too far east, on a spot that usually corresponds with Pentaschoinon.

<sup>2421</sup> Ball, 1942, p. 105. TAVO Register, 1994, p. 177.881.1118 (cf. p. 579) gives 31° 00' north latitude and - inconsequently - 32° 30' and 40' eastern longitude.

<sup>2422</sup> The figures differ: 10 m [Ascherson, 1887, p. 183; Clédat, 1920, p. 119]; 13 m [Eissfeldt, 1932, p. 39; Abel, 1940, p. 235; Colpe, Carsten, s.v. Kasion, in KP, III, 1969, col. 141; Figueras, 2000, p. 193]; 13,3 m [Clédat, 1909a, p. 764; Cook, 1925, II 2, p. 985].

<sup>2423</sup> Prétot, 1860, p. 94 in Clédat, 1905c, p. 604.

<sup>2424</sup> Cf. Linant, 1873, p. 146 in Clédat, 1923b, p. 162-163; Oren, 1982a, p. 24; Hussein, 1996, p. 205.

<sup>2425</sup> Cf. Clédat, 1923a, p. 68. It is perhaps identical with the Sabkhat north of Bir el-Abd on Paoletti, 1903, pl.

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Bardawil near Mahammediya, but Clédat apparently misinterpreted Ascherson's article<sup>2426</sup>.

### Archaeological finds

Already in 1799 some ruins were spotted at Mahammediya<sup>2427</sup>. In 1873 Linant wrote that he had noticed ancient ruins extending some 60 m into the sea<sup>2428</sup>. In 1880 Chester found a sand hill of moderate elevation, with its sea-front defended by massive walls and towers of hewn limestone, parts of which, undermined by the waves, have fallen upon the beach; the interstices of this limestone were filled with a yellowish spar. There were also signs of an ancient town and the shaft of a brickwork well in the face of the low cliff<sup>2429</sup>. In 1887 Ascherson mentions some limestone blocks and a brick round tower, which he tentatively dates to the Middle Ages<sup>2430</sup>.

In November 1904 and October 1905 Clédat noticed on top of the sand hill a construction - probably the one mentioned by Chester - with a length of some 150 m (sic), which he at that moment identified as a Byzantine monastery; much of it had been destroyed by the sea. In the centre of the construction he found a large hall, with a 4 m large window, which looked at the sea, decorated with two columns and situated at 5 m above sea level. The wall under it was constructed from alternative layers of stone and brick. More to the east were traces of canalisation and at the eastern end of the construction there was a 4 m large gate. East of the hill, along the coast, were traces of houses extending for some 100 m<sup>2431</sup>. Clédat came back for excavations in 1909, 1910 and 1911<sup>2432</sup>. He then noticed that the buildings were made in blocks of gypsum joined by plaster<sup>2433</sup> and in bricks. The quarries of this gypsum are now probably situated under Sabkhat Bardawil and it was impossible for Clédat to check them out. Possible traces of a quay were visible under water, a few meters

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<sup>2426</sup> Ascherson, 1887, p. 180; Clédat, 1905c, p. 604.

<sup>2427</sup> Description, 1830, XVIII, p. 174.

<sup>2428</sup> Linant, 1873, p. 146 in Clédat, 1923b, p. 163.

<sup>2429</sup> Chester, 1880, p. 150-151.

<sup>2430</sup> Ascherson, 1887, p. 183-184.

<sup>2431</sup> Clédat, 1905c, p. 604-605; cf. Eissfeldt, 1932, p. 42; Valbelle, 1999a, p. 75.

<sup>2432</sup> Clédat, 1909a, p. 614.764.768-772; 1910c, p. 201; 1913a, p. 85; 1920, p. 118-119; 1921, p. 196; 1923a, p. 73-74.158-160; 1923b, p. 163.165 and p. 177, n. 2; Valbelle, 1999a, p. 72.75; cf. Cook, 1925, II 2, p. 985; Eissfeldt, 1932, p. 40-41; Cazelles, 1987 [= 1955], p. 201; BIA, 1992, VI, p. 28. No map of the site has been published, as far as I know.

<sup>2433</sup> In contradiction with the description of Chester.

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offshore, but it is not clear whether the quay actually belonged to harbour facilities<sup>2434</sup> or just protected the city against the sea. Because Linant had noticed ancient constructions at a distance of 60 m into the sea, one can even wonder whether it is actually a quay or whether all constructions, which are now considered lying at a monumental seafront, in fact lay more inland. Clédat excavated an early Byzantine public bath at the western end of the tell, which covered a surface of some 20 x 20 m. It was partially destroyed by the sea and used to be decorated with marble. In the bath he discovered some architectural elements, unpublished fragments of Greek and Latin marble inscriptions, and terra cotta statues (a.o. of Aphrodite and Bes) and lamps. Its relationship with the construction identified in 1905 as a monastery, is not clear, and it is not impossible that Clédat described in 1909 a part of the same building, without mentioning that he had abandoned his previous interpretation<sup>2435</sup>. An Israeli expedition of 1976, however, noticed a large public structure, identified as a church or a monastery, which was being destroyed by the sea waves<sup>2436</sup>. One can only guess whether Clédat's first assumption after all was right or if another construction is involved. At the eastern end of the dune, near the sea, Clédat partially excavated a small (Roman?) tetrastyle temple of 9,6 x 6 m, constructed in gypsum, with the entrance at the eastern side<sup>2437</sup>. Also along the seaside were two large altars next to each other. Further from the sea he saw less important constructions and houses. He dated the whole site in the Roman period and did not find traces of Arab constructions. Wagner, however, identified some of the material at the site as Arab<sup>2438</sup>. Also the Israeli expedition discovered the extensive remains of a walled settlement, described as a large fortress (or khan?) of the 8th-10th century AD (site S15)<sup>2439</sup>, but its description is too vague to judge its position relative to the site excavated by Clédat.

The excavations of the Egyptian Antiquities Organization in 1994 apparently investigated the temple, revealed a Nabataean settlement and yielded some coins of

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<sup>2434</sup> Cf. Wagner, 1993a, p. 9.

<sup>2435</sup> Cf. Abel, 1940, p. 235. Clédat, 1920, p. 119 specifically states that he did not find any Christian construction in the centre of the site, and he did not mention the monastery anymore after his report of 1905.

<sup>2436</sup> Oren, 1993, p. 1396.

<sup>2437</sup> Cazelles, 1987 [= 1955], p. 201.203.206 mixes up this unidentified temple with the temple of Zeus Kasios in Tell el-Farama; see also Wiegand, 1920a, col. 87, who incorrectly locates the temple of Pelousion / Tell el-Farama in Mahammediya.

<sup>2438</sup> Wagner, 1993a, p. 11.

<sup>2439</sup> Oren, 1993, p. 1396; Cytryn-Silverman, 2001, p. 20.



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the 4th century AD, but further information is lacking<sup>2440</sup>. In 2006 an underwater exploration of the site has started<sup>2441</sup>.

Clédat stressed that he did not find any military constructions, but during the excavations in 1994 a stone fortress has been discovered, half vanished by the sea, with habitation and storage areas inside it. The pottery found ranges from the 1st to the 6th century AD<sup>2442</sup>. Leclant states that the fortress has already been noticed by Clédat, but it is not clear whether the monastery or the bath is referred to or some other building only mentioned in Clédat's notes and not in his publications. The matter will no doubt be settled by the publication of the reports of the recent excavations.

South and west of the site Clédat found two Roman and two Byzantine, Christian cemeteries, but no earlier or later graves. There were several types of tombs and Clédat noticed inscriptions giving the name of the dead or a short epitaph, but they all remain unpublished. Most of the hundred graves opened were already robbed and not many objects were left, but sometimes glassware, terra cotta statues, coins, nails and even golden or silver jewellery and pieces of gold leaf were found<sup>2443</sup>. The Israeli expedition investigated an extensive burial site to the southwest of the tell. One of the graves yielded a carved stone cross and an oil lamp decorated with a cross in relief<sup>2444</sup>. West of the main site hundreds of constructed tombs were found and dated to the Mameluke period (1250-1517)<sup>2445</sup>.

In or near Mahammediya some remarkable objects and inscriptions have been found, but unfortunately it has not been indicated where exactly they came from.

(1) Clédat found a fragmentary black granite weight of some 1,325 kg with a diameter of 0,122 m. The two Phoenician characters on it are to be read as 'ti', and

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<sup>2440</sup> Cf. Carrez-Maratray, 2000a, p. 17, fig. 6 and n. 57; p. 39 and n. 181.

<sup>2441</sup> Submerged city, 2006 (internet).

<sup>2442</sup> BIA, 1994, IX-X, p. 82-83; Leclant, 1995, p. 251; Nibbi, 1995a, p. 5; Ballet, 1998, p. 103-106; cf. Hussein, 1996, p. 206.

<sup>2443</sup> Clédat, 1905c, p. 605-606; 1909a, p. 614.769.772-774; 1912, p. 159, n. 1; 1913a, p. 85; 1916b, p. 28; 1920, p. 119; cf. Cook, 1925, II 2, p. 985; Gaillard, 1988, p. 199; Clédat, 1991, p. 5; Valbelle, 1999a, p. 75. For the coins found by Clédat in Mahammediya, cf. el-Khachab, 1956, p. 97-145 (cf. Christiansen, 1988, I, p. 28), although unfortunately the exact place of origin for each piece separately is not indicated.

<sup>2444</sup> Oren, 1982a, p. 20 and p. 38, fig. 43; 1993, p. 1395.

<sup>2445</sup> Cytryn-Silverman, 2001, p. 20-21.

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according to Petrie the weight corresponds with two Phoenician minae. No date has been suggested<sup>2446</sup>.

(2) Clédat, while staying in the nearby Tell el-Heir in the winter of 1904-1905, bought from some Beduin an inscription on a rectangular basalt block, which is said to be found in Mahammediya (SB I, 982). It is a dedication of a throne and an altar to probably the god Pelousios by Quintus Corvius Flaccus son of Quintus, former epistrategos of the Thebais and then 'dikaiodotes' or 'iuridicus', on behalf of the imperial family and of the praefectus Aegypti Gaius Turranius, on 8 January of the year 4 BC<sup>2447</sup>:

1 ὑπὲρ Αὐτοκράτορος Καίσαρος θεοῦ υἱοῦ Σεβαστοῦ καὶ  
Λειουίας Σεβαστοῦ καὶ Γαίου Καίσαρος καὶ Λευκίου Κ-  
αίσαρος τῶν υἱῶν τοῦ Αὐτοκράτορος καὶ Ἰουλίας  
5 τῆς θυγατρὸς τοῦ Ἀὐτοκράτορος καὶ Γαίου Τουρ-  
ρανίου ἐπάρχου τῆς Αἰγύπτου Κοίντος Κόρουι-  
ος Κοίντου υἱὸς Φλάκκος ἐπιστρατηγῆσας Θη-  
βαίδος δικαιοδοτῶν Πηλουσίω τῶν (read τὸν) θρόνον  
8 καὶ τὸν βωμὸν ἀνέθηκε. (ἔτους) κς' Καίσαρος, Τῦβι ιγ'.

'On behalf of Emperor Caesar Augustus son of Divus, and of Livia Augusta, and of Gaius Caesar and Lucius Caesar the sons of the Emperor, and of Iulia the daughter of the Emperor, and of Gaius Turranius the praefectus Aegypti, Quintus Corvius Flaccus son of Quintus, former epistrategos of the Thebais and (now) iuridicus, dedicated the throne and the altar to Pelousios. Year 26 of Caesar, Tybi 13.'

The expression Πηλουσίω has caused some discussion, because it has been linked with the participle δικαιοδοτῶν and translated 'who is iuridicus in / for Pelousion'. Carrez-Maratray, however, rightly pointed out that not the city Pelousion, but the god Pelousios is involved, to whom the throne and the altar are dedicated. There is no reason, therefore, to suppose the function of a specific iuridicus for Pelousion, next to the well-known iuridicus of Alexandria<sup>2448</sup>. It does remain unclear why a Roman official residing in Alexandria makes a dedication to Pelousios in the neighbourhood of Mahammediya. If the stone really comes from Mahammediya and has not been transported there from Tell el-Farama or from one of the other sites of Pelousion, one

<sup>2446</sup> Clédat, 1915b, p. 36 and fig. 9; Petrie, 1915, p. 184.

<sup>2447</sup> The inscription is now in the Ismailia Museum. Cf. Clédat, 1905c, p. 602-603.608-611; Cagnat, AE, 1906, p. 19, no. 51; Cagnat, IGR I 5, 1908, p. 380, no. 1109; Preisigke, SB I, 1915, p. 82, no. 982; Kees, Hermann, s.v. Pelousion, in RE, XIX 1, 1937, col. 414; Abel, 1940, p. 236; Littmann, 1954, p. 214.243 (who incorrectly states that it was an architrave inscription which has been put up by Turranius); Ehrenberg, 1955, p. 68, no. 62; Bernard, 1983, p. 31; Carrez-Maratray, 1985, p. 150-154, no. 4; Bureth, 1988, p. 475; Carrez-Maratray, 1989, p. 55; Wagner, 1993b, p. 104; Carrez-Maratray, 1995, p. 148; Valbelle, 1995b, p. 31.41; Hussein, 1996, p. 206.209; Carrez-Maratray, 1999b, p. 210-214, no. 392, with photo (cf. also p. 402.420.424.426).

<sup>2448</sup> For Quintus Corvius Flaccus and his functions, cf. Cagnat in Clédat, 1905c, p. 609-610; Meyer, 1907, col. 463; Wilcken, 1908a, p. 384-385.416; Martin, 1911, p. 185; Pflaum, 1961, III, p. 1091; Vandoni, 1970, p. 47; Foti Talamanca, 1974, p. 101-104; Thomas, 1982, II, p. 53-54 en p. 185, no. 2; Carrez-Maratray, 1985, p. 151-152.

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might suppose that the man had some links with the military camp of Gerra, but this is a mere hypothesis<sup>2449</sup>.

(3) In the summer of 1993 some fishermen found a marble bust in the Mediterranean not far from Mahammediya, which probably comes from a cemetery there that has been flooded by the sea. The bust shows a man of some forty years old, which a funerary inscription identifies as Herakleides (Heraklides). Stylistically and palaeographically the bust can be dated in the time of Augustus (30 BC - 14 AD) (SEG XLVI, 2133)<sup>2450</sup>:

1 Ἡρακλίδη,  
χρηστὲ καὶ  
ἄλυπε, χαί-  
4 ρε.

'Heraklides, a good person and without pain, greetings.'

Because a funerary inscription on a statue is very rare in Egypt, it has been suggested that the bust was an honorary monument, which later has been used in a funerary context.

(4) In 1909, during excavations in Mahammediya, Clédat found - next to the scraps of inscriptions in the bath and the cemeteries already mentioned<sup>2451</sup> - a funerary cippus of the Roman period, which is now lost. On the basis of Clédat's excavation notes it is possible to restore the inscription on this monument<sup>2452</sup>:

1 Κάσιος  
2 Κάσιος  
'Kasios Kasios'

The letters of the first line are ca. 0,20 m high, those on the second line ca. 0,15 m. For Clédat Kasios was the personal name of a local inhabitant, but the double mention of that name is yet unexplained. Because the last letters of l. 2 are severely damaged, one might perhaps suggest the reading Κάσιου, 'Kasios son of Kasios'.

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<sup>2449</sup> Wilcken, who links the inscription with Pelousion, suggests that Corvius was present because of the annual conventus, but it is not certain that the iuridicus accompanied the praefectus Aegypti at this occasion (cf. Haensch, 1997, p. 337 and n. 81).

<sup>2450</sup> The bust is now in the Museum of Port Said. For this inscription, cf. Valbelle, 1995b, p. 31.41; Hussein, 1996, p. 205-212 and pl. 8-9; Bingen, BE, 1997, p. 603, no. 674; Leclant, 1997, p. 244-245; Boyaval, 1997, p. 78-79 (non vidi); SEG XLVI, 1996 [=1999], p. 613, no. 2133; Valbelle, 2000a, p. 146; Carrez-Maratray, 2001a, p. 232-233; SEG XLIX, 1999 [= 2002], p. 705, no. 2321. The name Herakleides also occurs on O.Tell el-Heir, 1, 7 (see s.v. Tell el-Heir).

<sup>2451</sup> Cf. Clédat, 1909a, p. 771.773 and 1913a, p. 85, n. 1.

<sup>2452</sup> Clédat, 1909a, p. 774; cf. Salač, 1922, p. 168, n. 1; Cook, 1925, II 2, p. 985; Eissfeldt, 1932, p. 41; Abel, 1940, p. 236; Cazelles, 1987 [= 1955], p. 201.205 (who apparently mixes up with some other inscriptions); Chuvin, 1986, p. 56, n. 65; Abd el-Maksoud, 1988a, p. 101; Carrez-Maratray, 1989, p. 55; Figueras, 2000, p. 123. The text has finally been published by Carrez-Maratray, 1999b, p. 243, no. 402. For the possible theophoric character of the name Kasios, see s.v. Kasion.

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(5) On a fragment of pottery, possibly a plate, the word Ἡλιό[ ] has been painted with red (SB III, 7017). It comes from Mahammediya and was given to Clédat by a Beduin, but nothing further is known. Carrez-Maratray dates the inscription to the Roman period<sup>2453</sup>.

Clédat found a small Christian altar of 1,15 m high. One side was decorated with a cross and some fire marks indicate that it was used to burn incense<sup>2454</sup>.

The Nabataean inscription, often said to be found by Clédat in Mahammediya, in fact comes from his excavations in Qasr Ghet<sup>2455</sup>. Littmann also mixes up the findings of Clédat in Mahammediya and el-Qels and incorrectly considers some of the inscriptions found near el-Qels as coming from the former place<sup>2456</sup>.

### Identifications

The position of Mahammediya near the Mediterranean at some 15 km east of Tell el-Farama (Pelousion) matches that of Gerra in the itineraries. The archaeological remains indicate an important place in the Roman and Byzantine period, which fits the description of 5th century AD Gerra as a small city, but there are apparently no traces found of the earlier, Ptolemaic occupation. Some of the constructions discovered are probably identical with the military camp and the church in Gerra, which are both implied in the sources.

The military camp of Skenai must have been situated in the immediate neighbourhood, but there is no reason to identify Gerra, Skenai and even Pentaschoinon and Aphnaion and to locate them all in Mahammediya, as Clédat does<sup>2457</sup>.

According to Clédat Ascherson identified Ostrakine with Mahammediya, but Clédat apparently misinterpreted Ascherson's article<sup>2458</sup>.

In 1905 Clédat located Kasion at Mahammediya, but later on he changed his mind and rightly placed it at el-Qels. His first view, however, is still often been

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<sup>2453</sup> Clédat, 1915b, p. 36 and a facsimile fig. 10; Bilabel, SB III, 2, 1927, p. 186, no. 7017; Carrez-Maratray, 1985, p. 170, no. 15; Carrez-Maratray, 1999b, p. 245, no. 406.

<sup>2454</sup> Clédat, 1915b, p. 36-37 and fig. 11.

<sup>2455</sup> Clédat, 1911, p. 433. See s.v. Qasr Ghet.

<sup>2456</sup> Littmann, 1954, p. 214 with n. 1 and p. 243. See s.v. el-Qels.

<sup>2457</sup> See s.v. Gerra, s.v. Skenai, s.v. Pentaschoinon and s.v. Aphnaion. For the location of Pentaschoinon at Mahammediya, cf. especially Dalman, 1924, p. 47 and the map p. 42; Honigmann, 1939a, p. 46 and the maps p. 60 and pl. 1.4; Alt, 1954, p. 157; Donner, 1992, p. 78.

<sup>2458</sup> Ascherson, 1887, p. 180; Clédat, 1905c, p. 604.

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followed. Because Kasion has sometimes been identified with the Baal-Saphon of the exodus, also this place has often been located at Mahammediya<sup>2459</sup>.

Scholars who think that the exodus started through the northern Sinai, often place Pi-Hahiroth near Mahammediya at the entrance to the narrow strip of land between Sabkhat Bardawil and the Mediterranean<sup>2460</sup>. This northern itinerary of the exodus, however, is no longer accepted.

Since Mahammediya seems to have been inhabited still in the Arab period, one could suggest an identification with the stations el-Udhaib or Umm el-Arab situated at the coast and known from Arab itineraries till the 15th century AD. Because, however, a trustworthy location of these stations in the Arab sources is lacking, almost every site at the Mediterranean comes into account and a location in or near Mahammediya is a mere hypothesis<sup>2461</sup>.

### Etymology

The form Mohammediya (and its variants) is known from the late 19th century on; the form Mahammediya (and its variants) occurs somewhat later<sup>2462</sup>. They seem to be formed on names as Amadiyah and Hemdeyeh, which themselves are probably derived from the Arab Anb Diab, but the origin of the first element 'Mo-' or 'Ma-' is not clear to me<sup>2463</sup>. Some scholars explicitly prefer the form Mohammediya<sup>2464</sup>, but they do not give any further argumentation for their choice. Hussein states that the form Mohammediya is recently becoming the more common one<sup>2465</sup>.

### Homonyms

In Mesopotamia another place with the name el-Muhammediya is known<sup>2466</sup>.

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<sup>2459</sup> See the discussion and further literature s.v. Kasion.

<sup>2460</sup> Cf. Brugsch, 1875, map; Chester, 1880, p. 150 and the map p. 144; Ebers, 1881, map p. 108; Fontaine, 1956b, map 2.

<sup>2461</sup> See s.v. el-Udhaib / Umm el-Arab.

<sup>2462</sup> Ascherson, 1887, p. 176.183-187 with the forms 'Mehamediyeh' and 'Mohamediyeh'; Clédat, 1905c, p. 604 with the form 'Mahemdiah'.

<sup>2463</sup> See s.v. Anb Diab / el-Qels.

<sup>2464</sup> Muysier, 1946, p. 173; followed by Stiernon, D. and L., s.v. Gerra 1, in DHGE, XX, 1984, col. 1045.

<sup>2465</sup> Hussein, 1996, p. 205, n. 2.

<sup>2466</sup> Cf. TAVO Register, 1994, p. 1118.

## **EL-KENISA - EL-MALLAHA - KHIRBA (II)**

### **Topographical situation**

The site of el-Kenisa - also named el-Mallaha or simply Khirba - lies some 1,5 km west of Mahammediya, at a few hundred meters from the coast, surrounded by two dunes. The first dune, Qasr Mishrif, lies south of the site, the other one, Umm el-Djarad, north of it<sup>2467</sup>.

### **Archaeological finds**

The ruins at the site seem to be rather unimportant, but they are partially covered by the dunes and all the constructions are hidden in the sand. The site, which has a surface of some 200-300 m east - west and some 100-150 m north - south, is only indicated by the presence of mud brick in a state of decomposition, some bricks, some pieces of stone and fragments of pottery and glass. Clédat does not date his findings<sup>2468</sup>. The assumption that this is the place of a church or a monastery is entirely based upon the modern name el-Kenisa, and can only be confirmed by excavations.

### **Identifications**

Clédat, locating Pentaschoinon (as well as Gerra and Skenai) at Mahammediya, looks for Aphnaion at the site of el-Kenisa<sup>2469</sup>. Since, however, Mahammediya is to be identified only with Gerra, not with Pentaschoinon, and since Aphnaion most likely lies east of Gerra, the identification of Aphnaion and el-Kenisa

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<sup>2467</sup> Cf. Clédat, 1910a, map A; 1913b, p. 116, n. 1; 1920, p. 117-118. On the inaccurate map Clédat, 1905c, p. 603 the site lies too far to the south; it may not be confused with the 'Ruins' indicated on about the same spot on Clédat, 1910a, map A, which possibly correspond with Djebel Uabra or Abu Galada.

<sup>2468</sup> Clédat, 1920, p. 117-118; Valbelle, 1999a, p. 75. Timm, 1984, I, p. 139, n. 7 identifies the archaeological finds as belonging to the Byzantine period, but this does not show from Clédat's description.

<sup>2469</sup> Clédat, 1920, p. 117-118 and 1923b, p. 166; followed tentatively by Tsafirir, 1994, p. 64, who locates Aphnaion east of Gerra, but does apparently not realise that el-Kenisa lies west of Mahammediya; rejected by Abel, 1940, p. 62. Cf. Timm, 1984, I, p. 138 and p. 139, n. 7; Figueras, 1988, p. 58, n. 12. See s.v. Aphnaion.

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cannot be accepted. Abel's suggestion that el-Kenisa is the site of the church at the grave of Nilammon, an anchorite of Gerra who died in 403/404 AD, is mere fantasy<sup>2470</sup>. It is not impossible that el-Kenisa can be linked with Skenai, but without further archaeological research this remains a mere hypothesis.

### Etymology

el-Kenisa, 'The church', and Khirba, 'Ruins', are common Arab expressions here used as toponyms. The name el-Mallaha probably refers to a salty area<sup>2471</sup>. The name Umm el-Djarad indicates a completely nude dune and Qasr Mishrif might have the meaning of 'noble castle'<sup>2472</sup>.

### Homonyms

In the northern Sinai the expression el-Kenisa is also used in the toponym Tell el-Kenisa near Qatia<sup>2473</sup>. The name Khirba is quite common in Egypt and is e.g. used for a site near el-Zaraniq and for another one between Bir el-Abd and Qatia<sup>2474</sup>.

## MENQA ETMAN

The Menqa Etman are large dunes parallel to the sea, west of el-Kenisa and extending till the plain of el-Farama<sup>2475</sup>.

## DJEBEL UABRA

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<sup>2470</sup> Abel, 1940, p. 62. For the death of Nilammon, cf. Sozomenos, *Historia ecclesiastica*, 8, 19, 3-7 (Bidez, 1960, p. 375), discussed s.v. Gerra.

<sup>2471</sup> Cf. Wehr, 1979, p. 1079, s.v. malaḥa, 'to be salty' and s.v. mallāḥa, 'salina, saltworks'. Clédat, 1920, p. 117 explains the name 'parce qu'il est plongé dans le marais'.

<sup>2472</sup> Clédat, 1920, p. 117 and n. 2.

<sup>2473</sup> Clédat, 1912, p. 147, n. 1. See s.v. Qatia.

<sup>2474</sup> See s.v. Khirba (I) (in the chapter on Ostrakine) and s.v. Khirba (III) (in the chapter on the region south of Sabkhat Bardawil).

<sup>2475</sup> Clédat, 1913b, p. 116, n. 1.

### *7. The coastal area between Kasion and Pelousion*

The Djebel Uabra lies somewhat west or southwest of el-Kenisa and the Menqa Etman dunes<sup>2476</sup>. About 1910 Clédat noticed a large concentration of Roman pottery on the surface<sup>2477</sup>.

### **ABU GALADA**

The dunes of Abu Galada lie somewhat west or southwest of el-Kenisa and Djebel Uabra. A tribe of Kharsa Beduin was camping there about 1910. Clédat noticed Roman potsherds scattered around on the ground<sup>2478</sup>.

It is not clear whether this site corresponds with the ruins indicated on a map of Clédat between el-Kenisa and Bir el-Arais<sup>2479</sup>.

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<sup>2476</sup> Clédat, 1913b, p. 116, n. 1.

<sup>2477</sup> Clédat, 1913b, p. 116-117, n. 1.

<sup>2478</sup> Clédat, 1913b, p. 116-117, n. 1.

<sup>2479</sup> Cf. Clédat, 1910a, map A.



## 8. The inland road south of Sabkhat Bardawil

### *Summary*

#### *The area between el-Arish and el-Felusiyyat*

**The A-sites of the Israeli survey west of el-Arish - Bir el-Masa'id - el-Deheisha - Sebil - el-Dakar - Zari' - Bir el-Qadi - Abu Hawidat - Themajel Djaber - Abu Mazruh - el-Meidan - Umm el-Ushush - Qabr el-Sa'i - Bousser - Hadjar Bardawil (Sabkhat Bardawil) - Bir el-Generat - Sabikah - Mahall el-Baraqaat**

#### *The area between el-Felusiyyat and Bir el-Abd*

**Nakhla - Aitwegenai - Bir el-Zubatiyya - Bir el-Mazar - Bir Matta - Bir Kasiba (I) - el-Rodah - Garif el-Gizlan - Umm el-Hasan - el-Sawada - Abu Tilul - el-Amrawiyyah - Lake Huash / Umm el-Girdan / Tabam Umm el-Girdan - Lebrash - Sheradel - Luliya - Dawanir - Umm - Misfaq - Nahal Yam - Madba'a - Arar - Ru'us el-Adrab - el-Breidj - Bir Salamana - el-Mutaileb - el-Baqqara - el-Sadat - Bir el-Ganadil - Sabkhat el-Derwish - Mabrukah - Bir el-Abd**

#### *The area between Bir el-Abd and Qatia*

**Djebel Rua - Djebel Akhsum - Nadjah - Abu Sa'dan - Khirba (III) - Bir el-Afein - Subaikhat Nakhlat Ma'n - Hod el-Nahr - el-Nasr - el-Rumiya - el-Kifah - Anfushiya - el-Faydah - Bewasmir - Nadjila - el-Ta'awun - el-Salam - Amm Ugbah - Rab'ah - Djbarah - Oghratina el-Seriri - Qatia - Oqtahia**

#### *The area of Qasr Ghet southeast of Qatia*

**Qasr Ghet - Awiti - Autaioi - el-Dheish - el-Farsh - el-Hasua - el-Sadjia - el-M'zahamiya - el-Mahari**

#### *The area northwest of Qatia*

**Khirbet el-Mard - el-Ghabai - Djebel Abu Darem - Djebel Aenni - el-Karamah - Bir Abu Hamra - Hod el-Sufia - Rumani - Bir Etmalir - el-Shoada - Bir el-Arais - Djebel Abu Ganid - Bir Abu Diyuk - T267 - el-Bahria**

#### *The area southwest of Qatia*

**Bir Nagid - Bir Abu Raml - Tell el-Dab'a - Bir el-Dahaba - Bir el-Nuss - Djebel Chalra - el-Kheit Nagar - el-Rehemi - el-Morzugat - el-Machar - Djebel Marguni - el-Beda - el-Lagia - el-Khasana - el-Uash - el-Shohat - Kheit Sala - Djebel Lissan - el-Djesuha - Tell el-Naga - Tell el-Nisseya - Abu Zedl - Abu Ghendi - Umm Negm - el-Ghurabi - Bir Kasiba (II) - Bir el-Goga - Bir el-Duwaidar - Bir el-Djilbana - el-Aqula**

#### *Sites in the area west of Qatia without a specific location*

**Umm el-Ghazlan - Abu Shamla - Kathib Uaset - Abu el-Ghazlan - Umm el-Hera - Abu Rati - Kathib el-Aura - Go el-Ahmar - Ganub Za'u - Djebel el-Ekhz - Mardeit - el-Cana**

### *Summary*

Along the inland road, on the track that goes from el-Arish in the east till the place where it joins the road from el-Farama to el-Qantara in the west, some 140 toponyms are known. Most names come from Arab itineraries or from present-day maps and accounts, while only the city (?) of Awiti and the Arab tribe of the Autaioi are mentioned in ancient sources. This track of some 140 km for convenience's sake is

## 8. *The inland road south of Sabkhat Bardawil*

divided into seven sections, in which the sites are mainly listed from east to west. This order is sometimes rather artificial, because sites or clusters of sites often lie north or south of the main road, which itself had no fixed course, not even in the 20th century. The first section lists the sites between el-Arish and el-Felusiyat; the sites in the neighbourhood of the ancient Ostrakine are discussed separately in that chapter. The second section goes from the Ostrakine area to Bir el-Abd and the third one from Bir el-Abd to Qatia. The fourth section contains the sites southeast of Qatia, in the neighbourhood of Qasr Ghet. West of Qatia the track bifurcates, the fifth section going northwest into the direction of Tell el-Farama and Tell el-Heir, the sixth section going southwest into the direction of Tell Habwa. The final section contains sites west of Qatia, whose exact location is not known.

The major northern Sinai sites from the Roman and the Byzantine period seem to be confined to the coastal area and the Roman itineraries only describe this road. Archaeological surveys more inland, however, show that probably also another route could be used, along the edge of the desert south of present-day Sabkhat Bardawil. Some sites there are indeed identified as Roman or Byzantine (Abu Mazruh; Bir el-Mazar; el-Breidj; Bir el-Abd; Anfushiya; Qatia; Oqtahia; Qasr Ghet; el-Dheish; el-Mahari; Djebel Aenni; Rumani; Djebel Lissan; el-Ghurabi; Abu el-Ghazlan; Djebel el-Ekhz), although especially Clédat's identifications have to be treated with care. For none of these sites the ancient name is known. Nabataeans were present in Bir el-Mazar in the 1st-2nd century AD and in Qasr Ghet, where they had a religious and commercial centre from the 2nd century BC to the early 3rd century AD. Near Bir Salamana a vessel with a Thamudic inscription has been found, which can possibly be dated to the 2nd-1st century BC. In Rumani a cemetery with Hellenistic pottery has been noticed. In el-Shoada a funerary stele of the 4th-3rd century BC has been found, and the sites of Rumani, Bir el-Mazar and perhaps also el-Meidan yielded material from the 5th-4th centuries BC. In Bir el-Abd some pottery from the 6th century BC has been found, but no major sites are known in the central northern Sinai for the Saite and the Third Intermediate period. During the New Kingdom the major road through the northern Sinai apparently went south of present-day Sabkhat Bardawil and the sites of the area immediately west of el-Arish, Bir el-Mazar, Misfaq / Nahal Yam / Madba'a, Bir Salamana, Bir el-Abd, Nadjila and Rumani most likely correspond with stations mentioned on the Karnak relief of Sethos I and in the itinerary of P.Anastasi I of the time of Ramses II.

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In the Arab period the Roman and Byzantine coastal road was gradually abandoned and the old New Kingdom road was used again. In the 9th-10th centuries AD el-Baqqara was the major site between el-Warrada and el-Farama, but soon afterwards it disappeared. In the 13th-15th century AD a network of stations came into being (Bir el-Qadi; Bousser (?); el-Sawada; el-Mutaileb; Subaikhat Nakhlat Ma'n; Qatia; el-Ghurabi). In the following centuries they were all replaced by the stations Bir el-Masa'id, Qabr el-Sa'i, Mahall el-Baraqa, Nakhla, Umm el-Hasan, Arar, Ru'us el-Adrab, Bir el-Abd, Bir el-Duwaidar and el-Aqula, while only Qatia stayed in use under the same name. Also most of these stations disappeared in the course of the 18th century, while only few of them still occur on 20th century maps.

### *The area between el-Arish and el-Felusiyat*

## **THE A-SITES OF THE ISRAELI SURVEY WEST OF EL-ARISH**

In 1972 Oren carried out a survey over an area of 10 km<sup>2</sup>, about 5 to 12 km west of el-Arish<sup>2480</sup>. There he found about 50 sites, some 50 to 400 m apart from each other, with material - including several kilograms of copper ore - mainly dating from the Egyptian late Predynastic period and the First Dynasty and the Canaanite Early Bronze Age I-II, i.e. the early 3rd millennium BC, and only a few remains from the Middle Bronze Age (ca. 2200-1200 BC) and the Iron Age (ca. 1200-586 BC). In the area Egyptian material was predominant, except for some sites as A210, where Canaanite materials prevailed.

Elsewhere in the neighbourhood of el-Arish - without further specification - Oren also found a cluster of New Kingdom sites. One of these sites yielded a scarab of Ramses III<sup>2481</sup>.

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<sup>2480</sup> Cf. Oren, 1973c, p. 198-205 and pl. 52-54; Oren, 1979b, p. 184; Oren, 1989a, p. 389-405; Oren, 1993a, p. 1387-1388; de Miroschedji, 1998, p. 20-32; for this 'Area A', cf. the survey map in Oren, 1973c, p. 199 and 1989a, p. 391 and the detailed map in Oren, 1973c, p. 201; see also the adaptation of this survey map in Nibbi, 1985, p. 154, fig. 11. The violin figurine typical for the Chalcolithic culture of Beersheba and Ghassul, said to be found in el-Arish (Oren, 1982a, p. 7, fig. 4), in fact comes from site R48, a few kilometres west of Rafah (Oren, 1981a, p. 33, p. 35, fig. 9, 14 and pl. 7, 3; Oren, 1987b, p. 629-630, fig. 2; Oren, 1993a, p. 1387; de Miroschedji, 1998, p. 21 and p. 22, fig. 5); see s.v. 'The R-sites of the Israeli survey west of Rafah'.

<sup>2481</sup> Oren, 1979b, p. 188.190; Oren, 1987a, p. 77 (cf. the map p. 79); Oren, 1993a, p. 1389.

## **BIR EL-MASA'ID**

### **Topographical situation**

The well and palm grove of Bir el-Masa'id, known from the late 17th century AD on (1), is situated along the coast, some 6 km west of el-Arish<sup>2482</sup> and probably very near the palm groves el-Deheisha and Sebil. Its water is said to be the best in the region<sup>2483</sup>. Clédat did not notice any ruins near Bir el-Masa'id<sup>2484</sup>.

In 1910 a Beduin showing some tree-stumps near the well told Clédat the legend that they had grown at the banks of a former river there and that the well had only been dug once the water had withdrawn; this river was said to be a branch of the Nile, which came all the way from el-Qantara. Clédat is inclined to accept the existence of such a river or canal, referring to ancient sources, the nature of the land, which gives the impression of a large valley, and an 18th century map<sup>2485</sup>. The passages in Strabon and Iosephos, however, have to be interpreted differently<sup>2486</sup>. The map of Berg e.g.<sup>2487</sup>, showing dunes to the north and hills to the south, makes it more or less clear how Clédat got the impression of a valley, but there are no indications that a river ever ran through it. The map of de Vaugondy shows the biblical river Shihor going straight west and flowing into an unrecognizable Sabkhat Bardawil<sup>2488</sup>; perhaps this position is based upon that same 'valley', but it is equally possible that its location is due to the imagination of the maker of the map, who also quite arbitrarily scattered around other ancient toponyms.

### **Identifications**

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<sup>2482</sup> The distances differ: ca. 5 km (Gardiner, 1920, pl. 13); 6,5 km (de Jong, 2000, p. 654-655); cf. Clédat, 1910a, p. 227 and n. 2 ('east of el-Deheisha, which lies at two hours walking'), 1923a, p. 64 ('at two hours') and 1923b, p. 152 ('at two hours and a half on a camel'). Bir el-Masa'id possibly corresponds with one of the two nameless wells in the neighbourhood of el-Arish on the map of Paoletti, 1903.

<sup>2483</sup> Guest in Hartmann, 1910, p. 701.

<sup>2484</sup> Clédat, 1923a, p. 64.

<sup>2485</sup> Clédat, 1910a, p. 232-233; cf. 1920, p. 111; see also Figueras, 2000, p. 24.206.

<sup>2486</sup> See s.v. Lake Serbonis and s.v. Ostrakine.

<sup>2487</sup> Berg, 1973, map 3.

<sup>2488</sup> Robert de Vaugondy, 1757, pl. 96 in Clédat, 1910a, p. 233. Cf. also d'Anville, 1766, p. 1.218

## 8. *The inland road south of Sabkhat Bardawil*

Clédat identifies Bir el-Masa'id with the Bir el-Qadi of the Arab itineraries of the 13th-15th centuries AD<sup>2489</sup>, but the latter probably lay some 7 km more to the west.

Hartmann identifies the station Beresanni in the 1661 AD itinerary of von Troilo with Bir el-Masa'id<sup>2490</sup>, but an identification of Beresanni with Qabr el-Sa'i more to the west seems more plausible.

### **Homonyms**

Cytryn-Silverman refers to a place called Bir el-Masa'id some 15-20 km east of el-Arish, but since she is the only one to mention this name, it does not seem impossible that it has been used there incorrectly<sup>2491</sup>.

In the early 20th century the Beduin Masa'id tribe lived in the northwestern Sinai in the neighbourhood of Bir el-Djilbana<sup>2492</sup>.

### **Analysis of the sources**

About 1697 AD el-Nabulusi (1) travelled from el-Arish via the smaller stations Bir el-Masa'id, Qabr el-Sa'i and Mahall el-Baraqaq further on to Umm el-Hasan<sup>2493</sup>.

### **EL-DEHEISHA**

el-Deheisha is a palm grove at some two hours walking (about 6 km?) west of el-Arish, and not very far west of Bir el-Masa'id<sup>2494</sup>.

### **SEBIL**

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<sup>2489</sup> Clédat, 1923a, p. 64 and 1923b, p. 152. See s.v. Bir el-Qadi.

<sup>2490</sup> Hartmann, 1910, p. 699.701. See s.v. Qabr el-Sa'i.

<sup>2491</sup> Cytryn-Silverman, 2001, p. 19 and the map p. 32. Especially the fact that she actually knows the Bir el-Masa'id west of el-Arish (p. 17.24), but does not explicitly distinguish it from her Bir el-Masa'id east of el-Arish (p. 19-20), strengthens my suspicion. See s.v. A335 - A346.

<sup>2492</sup> For the Masa'id tribe, cf. Clédat, 1923a, p. 151; Bailey, 1985, p. 27.49; de Jong, 2000, p. 11-12 and the map p. 656. See s.v. Bir el-Djilbana.

<sup>2493</sup> el-Nabulusi (mentioned in Hartmann, 1910, p. 701); cf. von Kremer, 1850b, p. 824.

<sup>2494</sup> Clédat, 1910a, p. 227.

## 8. *The inland road south of Sabkhat Bardawil*

Sebil is a palm grove at somewhat more than two hours walking (about 6 km?) west of el-Arish, and not very far west of el-Deheisha<sup>2495</sup>.

### **EL-DAKAR**

Possibly at some 6 km west of el-Arish and at some twenty minutes west of Sebil lies el-Dakar, a place with a well and a palm grove, in 1910 inhabited by some Beduin<sup>2496</sup>.

### **ZARI'**

Zari' lies some 11 km west of el-Arish and some 5 km west of Bir el-Masa'id<sup>2497</sup>.

### **BIR EL-QADI**

#### **Topographical situation**

Bir el-Qadi, known from the 13th till the 15th century AD, is one of the road stations used by the postal services between Cairo and Rafah (4-7). It is situated at 3 'liues' or about 12 km west of el-Arish and 4 'liues' or about 16 km east of Bousser (1-3).

#### **Identifications**

Clédat identifies Bir el-Qadi with Bir el-Masa'id, some 5 km west of el-Arish and known from the 17th century AD on<sup>2498</sup>, but he gives no arguments for this identification. In fact, Bir el-Masa'id lies closer to el-Arish than to Bir el-Qadi.

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<sup>2495</sup> Clédat, 1910a, p. 227.

<sup>2496</sup> Clédat, 1910a, p. 227.

<sup>2497</sup> de Jong, 2000, p. 654-655.

<sup>2498</sup> Clédat, 1923a, p. 64 and 1923b, p. 152. See s.v. Bir el-Masa'id.

## 8. The inland road south of Sabkhat Bardawil

The identification of Bir el-Qadi with the Palestine toponym Berdan in the Valley of Gerar<sup>2499</sup> is not based on any evidence.

### Etymology

The Arab name Bir el-Qadi means 'Well of the cadī'<sup>2500</sup>. If this name refers to a historical cadī or judge, it is not known who he was or when he lived.

### Analysis of the sources

In 1253 AD the Egyptian Mamelukes and the Syrian Ayyubids placed the border between their realms in Bir el-Qadi, leaving el-Arish at the Syrian side. This situation ended already a few years later, when the Mamelukes incorporated Syria<sup>2501</sup>.

A project for a crusade containing an itinerary composed before 1289 AD is found in three different documents: the French *Via ad terram sanctam*, written ca. 1291-1293 (1); the Latin *Memoria terre sancte*, written ca. 1300-1321 (2); the Latin work of the Italian geographer Marino Sanudo (3), written in 1321 AD and based upon the *Memoria*. They describe the road from Rafah to Cairo, each with some minor variants. They mention Bir el-Qadi at 3 'liues' (ca. 12 km) west of el-Arish and 4 'liues' (ca. 16 km) east of Bousser. The road to Bir el-Qadi is sandy; there is plenty of good water<sup>2502</sup>.

(1) De Larris jusques a Bir el Cani, III liues tot sablon; aigue assés et bone.

'From Larris to Bir el Cani, 3 liues, all sand; plenty and good water.'

(2) de Lariz usque ad Birelcain, .III. leuce, totum littus et aque bone et satis.

'From Lariz to Birelcain, 3 liues, all sand and good and plenty water.'

(3) [inde usque Burelani leuce IV; totum littus, aqua bona et in copia.]

'From there to Burelani, 4 liues, all sand, good and plenty water.'

el-Omari (4), who wrote ca. 1345 AD, lists the road stations between Cairo and Gaza, including el-Warrada, Bir el-Qadi and el-Arish. The same post stations on

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<sup>2499</sup> Cf. Dalman, 1924, p. 53. Berdan is mentioned in Eusebios, *Onomasticon*, s.v. Φρεάρ κρίσεως (Klostermann, 1904, p. 166) referring to *Genesis*, 26, 20-22.

<sup>2500</sup> Clermont-Ganneau, 1906b, p. 200.

<sup>2501</sup> Mouton, 2000, p. 34 and p. 172, n. 20.

<sup>2502</sup> *Via ad terram sanctam* (Kohler, 1904, p. 432); *Memoria terre sancte* (Kohler, 1904, p. 455); Marino Sanudo, 3, 14, 12 (Röhricht, 1898, p. 121). The distance given in the *Via* and the *Memoria* is probably to be preferred.

## 8. *The inland road south of Sabkhat Bardawil*

the same road are still mentioned in Qalqashandi junior (1464 AD) (5), Khalil el-Zahiri (before 1468 AD) (6) and Abu'l-Mahasin (before 1470 AD) (7)<sup>2503</sup>.

### **ABU HAWIDAT**

Abu Hawidat lies some 14 km west of el-Arish<sup>2504</sup>. Between Abu Hawidat and Khirba, situated southeast of el-Zaraniq, there is a huge bed of nummulite limestone stretching east - west, which on some spots shows traces of extraction, although Clédat did not see any ruins<sup>2505</sup>.

### **THEMAJEL DJABER**

A 'themajel' is a well that only contains water when it has rained<sup>2506</sup>. Musil states that Themajel Djaber is situated north of Hadjar Bardawil, but as Dalman notices, Musil's map (which I could not consult) gives the positions just the other way round<sup>2507</sup>. It is indeed more likely that the position on the map is correct. For Musil the place was probably situated somewhere between Bir el-Masa'id and Abu Mazruh, but I have no further indications for a more exact position.

### **ABU MAZRUH**

#### **Topographical situation**

Abu Mazruh lies some 20 km west of el-Arish and some 2 km east of Umm el-Ushush<sup>2508</sup>.

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<sup>2503</sup> el-Omari (translated in Hartmann, 1916a, p. 487). Qalqashandi junior (mentioned in Hartmann, 1910, p. 689.691) and Khalil el-Zahiri (translated in Gaulmier, 1950, p. 201). Abu'l-Mahasin, *Chronicle* (mentioned in Popper, 1955, I, p. 47); cf. Clédat, 1923b, p. 152.153.

<sup>2504</sup> The place is possibly identical with the 'Bir' and 'Br(unnen)' mentioned at about the same distance west of el-Arish in Paoletti, 1903, map and Fischer, 1910, pl. 7.

<sup>2505</sup> Clédat, 1910a, p. 227 and map A; Gardiner, 1920, pl. 13.

<sup>2506</sup> Cf. Fischer, 1910, p. 208.

<sup>2507</sup> Musil, 1907, II 1, p. 230; Dalman, 1924, p. 52, n. 3.

<sup>2508</sup> Clédat, 1910a, map A and 1923b, p. 141; Gardiner, 1920, pl. 13. The toponym Hadjar el-Masvi or el-Mašvi (?) on the map of Margovsky, 1969, p. 46 (no. 12) at some 20 km east of el-Arish, is perhaps a mistake for Hadjar el-Masri, the Hebrew letters 'v' and 'r' being easily mixed up; the first element of the name reminds of Hadjar Bardawil, the second of Abu Mazruh.



### **Archaeological finds**

On the small tell of Abu Mazruh Clédat saw blocs of nummulite limestone scattered around, most of them provided with a stonecutter's mark. At the southern flank, in between the blocs, lay a lot of human bones. Ancient pottery is scarce. Without any argumentation Clédat thinks that it is the place of a small Roman fortress, which guarded the road<sup>2509</sup>.

## **EL-MEIDAN**

### **Topographical situation**

el-Meidan is probably situated some 21 km west of el-Arish<sup>2510</sup>. The name does not occur before 1969 and maybe it is a recent settlement.

### **Archaeological finds**

In the neighbourhood of el-Meidan Israeli archaeologists found numerous sites of the early 3rd millennium BC<sup>2511</sup> and some dated to the Iron Age (ca. 1200-586 BC)<sup>2512</sup>.

## **UMM EL-USHUSH**

### **Topographical situation**

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<sup>2509</sup> Clédat, 1910a, p. 224-225; 1923b, p. 141; 1926, p. 78; cf. Figueras, 2000, p. 158.

<sup>2510</sup> de Jong, 2000, p. 654-655; cf. the maps Margovsky, 1969, p. 46 and Oren, 1973c, p. 199 (at the abbreviation K).

<sup>2511</sup> Oren, 1973c, p. 200-201.

<sup>2512</sup> Oren, 1973c, p. 200, n. 3. Because the material is compared with the findings in el-Qels, it is not impossible that also the date of the el-Meidan material has to be lowered to the Persian period; see s.v. el-Qels.

## 8. *The inland road south of Sabkhat Bardawil*

Umm el-Ushush lies some 22 km west of el-Arish, near a huge bed of nummulite limestone, which on some spots shows traces of extraction, although Clédat did not see any ruins<sup>2513</sup>.

### **Identifications**

Umm el-Ushush should not be confounded with the place el-Ushsh between Rafah and el-Arish, known in sources of the 13th and 14th century AD as another name for el-Kharruba, or with the 15th century el-Ushsh north of Cairo<sup>2514</sup>.

### **Etymology**

The name Umm el-Ushush can perhaps be translated as 'Mother of the noise / the whispering'<sup>2515</sup>, but its meaning remains uncertain.

## **QABR EL-SA'I**

### **Topographical situation**

Qabr el-Sa'i is only attested in the 17th century AD. If the identification of Beresanni (? < \*Bir el-Sa'i) (1) and Qabr (or 'Grave') el-Sa'i (2) is accepted, the place is situated on the main road through the northern Sinai at some six hours or about 23 km west of el-Arish and at the same distance east of Umm el-Hasan, possibly somewhat west of Umm el-Ushush and Abu Mazruh.

### **Identifications**

Dalman identifies el-Warrada, Qabr el-Sa'i and Bir el-Generat<sup>2516</sup>, but his suggestions do not fit the geographical information about each place.

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<sup>2513</sup> Clédat, 1910a, p. 227.

<sup>2514</sup> See s.v. el-Ushsh.

<sup>2515</sup> For the word 'el-ushush', cf. Clédat, 1923a, p. 86, n. 5; Wehr, 1979, p. 1256, s.v. wašwaša.

<sup>2516</sup> Dalman, 1924, p. 53. See s.v. Bir el-Generat.

### **Analysis of the sources**

Ferdinand von Troilo (1), referring to a trip to Egypt in 1661 AD, mentions the stations Aziz (el-Arish), Beresanni and Melhesan (Umm el-Hasan). It took him six hours to go from el-Arish to Beresanni and the next day another six hours to reach Melhesan. When we divide the travelling hours given by Troilo over the actual distance of some 78 km between el-Arish and Bir el-Abd, Beresanni might have been situated some 23 km west of el-Arish<sup>2517</sup>:

Sechsten Tages nach Aziz 12 Stunden.  
Siebenden Tages nach Beresanni 6 Stunden.  
Achten Tages nach Melhesan 6 Stunden.  
Neunden Tages nach Pozzo Abde 8 1/2 Stunden.

Hartmann thinks that Beresanni corresponds with Bir el-Masa'id, although he realises that a six-hour walk is too much to cover the 5 km between el-Arish and Bir el-Masa'id. I am inclined therefore to identify Beresanni with Qabr el-Sa'i, a station between Bir el-Masa'id and Umm el-Hasan, which indeed might have been situated at a six-hour distance from el-Arish. If one compares both names, not all phonetic problems can be solved, but they do not seem more prohibitive than for an identification with Bir el-Masa'id.

About 1697 AD el-Nabulusi (2) travelled from el-Arish via the smaller stations Bir el-Masa'id, Qabr el-Sa'i and Mahall el-Baraqaq further on to Umm el-Hasan<sup>2518</sup>.

## **BOUSSER**

### **Topographical situation**

Bousser lies along the main road between Cairo and Rafah at 4 'liues' or about 16 km west of Bir el-Qadi - i.e. at some 28 km west of el-Arish - and 2 'liues' or about 8 km east of el-Warrada, near the place where king Balduinus died in 1118 AD. At this point also starts a road going more south through the sand (1-3).

Bousser is only attested in the late 13th century AD. Since el-Omari, who wrote about 1345 AD, does not mention the place and even stresses that it is a large

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<sup>2517</sup> Troilo (mentioned in Hartmann, 1910, p. 699).

<sup>2518</sup> el-Nabulusi (mentioned in Hartmann, 1910, p. 701).

## 8. *The inland road south of Sabkhat Bardawil*

distance between Bir el-Qadi and el-Warrada<sup>2519</sup>, it is unlikely that it still existed in the 14th century AD. Maybe Bousser was just the name of an uninhabited crossroad, which disappeared together with the track going south.

### **Identifications**

One should expect a place with the name Bousser, which seems to betray an Egyptian origin, to go back at least to Greek or Roman times, but in older sources the name is not known for the northern Sinai or the eastern Delta.

### **Etymology**

One is inclined to think that the name Bousser, which is only known in French and Latin sources, reflects the well-known Egyptian name Pr-Wsir ('House of Osiris'), in Greek normally rendered as Bousiris. But since this name in the Arab period usually becomes Abusir and there is no parallel for a Bousiris in the northern Sinai, Bousser might just as well refer to something completely different.

### **Homonyms**

The name Bousiris (Pr-Wsir, Βουσιρις, Abusir) is known all over Egypt, the most important place with this name being the capital of the ninth nome of Lower Egypt in the central Delta<sup>2520</sup>.

### **Analysis of the sources**

A project for a crusade containing an itinerary composed before 1289 AD is found in three different documents: the French *Via ad terram sanctam*, written ca. 1291-1293 (1); the Latin *Memoria terre sancte*, written ca. 1300-1321 (2); the Latin work of the Italian geographer Marino Sanudo (3), written in 1321 AD and based upon the *Memoria*. They describe the road from Rafah to Cairo, each with some

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<sup>2519</sup> el-Omari (translated in Hartmann, 1916a, p. 487).

<sup>2520</sup> Cf. Gauthier, 1925, II, p. 68-71 and 1931, VII, p. 9-10 (index); Yoyotte, 1959a, p. 57-60; Calderini, 1973, II 1, p. 65-68 and 1988, Suppl. I, p. 85-86; LÄ, VII, 1992, p. 250.291-292.301.302 (index).

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minor variants. They mention Bousser at 4 'liues' (ca. 16 km) west of Bir el-Qadi and 2 'liues' (ca. 8 km) along the main road east of el-Warrada; in Bousser also starts a road going more south through the sand, where one finds only bad water<sup>2521</sup>:

(1) De Bir el Cani jusques à Bousser, IIII liues; et la se prenent II chemins; celui de haut est tot sablon et mauvaise aigue.

'From Bir el Cani to Bousser, 4 liues; and there one can take two roads; the higher one is all sand and has bad water.'

(2) de Birelcani usque ad Bousser, .IIII. leuce; ibi sunt duo camini, unus de alto, reliquus de basso.

'From Birelcani to Bousser, 4 liues; there are two roads, a higher and a lower one.'

(3) inde usque Bouser leuce IV. et ibi via dividitur in superiorem et inferiorem.

'From there to Bouser, 4 liues; there the road splits in a higher and a lower one.'

## **HADJAR BARDAWIL (SABKHAT BARDAWIL)**

### **Topographical situation**

In 1118 AD king Balduinus died on his way from el-Farama to el-Arish. Most sources situate the events only roughly in the neighbourhood of el-Arish (**1**, **5**), or even incorrectly<sup>2522</sup> in el-Arish itself (**2**), but the *Via* (**6**) gives more precise information. It locates his place of death between the road stations Bousser and el-Warrada, some 28 to 36 km west of el-Arish, but the author rather incorrectly calls the place 'Sabaquet Bardoil' using the name of the lake instead, which has also been named after that king.

The intestines of the king were buried there and modern travellers point out the place Hadjar Bardawil or 'Stone of Balduinus', adding that people passing by still throw stones at it<sup>2523</sup>. It is not sure whether they all refer to the same archaeological remains, if these were visible at all in the 19th and the early 20th century AD, for sometimes one gets the impression that the travellers just copied the story of Ibn Challikan (**4**), Abu'l-Feda (**9**) or Abu'l-Mahasin (**11**). Anyway, at the beginning of this century Clédat has been looking in vain for this memorial<sup>2524</sup>. Hadjar Bardawil has

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<sup>2521</sup> *Via ad terram sanctam* (Kohler, 1904, p. 432); *Memoria terre sancte* (Kohler, 1904, p. 455); Marino Sanudo, 3, 14, 12 (Röhricht, 1898, p. 121); cf. Hartmann, 1910, p. 689.691.

<sup>2522</sup> Against Schlumberger, 1906, p. 75; Hagenmeyer, 1913, p. 611; Abel, 1933, I, p. 435, n. 5 and 1939, p. 212; Buhl, F., s.v. al-'Arish, in *EnclIslam*(2), I, 1960, p. 651; Baumgarten, 1990, p. 124 and others, who think that Balduinus died in el-Arish itself. See s.v. el-Arish.

<sup>2523</sup> Cf. Sepp, 1863, II, p. 534; van Senden, 1851, I, p. 81-83.323; Guérin, 1869, I 2, p. 248; Rey, 1884, p. 347; Griffith, 1890, p. 36; Paoletti, 1903, p. 105-106; Schlumberger, 1906, p. 76; Musil, 1907, II 1, p. 230; Hartmann, 1910, p. 679; Baedeker, 1912, p. 122; Hartmann, 1912, p. 148-149; Beer, Georg, s.v. Rinocolura, Rinocorura, in *RE*, I A 1, 1914, col. 842; Clédat, 1923b, p. 141.

<sup>2524</sup> Cf. Clédat, 1926, p. 76.

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apparently never been a village, but only indicated the place where the intestines of Balduinus were buried.

The legend that arose around this king, was still told in the early 20th century AD. It situated Hadjar Bardawil north of Themajel Djaber not far from the coast<sup>2525</sup>, in the coastal plain near Abu Mazruh, about 20 km west of el-Arish<sup>2526</sup> or between Abu Mazruh and Bir el-Masa'id<sup>2527</sup>. These locations, though, are too far east in comparison with the distance given in the *Via* (6) and one gets the impression that legend got the upper hand on history.

Somewhere near Sabkhat Bardawil Salvator saw a ruined castle built of shelly marlstone, which according to a local tradition once belonged to Balduinus<sup>2528</sup>. Also Griffith had some information about a Qasr Bardawil or 'Castle of Balduinus' somewhere in the neighbourhood, but he is vague in locating it and did not see it himself<sup>2529</sup>. Clédat knew a legend about the castle of the giant king el-Bardawil, who was killed by Abu Zeid, located in the plain that extends for some 15 km between Abu Mazruh and Bir el-Masa'id<sup>2530</sup>. Whatever the sources might have described, it was surely not a crusaders' castle.

### **Identifications**

Rey identifies Hadjar Bardawil with the 'caput Beroardi' known in the early 13th century AD<sup>2531</sup>, but it seems very unlikely that this rather legendary monument could have been a distinguishing mark for sailors on the Mediterranean. In fact the 'caput Beroardi' probably refers to the neighbourhood of Rafah<sup>2532</sup>.

van Senden incorrectly locates Hadjar Bardawil between el-Arish and Rafah. He states that the place is also called Sheikh Yehud, but this seems to be a deformation of Sheikh Zuweid<sup>2533</sup>.

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<sup>2525</sup> Musil, 1907, II 1, p. 230, corrected by Dalman, 1924, p. 52, n. 3.

<sup>2526</sup> Clédat, 1923b, p. 141. See also the toponym 'Bardaouil' on the map of Paoletti, 1903 at about 20 km west of el-Arish.

<sup>2527</sup> Clédat, 1926, p. 76.

<sup>2528</sup> Salvator, 1879 in Figueras, 2000, p. 14.

<sup>2529</sup> Griffith, 1890, p. 36.

<sup>2530</sup> Clédat, 1923b, p. 141 and 1926, p. 76. See s.v. Hadjar Bardawil.

<sup>2531</sup> Cf. Marino Sanudo, 2, 4, 25 (Röhrich, 1898, p. 119-120); Rey, 1884, p. 347.

<sup>2532</sup> See s.v. Itineraries. Descriptions of the coastline.

<sup>2533</sup> van Senden, 1851, I, p. 83. See s.v. Sheikh el-Zuweid.

## Etymology

The Hadjar Bardawil is the 'Stone of Balduinus'<sup>2534</sup>; also the plural 'Stones of Balduinus' occurs<sup>2535</sup>. Sometimes it is called 'Adm Bardawil, 'Bones of Balduinus'<sup>2536</sup>, Turbet Bardawil, 'Tomb of Balduinus'<sup>2537</sup>, or Rudjm Bardawil, 'Tombstone of Balduinus'<sup>2538</sup>.

## Analysis of the sources

The crusader king Balduinus I had taken el-Farama at the end of March 1118 AD<sup>2539</sup>. Some ten years after the events Fulcherus Carnotensis (1) describes how Balduinus got sick there and wanted to return to Jerusalem. He died on the way near the city Laris (el-Arish) on 2 April 1118 AD. His intestines were salted and buried, while his body was transported further on to Jerusalem<sup>2540</sup>:

cumque ad usque villam, quae dicitur Laris, pervenissent, infirmitate ingruente et illum penitus consummante, defungitur. et locatis eius intestinis et sallitis atque in loculo conditis, Hierosolymam properaverunt.

'When they reached the village called Laris, he finally died, his body nearly wasted away with illness. They took out his intestines, salted them and laid them in the coffin, and hurried on to Jerusalem.'

The same story is told by Willelmus Tyrensis (2) about 60 years later<sup>2541</sup>:

sicque continuatis itineribus, transcursum ex parte solitudine que inter Egyptum et Syriam media diffunditur, Laris antiquam eiusdem solitudinis urbem perveniunt maritimam. ubi morbo superatus rex, ad extremum veniens in fata concessit.

'In this fashion by uninterrupted journeys, they crossed that part of the wilderness which extends between Egypt and Syria, and arrived at Laris, an ancient coast city in that desert. There the king succumbed to his illness and yielded to fate.'

While the phrasing in Fulcherus ('ad usque villam') might leave some doubt for the exact location of the events, for Willelmus it was clear that Balduinus died in Laris self. No mention is made of the buried intestines.

Arab authors also know the story. Idrisi (3), who wrote in 1154 AD, mentions Balduinus' presence in el-Farama; the king almost drowned there with his horse and

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<sup>2534</sup> Cf. Guérin, 1869, I 2, p. 248; Rey, 1884, p. 347; Baedeker, 1912, p. 122; Beer, Georg, s.v. Rinocolura, Rinocorura, in RE, I A 1, 1914, col. 842.

<sup>2535</sup> Cf. Clédat, 1923b, p. 141.

<sup>2536</sup> Cf. Griffith, 1890, p. 36.

<sup>2537</sup> Cf. Paoletti, 1903, p. 106.

<sup>2538</sup> Cf. Musil, 1907, II 1, p. 230, followed by Hartmann, 1910, p. 679 and Dalman, 1924, p. 52, n. 3.

<sup>2539</sup> Cf. Hagenmeyer, 1913, p. 609-613; Clédat, 1926, p. 72-81.

<sup>2540</sup> Fulcherus Carnotensis, *Historia Hierosolymitana*, 2, 64, 3 (Hagenmeyer, 1913, p. 611-612); cf. the translation of Ryan, 1969, p. 222.

<sup>2541</sup> Willelmus Tyrensis, *Chronicon*, 11, 31 (Huygens, 1986, p. 543-544); cf. the translation of Babcock, 1943, I, p. 515; cf. Musil, 1907, II 1, p. 304.

## 8. The inland road south of Sabkhat Bardawil

therefore he returned to Syria. Idrisi does not explicitly mention Balduinus' death, but maybe the odd story about the drowning, which is not known in other sources, is a distortion of the events around his death<sup>2542</sup>.

About 1250 AD Ibn Challikan (4) tells that Arab travellers used to throw stones to the grave of Balduinus as a curse<sup>2543</sup>.

Abu Salih (5), who wrote before 1260 AD, specifies that Balduinus died near el-Arish and that his body was embalmed. He does not mention any grave<sup>2544</sup>.

A project for a crusade containing an itinerary composed before 1289 AD is found in three different documents: the French *Via ad terram sanctam*, written ca. 1291-1293 (6); the Latin *Memoria terre sancte*, written ca. 1300-1321 (7); the Latin work of the Italian geographer Marino Sanudo (8), written in 1321 AD and based upon the *Memoria*. They describe the road from Rafah to Cairo, each with some minor variants. Between Bousser and el-Warrada, which is a track of 2 'liues' (ca. 8 km), Sabkhat Bardawil lies, the spot where king Balduinus I died in 1118 AD<sup>2545</sup>:

(6) celui de bas est le chemin usé et s'en vait par un leu ou le roi Baudoin morut, et celui leu s'apele Sabaquet Bardoill et vait a l'Aorade, et a sablon assés.

'the lower road is the more common one and passes by the place where king Baudoin died and which is called Sabaquet Bardoil; it leads to Aorade, and there is a lot of sand.'

(7) ille de basso caminus est consuetus et vadit per quemdam locum ubi mortuus est rex Balduinus, et vocatur Sabaquet Bardoil, et vadit recte ad locum vocatum Carade, et habet satis littore.

'the lower road is the more common one and passes by the place where king Balduinus died and which is called Sabaquet Bardoil; it leads straight to Carade, and there is a lot of sand.'

(8) inferior est magis communis et transit per locum vocatum Sabaquet baridoil, ubi mortuus est rex Balduinus.

'the lower road is the more common one and passes by the place called Sabaquet baridoil, where king Balduinus died.'

The name Sabkhat Bardawil, which the author gives, probably refers in fact to the lake in the neighbourhood and not to the exact place of burial.

Abu'l-Feda (9), who wrote before 1331 AD, tells that Balduinus died before arriving in el-Arish and that the Sabkhat Bardawil, which is situated in the midst of the sand on the road from Egypt to Syria, is called after this king. He mentions the spot where the intestines of the king were buried, adding that people still continued to throw stones at it. Although Abu'l-Feda does not explicitly link this place with

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<sup>2542</sup> Idrisi (translated in Dozy, 1866, p. 184). Clédat, 1923a, p. 68 wants to locate the events in Sabkhat Bardawil, but the story is clearly linked with Pelousion and not with the northern Sinai.

<sup>2543</sup> Ibn Challikan (mentioned in Hartmann, 1912, p. 148-149); cf. Hartmann, 1916b, p. 375.

<sup>2544</sup> Abu Salih (translated in Evetts, 1895, p. 170-171).

<sup>2545</sup> *Via ad terram sanctam* (Kohler, 1904, p. 432); *Memoria terre sancte* (Kohler, 1904, p. 455); Marino Sanudo, 3, 14, 12 (Röhricht, 1898, p. 121).



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Sabkhat Bardawil, it is not unlikely that for him the king died somewhere in the neighbourhood of the lake<sup>2546</sup>.

Maqrizi (10), who incorrectly dates the events in 1113/1114 AD, tells how the companions of the king tried to hide Balduinus' death and embalmed his body to transport it back to his country, but he does not dwell on the place of his death<sup>2547</sup>.

For Abu'l-Mahasin (11) in the 15th century AD Balduinus was killed by God before he reached el-Arish, because he had destroyed the mosques of el-Farama. People still throw stones at the place in the 'sabkhat' where his intestines were buried<sup>2548</sup>.

Balduinus not only gave his name to this so-called grave and to the lake, but a legend, which occurs in the Banu Hilal epic, even combined elements from Samson and Delilah and David and Goliath with the death of the king. The story is situated differently according to the source of information in an area extending some 5 to 20 km west of el-Arish. The pagan giant king 'el-Bardawil' lived in a fortress near the lake. He tried to obstruct the national Arab hero Abu Zeid on his way to Egypt, but was betrayed by his own mistress who discovered that the strength of the giant was situated in his hair. el-Bardawil got killed in a duel with Abu Zeid and was buried there. West of the pile of stones some traces of giant steps were found said to have come from the horse of Abu Zeid pursuing el-Bardawil<sup>2549</sup>.

## **BIR EL-GERERAT**

### **Topographical situation**

Bir el-Generat lies - linea recta - some 30 km west of el-Arish and some 10 km south of the Mediterranean. It is not situated on the main road, but more inland than

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<sup>2546</sup> Abu'l-Feda, *Annals* (translated in de Slane, 1872, p. 11).

<sup>2547</sup> Maqrizi (translated in Bouriant, 1900, p. 626-627).

<sup>2548</sup> Abu'l-Mahasin, *Annals* (translated in Recueil, 1884, III, p. 488).

<sup>2549</sup> Salvator, 1879 in Figueras, 2000, p. 14.249; Hartmann, 1898a, p. 262-263, translating stories about el-Bardawil told in the Libyan desert; Hartmann, 1898b, p. 301-302.313-314, referring to the Banu Hilal epic; Paoletti, 1903, p. 105-106, who refers to 'ancient Arab authors'; Musil, 1907, II 1, p. 230; Hartmann, 1916b, p. 377, referring to both the Banu Hilal epic and the oral tradition; Clédat, 1923b, p. 141 and 1926, p. 76-81, who states that the story has personally been told to him by a sheikh of el-Arish in 1914.

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the other places. It lies south of the hill Djebel Gurfan<sup>2550</sup>, west of the 'mouth' of the Wadi Motlaqa<sup>2551</sup> and it is the beginning of a trail going southeast into the desert.

### **Identifications**

The identification of Bir el-Generat with the biblical toponyms Gerar, Berdan or Bered is not based on any evidence<sup>2552</sup>.

Dalman - for reasons not clear to me - thinks that the name Bir el-Generat implies the presence of a saint's grave in the neighbourhood, and he therefore identifies the place with both el-Warrada and Qabr el-Sa'i<sup>2553</sup>. The fact, though, that Bir el-Generat is not situated on the main road, enfeebles his suggestion.

### **SABIKAH**

Sabikah lies on the main road from Egypt to Rafah, some 31,5 km west of el-Arish, some 9,5 km east of Bir el-Mazar, and some 10 (?) km southeast of el-Felusiyat<sup>2554</sup>.

### **MAHALL EL-BARAQAT**

#### **Topographical situation**

According to el-Nabulusi (1) Mahall el-Baraqat is situated somewhere between Qabr el-Sa'i and Umm el-Hasan, places that are reached from el-Arish after respectively six (ca. 24 km) and twelve hours (ca. 48 km). One could therefore suggest a location between Bir el-Generat and Bir el-Mazar, perhaps at some 36 km west of el-Arish, which brings it in the neighbourhood or somewhat south of the old road station el-Warrada.

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<sup>2550</sup> For this djebel, cf. Clédat, 1910a, map ('G(ebel) Gourfan').

<sup>2551</sup> For this wadi, cf. Paoletti, 1903, map ('Ouady Motlaka'); Fischer, 1910, p. 220 and pl. 7 ('Wādi Moṭlaḳa').

<sup>2552</sup> For Gerar, cf. *Genesis*, 26, 17-26; for Berdan, cf. Eusebios, *Onomasticon*, s.v. Φρεάρ κρίσεως (Klostermann, 1904, p. 166) referring to *Genesis*, 26, 20-22; for Bered, cf. *Genesis*, 16, 14. Cf. Dalman, 1924, p. 53.

<sup>2553</sup> Dalman, 1924, p. 53.

<sup>2554</sup> Cf. de Jong, 2000, p. 654-655 and the map Levy, 1987, p. 260.

## 8. *The inland road south of Sabkhat Bardawil*

### **Analysis of the sources**

About 1697 AD el-Nabulusi (1) travelled from el-Arish via the smaller stations Bir el-Masa'id, Qabr el-Sa'i and Mahall el-Baraqat further on to Umm el-Hasan<sup>2555</sup>.

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<sup>2555</sup> el-Nabulusi (mentioned in Hartmann, 1910, p. 701).

*The area between el-Felusiyat and Bir el-Abd*

**NAKHLA**

**Topographical situation**

Nakhla lies some 40 km west of el-Arish, some 7 km southeast of el-Felusiyat and some 4 km north of Bir el-Mazar, immediately north of the road and telegraph line from Egypt to Rafah, which goes south of Sabkhat Bardawil<sup>2556</sup>. Despite the name Nakhla or 'Palm tree' Clédat did not notice any palm trees in 1910. This place is most likely identical with the road station Nachile mentioned in 1565 AD between el-Arish and Umm el-Hasan (1).

**Archaeological finds**

In 1910 Clédat noticed in Nakhla some constructions in nummulite limestone, partially covered by sand, and surface material, which he dated in the Arab period. The site consists of two small hills and is maximum 150 m long and 60 to 70 m broad. At the southern slope of the hills Clédat saw some small rectangular constructions with limestone walls, which he tentatively identified as the cemetery<sup>2557</sup>.

**Homonyms**

Also in the central Sinai a place called Nakhel is known<sup>2558</sup>.

**Analysis of the sources**

In 1565 AD Johann Helffrich (1) knows the stations Arisch (el-Arish), Nachile (Nakhla), Hemelesin (Umm el-Hasan), Bierlehali (Bir el-Abd?) and Catie (Qatia) on the road from Gaza to Cairo<sup>2559</sup>.

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<sup>2556</sup> Clédat, 1910a, p. 227-228 and map A.

<sup>2557</sup> Clédat, 1910a, p. 228.

<sup>2558</sup> Cf. the map Bartholomew, 1977.

## **AITWEGENAI**

In 1849 van Senden passed by the village Aitwegenai, of which only some ruins exist, between Hauf Bazar (Bir el-Mazar?) and Nachile (Nakhla), but further information is lacking<sup>2560</sup>.

## **BIR EL-ZUBATIYYA**

### **Topographical situation**

Bir el-Zubatiyya lies some 5 km southeast of Bir el-Mazar<sup>2561</sup>.

### **Archaeological finds**

The Israeli archaeological survey noticed three Islamic settlements (C92, C94 and C97) in the neighbourhood of Bir el-Zubatiyya and Bir el-Mazar, with pottery mainly from the 8th-13th centuries AD<sup>2562</sup>.

## **BIR EL-MAZAR**

### **Topographical situation**

Bir el-Mazar<sup>2563</sup> lies some 41 km west of el-Arish<sup>2564</sup> and some 37 km east of Bir el-Abd<sup>2565</sup>, some 8 km south of el-Felusiyat<sup>2566</sup> and some 4 km south of

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<sup>2559</sup> Johann Helffrich (mentioned in Hartmann, 1910, p. 697). Hartmann was unable to identify the place.

<sup>2560</sup> van Senden, 1851, I, p. 75.

<sup>2561</sup> Cf. Cytryn-Silverman, 2001, p. 32, map 1.

<sup>2562</sup> Cf. Cytryn-Silverman, 2001, p. 19-23.

<sup>2563</sup> The map Kümmerly, 1995 makes the distinction between the railway station el-Mazar and the place Bir el-Mazar more south.

<sup>2564</sup> Cf. de Jong, 2000, p. 654-655: 41 km; Figueras, 1988, p. 55 and 2000, p. 13: 40 km.

<sup>2565</sup> The distances differ: 36,5 km (de Jong, 2000, p.654-655); 40 km (Figueras, 1988, p. 55 and 2000, p. 13); the map Kümmerly, 1995 has 82 km between el-Arish and Bir el-Abd, which might imply a distance of some 41 km between Bir el-Mazar and Bir el-Abd.

<sup>2566</sup> Cf. Dalman, 1924, p. 53.

## 8. *The inland road south of Sabkhat Bardawil*

Nakhla<sup>2567</sup>, at the road from Egypt to Rafah, which goes south of Sabkhat Bardawil. A desert road started from the well into the direction of Suez<sup>2568</sup>. In 1890 Bir el-Mazar was the last well before el-Arish, but the water was so salty that it was hardly drinkable<sup>2569</sup>. According to Clédat the well was built by Ibrahim Pasha in the first half of 19th century and the name Bir el-Mazar was probably then created. In 1910 the well was maintained by the Egyptian government, which had placed a guard, but a few years later the man was removed and the water became again of bad quality<sup>2570</sup>.

### **Archaeological finds**

Near Bir el-Mazar, about 1 km northwest of the well, on a small hill, lie the ruins of the wely or burial chapel of Soliman Abu Djilbana, with an Arab necropolis around it. West of the wely, on the eastern flank of a second dune, the soil is covered with Roman or Byzantine pottery, but in 1910 Clédat did not notice any constructions. Apparently during another visit in 1914 he did see traces of a Roman post or fortress built in 'beautiful white stones', which guarded the road, and a settlement. The material of the site was apparently used to build the wely<sup>2571</sup>.

An Israeli archaeological survey investigated the area of Bir el-Mazar. Occupation in the Early Bronze Age (ca. 3300-2200 BC) is indicated by the discovery of several kilograms of copper ore<sup>2572</sup>. One of the sites in the neighbourhood yielded Middle Bronze Age II A (ca. 2000-1750 BC) and Middle Kingdom pottery<sup>2573</sup>. A cluster of New Kingdom sites near Bir el-Mazar consists of a central fort or station surrounded by smaller campsites for caravans and huts or tents for local inhabitants<sup>2574</sup>. In the same neighbourhood a lot of sites of the 5th and 4th century BC

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<sup>2567</sup> For Clédat, 1910a, p. 228 Bir el-Mazar lies one hour by camel southwest of Nakhla and more than two hours southeast of el-Khuinat; Clédat, 1916a, p. 9 and 1923a, p. 64-65, however, locates the well two hours south of el-Felusiyat. The maps available are not consequent placing Bir el-Mazar south, southwest or southeast of el-Felusiyat and el-Khuinat.

<sup>2568</sup> Clédat, 1916a, p. 9 and 1923a, p. 64.

<sup>2569</sup> Griffith, 1890, p. 36.

<sup>2570</sup> Clédat, 1910a, p. 210.228; 1916a, p. 10; 1923a, p. 64-65 and p. 65, n. 1.

<sup>2571</sup> Clédat, 1910a, p. 228; 1916a, p. 9-10; 1923a, p. 65; 1923b, p. 141; 1926, p. 78. van Senden, 1851, I, p. 74-75 mentions the well 'Abu Shilban' and the mosque of 'Hauf Bazar' as two separate places on his journey between Bir el-Abd and el-Arish, but I get the impression that he mixes things up.

<sup>2572</sup> Oren, 1989, p. 400 (cf. the map p. 391, but it is not clear which site is referred to).

<sup>2573</sup> Oren, 1993, p. 1388.

<sup>2574</sup> Oren, 1979b, p. 188; 1987, p. 77 and p. 114, n. 7 (cf. the map p. 79, but it is not clear which site is referred to); 1993, p. 1389; cf. BIA, 1991, IV, p. 29. Figueras, 1988, p. 55 incorrectly states that there is no evidence of any ancient Egyptian presence.

## 8. *The inland road south of Sabkhat Bardawil*

were found<sup>2575</sup>. Excavations at Bir el-Mazar - probably at the site noticed by Clédat - revealed a settlement of some 4 ha (?) with two phases of occupation. The first one yielded Nabataean pottery and terra sigillata of the 1st-2nd centuries AD. In the 4th century AD a new settlement was built, somewhat smaller but certainly a prosperous Byzantine town with public buildings; it was abandoned at the end of that same century<sup>2576</sup>. Oren considers Bir el-Mazar one of the more important Arab stations in the northern Sinai before 1516 AD<sup>2577</sup>, but it is not clear whether he refers to archaeological remains or whether he implicitly identifies the place with e.g. the station of el-Baqqara.

### **Identifications**

In 1879 Salvator describes how he travelled in one day from Bir el-Abd to Bir el-Maghara and the next day continued to el-Arish<sup>2578</sup>. There is little doubt that Bir el-Maghara in this context corresponds with Bir el-Mazar, which indeed lies halfway Bir el-Abd and el-Arish. Figueras, however, links the place with the Bir el-Maghara known near the Djebel Maghara in the central Sinai<sup>2579</sup>, but this well lies far too south to come into account<sup>2580</sup>.

## **BIR MATTA**

### **Topographical situation**

Fischer tentatively locates the well Bir Matta some 3 km south of Bir el-Mazar<sup>2581</sup>.

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<sup>2575</sup> Oren, 1982a, p. 14.

<sup>2576</sup> Oren, 1982a, p. 26-27 (cf. Wenning, 1987, p. 183.185; Figueras, 1988, p. 55) and 1993, p. 1395; the surface area given as '40 hectares' (sc. ca. 630 x 630 m) is probably a mistake for '4 hectares' (sc. ca. 200 x 200 m) (cf. a similar mistake for the surface area of the site near el-Arish mentioned in the same context). The place was labelled site C86 (cf. Oren, 1980b, p. 131.144.147 and 1993, p. 1395).

<sup>2577</sup> Oren, 1982a, p. 46.

<sup>2578</sup> Salvator, 1881 [1879], p. 23 in Figueras, 2000, p. 14.168.169.198.

<sup>2579</sup> Figueras, 2000, p. 14.168.

<sup>2580</sup> For this well, cf. Clédat, 1924, p. 35. and the maps of Meshel, 1973c, p. 208, Baumgarten, 1990 and Oren, 1993a, p. 1387.

<sup>2581</sup> Fischer, 1910, pl. 7.

### **Homonyms**

Another Bir Matta is situated in the central Sinai some 50 km south of the Bir Matta near Bir el-Mazar<sup>2582</sup>.

### **BIR KASIBA (I)**

#### **Topographical situation**

South of the road from Egypt to Rafah, some 14 km southwest of Bir el-Mazar, lies the well Bir Kasiba<sup>2583</sup>.

### **Homonyms**

In the northern Sinai another Bir Kasiba is known between Qatia and Bir el-Duwaidar<sup>2584</sup>.

### **EL-RODAH**

el-Rodah lies some 3 km east of Bir el-Mazar and some 43 km west of el-Arish<sup>2585</sup>.

### **GARIF EL-GIZLAN**

Garif el-Gizlan lies some 7 km south of the main road, southwest of el-Rodah and southeast of Abu Tilul<sup>2586</sup>.

### **UMM EL-HASAN**

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<sup>2582</sup> Cf. Fischer, 1910, pl. 7 and p. 213.

<sup>2583</sup> Cf. Baumgarten, 1990, map; the map Kümmerly, 1995 locates the well apparently closer to the road and only some 10 km west of Bir el-Mazar.

<sup>2584</sup> See s.v. Bir Kasiba (II).

<sup>2585</sup> de Jong, 2000, p. 654-655.

<sup>2586</sup> de Jong, 2000, p. 654-655.



### **Topographical situation**

The road station Umm el-Hasan, mentioned in sources of the 15th-17th centuries AD, is situated roughly halfway between el-Arish and Qatia. Stations located immediately east of Umm el-Hasan are el-Arish (**1-3, 6**), Beresanni (Qabr el-Sa'i?), which is situated some six hours east of Umm el-Hasan (**7**), Mahall el-Baraqat (**8**) and Nakhla (**4**). Stations located immediately west of Umm el-Hasan are Arar (**2**), Ru'us el-Adrab (**8**), Bir el-Abd, which is situated some eight hours and a half west of Umm el-Hasan (**3?, 4?, 5?, 6, 7**), and Qatia (**1**). When we divide the travelling hours given by Troilo (**7**) over the actual distance of some 78 km between el-Arish and Bir el-Abd, Umm el-Hasan might have been situated some 46 km west of el-Arish and some 32 km east of Bir el-Abd.

### **Identifications**

Already in 1482 AD some ruins were found at the spot (**3**), so Umm el-Hasan most likely corresponds with one of the older road stations, which apparently changed name.

Cytryn-Silverman tentatively identifies Umm el-Hasan with site C102, where the Israeli survey recorded pottery from the 14th-18th centuries AD<sup>2587</sup>.

### **Analysis of the sources**

In 1477/1478 AD sultan Qaitbay went in one day from el-Arish to Umm el-Hasan and continued the next day to Qatia (**1**)<sup>2588</sup>.

In 1481 AD rabbi Meshullam of Volterra (**2**) went from Egypt to Palestine, passing by Bir el-Abd, el-Sawada, Arar, the large customs station Mulhasin (Umm el-Hasan) and el-Arish<sup>2589</sup>.

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<sup>2587</sup> Cytryn-Silverman, 2001, p. 24.

<sup>2588</sup> Ibn el-Dji'an (translated in Devonshire, 1922, p. 32); cf. Gildemeister, 1880, p. 249; Hartmann, 1910, p. 696.

<sup>2589</sup> Meshullam of Volterra (mentioned in Cytryn-Silverman, 2001, p. 14.23); cf. Veronese, 1989, p. 60-63 (non vidi).

## 8. The inland road south of Sabkhat Bardawil

In 1482 AD Joos van Ghistele (3) travelled from Gaza to Cairo via Larijs (el-Arish), Hemelessijn (Umm el-Hasan), Bierlehalt (Bir el-Abd?) and Cattia (Qatia). In Hemelessijn the caravan found good water and van Ghistele noticed some buildings gone to ruins<sup>2590</sup>.

In 1565 AD Johann Helffrich (4) knows the stations Arisch (el-Arish), Nachile (Nakhla), Hemelesin (Umm el-Hasan), Bierlehali (Bir el-Abd?) and Catie (Qatia) on the road from Gaza to Cairo<sup>2591</sup>.

Francesco Quaresmi (5) travelled ca. 1616-1626 AD from 'Aris' (el-Arish) to 'Cathia' (Qatia), passing by two nameless wells; on this track he made 145 miles (ca. 217,5 km), but this distance is definitely too high. It is not unlikely that the first nameless station with salty and bitter water was actually Umm el-Hasan<sup>2592</sup>.

tertius post istum, peractis quinquaginta milliaribus, qui "Aris Principis" nomine insignitur: ibi dulces aquae inveniuntur; post hunc invenitur quartus puteus, a praecedenti nonaginta milliaribus dissitus; ex isto, peractis aliis triginta milliaribus, quinto pervenimus ad alium similiter aquae salitae et amarae puteum; post quem denique, absolutis adhuc viginti quinque milliaribus, invenitur Cathia.

'the third place hereafter, fifty miles further, is named Aris Princeps: here one finds fresh water; hereafter a fourth well is found, situated ninety miles from the previous one; next, after another thirty miles, we reach the fifth stage, another well likewise with salty and bitter water; hereafter, finally, after twenty-five miles, one finds Cathia.'

About 1655 AD Hadji Khalifa (6) refers to the stations el-Arish, Umm el-Hasan, Bir el-Abd and Qatia on that same road<sup>2593</sup>.

Referring to a trip to Egypt in 1661 AD Ferdinand von Troilo (7) mentions the stations Aziz (el-Arish), Beresanni (Qabr el-Sa'i?), Melhesan (Umm el-Hasan), Pozzo Abde (Bir el-Abd) and Calhia (Qatia). It took him six hours to go from Beresanni to Melhesan and the next day eight hours and a half to get in Pozzo Abde<sup>2594</sup>.

Sechsten Tages nach Aziz 12 Stunden.

Siebenden Tages nach Beresanni 6 Stunden.

Achten Tages nach Melhesan 6 Stunden.

Neunden Tages nach Pozzo Abde 8 1/2 Stunden.

Zehenden Tages Calhia 9 Stunden.

About 1697 AD el-Nabulusi (8) travelled from el-Arish to Qatia via Bir el-Masa'id, Qabr el-Sa'i, Mahall el-Baraqt, Umm el-Hasan, Ru'us el-Adrab and Bir el-Abd<sup>2595</sup>.

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<sup>2590</sup> *Tvoyage van Mher Joos van Ghistele* (Gaspar, 1998, p. 170); cf. Demaeckere, 1936, p. 78.

<sup>2591</sup> Johann Helffrich (mentioned in Hartmann, 1910, p. 697).

<sup>2592</sup> Francesco Quaresmi (De Sandoli, 1989, p. 432).

<sup>2593</sup> Hadji Khalifa (mentioned in Hartmann, 1910, p. 698).

<sup>2594</sup> Troilo (mentioned in Hartmann, 1910, p. 699).

<sup>2595</sup> el-Nabulusi (mentioned in Hartmann, 1910, p. 701).

## EL-SAWADA

### Topographical situation

el-Sawada is a road station situated between el-Warrada and el-Mutaileb on the road from Rafah to Cairo, attested in the 13th-15th centuries AD. There was a market and a caravan serai. In the *Devisé* (1) the place is situated 5 'liues' or about 20 km west of el-Warrada and 4 'liues' or about 16 km east of el-Mutaileb, while the *Via* (2) - more correctly? - gives the distances just the other way around. el-Sawada has therefore possibly to be looked for some 52 km west of el-Arish. Somewhere before 1345 AD el-Sawada has been moved from its original spot in order that travellers did not have to make a detour (5), but the exact circumstances of this event are not clear. In 1481 AD Meshullam mentions el-Sawada as a customs station between Bir el-Abd in the east and Arar and Umm el-Hasan in the west (13), but this location is probably not to be trusted since (the older) el-Sawada and (the more recent) Umm el-Hasan seem to have been quite close to each other and there are no reasons to assume that they functioned at the same time.

According to Hartmann el-Sawada was still a village of 2500 inhabitants about 1899<sup>2596</sup>, but I wonder whether he correctly refers to the village in the northern Sinai, because none of the maps of the 19th or the early 20th century mentions such an important village in the neighbourhood.

### Identifications

The identification of el-Sawada with some of the stations on the Karnak relief and in the itinerary of P.Anastasi is not based upon any evidence<sup>2597</sup>.

Clédat locates el-Sawada in present-day el-Ratama because of the presence of some important ruins there<sup>2598</sup>. el-Ratama, however, probably lies in the

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<sup>2596</sup> Hartmann, 1910, p. 691, referring to Boinet, 1899. For other places with the name el-Sawada, see § Homonyms.

<sup>2597</sup> Clédat, 1923b, p. 155 for Dmi qd.n ḥm.f m m3w.t ('Town which His Majesty built anew') - T3 ḥnm.t Ib-s-q-b ('The well (called Ib-s-q-b) [Karnak, 1986, IV, pl. 5, 20-21 (K-L)] and Ib-s-q-b [P.Anastasi I, 27, 6 (9)]; cf. Gauthier, 1925, I, p. 65.

<sup>2598</sup> Clédat, 1923b, p. 152.155-156. See s.v. el-Ratama.

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neighbourhood of el-Warrada, whereas el-Sawada should be looked for more to the west.

Abel places el-Sawada in the neighbourhood of Misfaq<sup>2599</sup>, while also Cytryn-Silverman tentatively identifies the place with site B1 near Misfaq<sup>2600</sup>, but if we may trust the figures in the itineraries, the station ought to be looked for some 10 km east of Misfaq. For Abel el-Sawada replaced the older el-Baqqara, but it is more likely that the more nearby station el-Mutaileb took over some of the functions of el-Baqqara.

### **Etymology**

According to De Sacy the word 'sawad' refers to a village or a campsite. 'Khosous' means 'reed' or 'the place where reed grows', and according to Clédat the expression Khosous Sawada (7) refers to a place where the houses are built in reed, while he looks for a link with the Greek toponyms Gerra or Skenai<sup>2601</sup>.

### **Homonyms**

There are at least two other towns in Egypt with the name Sawada, one near Minya in Middle Egypt, the other one near Faqus in the eastern Delta<sup>2602</sup>.

Because of the similar meaning of the names Gerra and el-Sawada Clédat thinks that there was a place el-Sawada in the neighbourhood of Mahammediya (Gerra)<sup>2603</sup>, but no such place is known in the Arab sources.

### **Analysis of the sources**<sup>2604</sup>

In *La devise des chemins de Babiloine* (1), written ca. 1289-1291 AD, a military itinerary goes from Rafah to Cairo. It mentions the station el-Sawada at 5

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<sup>2599</sup> Abel, 1940, p. 60, n. 2 (against the more vague location expressed in Abel, 1938, II, p. 218); cf. the location of el-Sawada in Popper, 1955, I, map 4. See s.v. Misfaq.

<sup>2600</sup> Cytryn-Silverman, 2001, p. 24.

<sup>2601</sup> De Sacy, 1810, p. 328 in Clédat, 1923b, p. 166, n. 1. See s.v. Gerra.

<sup>2602</sup> Cf. Golb, 1974, p. 139.147.

<sup>2603</sup> Clédat, 1923b, p. 166.

<sup>2604</sup> I have no information for the moment about the exact contents of Maqrizi, *History* (mentioned in Hartmann, 1916a, p. 487, n. 6; cf. Hartmann, 1910, p. 691) (9).

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'liues' (ca. 20 km) west of el-Warrada and at 4 'liues' (ca. 16 km) east of el-Mutaileb<sup>2605</sup>:

Item de la Oarrade iusques à la Soade liues .v.  
Item del Soade iusques El Montayleb liues .iv.  
'Next from Oarrade to Soade 5 liues.  
Next from Soade to El Montayleb 4 liues.'

A similar itinerary composed before 1289 AD is found in three different documents: the French *Via ad terram sanctam*, written ca. 1291-1293 (2); the Latin *Memoria terre sancte*, written ca. 1300-1321 (3); the Latin work of the Italian geographer Marino Sanudo (4), written in 1321 AD and based upon the *Memoria*. They also describe the road from Rafah to Cairo, each with some minor variants. They mention el-Sawada at 4 'liues' (ca. 16 km) west of el-Warrada and 5 'liues' (ca. 20 km) east of el-Mutaileb. The road to el-Sawada is very sandy; there is a good lodging place, plenty of good water and the place has a market<sup>2606</sup>:

(2) De la Aorade a la Saoede, a IIII liues; si a grant sablon et bone herberge et bone aigue et assés, et place de vendre et d'acheter.

'From Aorade to Saoede, 4 liues; there is a lot of sand, a good lodging place, plenty of good water, and a place for selling and buying.'

(3) ab Carade usque ad Soede, sunt .IIII. leuce; sic est ibi litus magnum, seu habundancia littoris, bonum herbagium, bona aqua et satis, et locus de emendo et vendendo.

'From Carade to Soede it is 4 liues; there is a lot of sand, or rather an abundance of sand, a good lodging place, plenty of good water, and a place for buying and selling.'

(4) inde usque Asbede leuce IV; sic est littus magnum, bonum herbacium, aqua bona et platea.

'From there to Asbede 4 liues; there is a lot of sand, a good lodging place, good water and a market place.'

el-Omari (5), who wrote ca. 1345 AD, lists the road stations between Cairo and Gaza, including el-Mutaileb, el-Sawada and el-Warrada. The same post stations on the same road are still mentioned in Qalqashandi junior (1464 AD) (10), Khalil el-Zahiri (before 1468 AD) (11) and Abu'l-Mahasin (before 1470 AD) (12)<sup>2607</sup>. el-Omari adds that el-Sawada has been moved from its original spot in order that travellers did not have to make a detour.

Ibn Battuta (6) tells in 1355 AD how he travelled in the summer of 1326 AD from Cairo to Gaza and passed through stations as el-Salhiya, el-Sawada and el-Warrada. Every station had a serai for travellers and their riding animals; outside that

<sup>2605</sup> *La devise des chemins de Babiloine* (Michelant, 1882, p. 242); cf. Schefer, 1884, p. 95.

<sup>2606</sup> *Via ad terram sanctam* (Kohler, 1904, p. 432-433); *Memoria terre sancte* (Kohler, 1904, p. 455); Marino Sanudo, 3, 14, 12 (Röhrich, 1898, p. 121).

<sup>2607</sup> el-Omari (translated in Hartmann, 1916a, p. 487). Qalqashandi junior (mentioned in Hartmann, 1910, p. 689.691). Khalil el-Zahiri (translated in Gaulmier, 1950, p. 201). Abu'l-Mahasin, *Chronicle* (mentioned in Popper, 1955, I, p. 47); cf. Clédat, 1923a, p. 63 and 1923b, p. 152.155-156.

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serai was a public watering place and a shop where all the necessary things could be bought<sup>2608</sup>.

In 1375 Ibn el-Dji'an (7) knows the village Khosous Sawada, which Clédat identifies with el-Sawada in the northern Sinai<sup>2609</sup>.

Maqrizi (8) situates in the 15th century AD the ruins of el-Qeis (sc. el-Qass, the ancient Kasion) between el-Sawada and el-Warrada<sup>2610</sup>.

In 1481 AD rabbi Meshullam of Volterra (13) went from Egypt to Palestine, passing by Bir el-Abd, the customs station 'Savedi' (el-Sawada), Arar, Umm el-Hasan and el-Arish<sup>2611</sup>. This description is somewhat puzzling if one considers that el-Sawada probably lay only some 6 km west of Umm el-Hasan, which would locate el-Sawada, Arar and Umm el-Hasan very close to each other, and one wonders whether Meshullam did not make some mistake.

### **ABU TILUL**

Abu Tilul lies some 16 km west of Bir el-Mazar and some 57 km west of el-Arish<sup>2612</sup>.

### **EL-AMRAWIYYAH**

el-Amrawiyah lies some 18 km west of Bir el-Mazar and some 59 km west of el-Arish<sup>2613</sup>.

### **LAKE HUASH - UMM EL-GIRDAN - TABAM UMM EL-GIRDAN**

Between el-Khuinat and el-Breidj, somewhat south of Sabkhat Bardawil and north of the main road between Egypt and Israel, lies a great lake named Huash. Its bottom is covered with crystallized gypsum and it is hard to cross. The islands Umm

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<sup>2608</sup> Ibn Battuta (translated in Gibb, 1958, I, p. 71).

<sup>2609</sup> Ibn el-Dji'an (mentioned in Clédat, 1923b, p. 166 and n. 1).

<sup>2610</sup> Maqrizi (translated in Bouriant, 1900, p. 520); cf. Clédat, 1923b, p. 161, who incorrectly supposes that the name el-Sawada is a mistake here.

<sup>2611</sup> Meshullam of Volterra (mentioned in Cytryn-Silverman, 2001, p. 14.23); cf. Veronese, 1989, p. 60-63 (non vidi).

<sup>2612</sup> de Jong, 2000, p. 654-655.

<sup>2613</sup> de Jong, 2000, p. 654-655.

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el-Girdan and - more to the west and somewhat smaller - Tabam Umm el-Girdan are situated in the middle of the lake<sup>2614</sup>.

### **LEBRASH**

In 1849 van Senden passed by the well Lebrash between Bir el-Abd and Hauf Bazar (Bir el-Mazar?), but further information is missing<sup>2615</sup>.

### **SHERADEL**

In 1849 van Senden passed by the well Sheradel between Bir el-Abd and Hauf Bazar (Bir el-Mazar?), but further geographical information is missing<sup>2616</sup>.

### **LULIYA**

In 1849 van Senden passed by the well Luliya between Bir el-Abd and Hauf Bazar (Bir el-Mazar?), but further information is missing<sup>2617</sup>.

### **DAWANIR**

In 1849 van Senden passed by the well Dawanir between Bir el-Abd and Hauf Bazar (Bir el-Mazar?), but further information is missing<sup>2618</sup>.

### **UMM**

In 1849 van Senden passed by the well Umm between Bir el-Abd and Hauf Bazar (Bir el-Mazar?), but further geographical information is missing<sup>2619</sup>. The name Umm is apparently not complete, but an identification with the island Umm el-Girdan or the road station Umm el-Hassan on the same track would be a mere hypothesis.

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<sup>2614</sup> Clédat, 1910a, p. 234.

<sup>2615</sup> van Senden, 1851, I, p. 74.

<sup>2616</sup> van Senden, 1851, I, p. 74.

<sup>2617</sup> van Senden, 1851, I, p. 74.

<sup>2618</sup> van Senden, 1851, I, p. 74.

<sup>2619</sup> van Senden, 1851, I, p. 74.

## MISFAQ

### Topographical situation

Misfaq lies some 21 km west of Bir el-Mazar, some 62 km west of el-Arish and some 16 km east of Bir el-Abd, along the road and the former railway between Egypt and Israel, immediately east of Nahal Yam<sup>2620</sup>. About 1940 the place had some importance because of the export of fish caught in the nearby Sabkhat Bardawil<sup>2621</sup>.

According to Abel the name el-Museifig in official onomastics has been altered to Misfaq (shortly before 1940?)<sup>2622</sup>.

### Archaeological finds

Near Misfaq and Nahal Yam numerous sites of the Canaanite Early Bronze Age I-II (3300-2700 BC) and the Egyptian late Predynastic and early Dynastic periods have been found during an Israeli archaeological survey. The finds included some copper ores<sup>2623</sup>.

The same survey also yielded a cluster of New Kingdom sites, in which a central fort or station is surrounded by smaller campsites for caravans and huts or tents for local inhabitants<sup>2624</sup>. In the archaeological reports this cluster is situated near Nahal Yam, Madba'a or Misfaq, but actually the same place seems to be referred to.

In the area also some Islamic settlements of the 8th-10th centuries AD were found<sup>2625</sup>, while at site B1 next to Misfaq the remains are recorded of an Islamic rectangular building with corner towers, for which no precise date has been given<sup>2626</sup>.

### Identifications

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<sup>2620</sup> de Jong, 2000, p. 654-655; cf. the map Kümmerly, 1995.

<sup>2621</sup> Abel, 1940, p. 60, n. 2.

<sup>2622</sup> Abel, 1940, p. 60, n. 2.

<sup>2623</sup> Oren, 1973c, p. 200 and the map p. 199 (at the abbreviation B); Oren, 1979b, p. 184.

<sup>2624</sup> Oren, 1979b, p. 188 (Nahal Yam); Oren, 1987a, p. 77 (Madba'a) and p. 114, n. 7 (Misfaq) (cf. the map p. 79, but it is not clear which site is referred to); Oren, 1993a, p. 1389 (Madba'a).

<sup>2625</sup> Cf. Cytryn-Silverman, 2001, p. 21.

<sup>2626</sup> Cf. Cytryn-Silverman, 2001, p. 24.



## 8. *The inland road south of Sabkhat Bardawil*

Abel locates the road station el-Sawada, known in itineraries of the 13th-15th centuries AD, in Misfaq<sup>2627</sup>, while Cytryn-Silverman tentatively identifies the same place with site B1<sup>2628</sup>, but el-Sawada has probably to be looked for some 10 km east of Misfaq.

### **NAHAL YAM**

Nahal Yam lies immediately west of Misfaq and some 15 km (?) east of Bir el-Abd, on the road from Egypt to Rafah<sup>2629</sup>. It is an Israeli agricultural-military settlement, created in 1968 and probably abandoned ca. 1982, which was used as basis for the Israeli archaeological expeditions in the area<sup>2630</sup>. The Hebrew name Nahal Yam ('The settlement of the Sea') probably refers to the nearby Sabkhat Bardawil.

### **MADBA'A**

Madba'a apparently lies between Bir el-Mazar and Bir el-Abd<sup>2631</sup>, possibly in the neighbourhood of Misfaq, but more precise information is lacking<sup>2632</sup>.

### **ARAR**

#### **Topographical situation**

In 1481 AD the road station Arar was situated between Umm el-Hasan and Bir el-Abd (1). Its precise location is not known, and the identification is complicated by the puzzling insertion of the older road station el-Sawada in the itinerary between Arar and Bir el-Abd.

#### **Identifications**

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<sup>2627</sup> Abel, 1940, p. 60, n. 2. See s.v. el-Sawada.

<sup>2628</sup> Cytryn-Silverman, 2001, p. 24.

<sup>2629</sup> The distances differ: 15 km (Kümmerly, 1995); ca. 20 km (Oren, 1973b, p. 112).

<sup>2630</sup> Dothan, 1969a, p. 579; Oren, 1987a, p. 114, n. 9.

<sup>2631</sup> Cf. the list in Oren, 1987a, p. 77 and 1993, p. 1389.

<sup>2632</sup> The archaeological sites near Madba'a are discussed s.v. Misfaq.

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It is not impossible that Arar corresponds with the road station Ru'us el-Adrab attested in the 17th century AD between Umm el-Hasan and Bir el-Abd<sup>2633</sup>.

### **Analysis of the sources**

In 1481 AD rabbi Meshullam of Volterra (1) went from Egypt to Palestine, passing by Bir el-Abd, el-Sawada, the customs station Arar, Umm el-Hasan and el-Arish<sup>2634</sup>. This description is somewhat puzzling if one considers that el-Sawada probably lay only some 6 km west of Umm el-Hasan, which would locate el-Sawada, Arar and Umm el-Hasan very close to each other, and one wonders whether Meshullam did not make some mistake including the older road station el-Sawada in his itinerary.

## **RU'US EL-ADRAB**

### **Topographical situation**

About 1697 AD the road station Ru'us el-Adrab is known between Umm el-Hasan and Bir el-Abd (1). Its precise location is not known. If it lay halfway between the two latter stations, it could be situated at some 62 km west of el-Arish, possibly in the neighbourhood of Misfaq.

### **Identifications**

It is not impossible that Ru'us el-Adrab corresponds with the road station Arar attested in the 15th century AD between Umm el-Hasan and el-Sawada<sup>2635</sup>.

### **Analysis of the sources**

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<sup>2633</sup> See s.v. Ru'us el-Adrab.

<sup>2634</sup> Meshullam of Volterra (mentioned in Cytryn-Silverman, 2001, p. 14.23); cf. Veronese, 1989, p. 60-63 (non vidi).

<sup>2635</sup> See s.v. Arar.

## 8. *The inland road south of Sabkhat Bardawil*

About 1697 AD el-Nabulusi (1) travelled from el-Arish to Qatia via Umm el-Hasan, Ru'us el-Adrab and Bir el-Abd<sup>2636</sup>.

### **EL-BREIDJ**

#### **Topographical situation**

el-Breidj lies between el-Khuinat and Bir el-Abd, at some 16 km east of the latter and some 62 km west of el-Arish, immediately south of Sabkhat Bardawil and somewhat north of the road from Egypt to Rafah. It is a low, marshy area, sometimes covered by high dunes<sup>2637</sup>. The name Debbet el-Breidj is used to indicate a dune area that apparently extends from el-Breidj to the region somewhat west of Bir el-Mazar<sup>2638</sup>

#### **Archaeological finds**

On one of the dunes in el-Breidj Clédat saw in 1910 the unimportant ruins of what he identified as a Roman fortress, built in nummulite limestone. Apparently later on he noticed Roman ruins and an Arab cemetery on the spot<sup>2639</sup>.

#### **Identifications**

Without any real arguments Clédat identifies some of the stations on the Karnak relief and in the itinerary of P.Anastasi with el-Mutaileb, an Arab road station known in the 13th-15th century AD. This place he tentatively locates in el-Breidj<sup>2640</sup>, but el-Mutaileb probably lies some 10 km more west.

### **BIR SALAMANA**

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<sup>2636</sup> el-Nabulusi (mentioned in Hartmann, 1910, p. 701); cf. von Kremer, 1850b, p. 824.

<sup>2637</sup> Clédat, 1910a, p. 234 ('a four hour march to Bir el-Abd') and map A (copied in Évieux, 1995, p. 419).

<sup>2638</sup> Cf. the map Butler, 1978 [= 1902], p. 208 ('Dubbat el Buraigh').

<sup>2639</sup> Clédat, 1910a, p. 234 and 1923b, p. 152.

<sup>2640</sup> Clédat, 1923b, p. 152.155; cf. Gauthier, 1925, II, p. 30 and 1926, III, p. 101. See s.v. el-Mutaileb.

### **Topographical situation**

Bir Salamana lies some 9 km east of Bir el-Abd and some 69 km west of el-Arish, along the road from Egypt to Rafah<sup>2641</sup>.

### **Archaeological finds**

Near Bir Salamana numerous sites of the Canaanite Early Bronze Age I-II (3300-2700 BC) and the Egyptian late Predynastic and early Dynastic periods have been found during an Israeli archaeological survey<sup>2642</sup>. From the Early Bronze IV - Middle Bronze I periods (2200-2000 BC) one of the base sites occupies 4000 to 6000 m<sup>2</sup>, including some poorly built remains of domestic architecture with large courtyards and animal pens constructed on sandstone foundations<sup>2643</sup>. The same survey also yielded some New Kingdom sites in the area<sup>2644</sup>.

A limestone vessel bearing a Northwest-Arabian Thamudic inscription (1) is said to be found by an inhabitant of el-Arish between Bir el-Abd and Bir Salamana<sup>2645</sup>. Its form and decoration are unparalleled: a winged figure of a boy, wearing only a chlamys, supports with his head and wings a round bowl, 9 cm in diameter; the total height is 15 cm. The outer face of the bowl is decorated in reddish brown with a row of triangles, which possibly imitate a lotus flower. The object may have served some cult purpose, possibly as an incense burner. It is difficult to date. Because of some elements in Greek archaic style it might be a product of the late 6th or early 5th century BC, but it can just as well have an Arabian origin in the 3rd to 1st centuries BC incorporating ancient features. The inscription in the Thamudic language is written inside the bowl:

lhdd bn msk zdm[ ]

'By Hadad the son of Masik. May (the god) Ma[rna] bless him.' (?)

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<sup>2641</sup> de Jong, 2000, p. 654-655.

<sup>2642</sup> Oren, 1973c, p. 200 and the map p. 199 (at the abbreviation C).

<sup>2643</sup> Oren, 1993, p. 1388.

<sup>2644</sup> Oren, 1987a, p. 114, n. 7 (cf. p. 77; see also the map p. 79, but it is not clear which site is referred to). Its position towards the New Kingdom cluster near Misfaq / Nahal Yam / Madba'a is not clear, but since Bir Salamana and Misfaq are mentioned together in the same context, apparently not the same sites are referred to.

<sup>2645</sup> Now in the Hebrew University, Jerusalem. Cf. Naveh, 1974a, p. 79-83 with fig. 1 and pl. 12-13; Naveh, 1974b, p. 41-42 and pl. C (Hebrew); Wenning, 1987, p. 183; Graf, 1990, p. 138 (who inaccurately mentions el-Arish as place of origin); Graf, 1998, p. 110; Oren, 1998, p. 82, n. 28; Figueras, 2000, p. 75.86.

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The Arab god Marna is worshipped in Gaza from the Persian period onwards. The text might be written by one of the Arabs living around 500 BC between Kadytis and Ienysos, as described by Herodotos<sup>2646</sup>, but if the language is Thamudic B, a date in the 3rd to 1st centuries BC comes into account. The editors, followed by Graf, prefer the early date; Wenning chooses for a date in the 2nd or 1st century BC.

### **EL-MUTAILEB**

#### **Topographical situation**

el-Mutaileb was a minor road station with a caravan serai between el-Sawada and Subaikhat Nakhlata Ma'n on the road from Rafah to Cairo, attested in the 13th-15th centuries AD. In the *Devisse* (3) the place is situated 4 'liues' or about 16 km west of el-Sawada and 5 'liues' or about 20 km east of Ma'n, while the *Via* (4) - more correctly? - gives the distances just the other way around. el-Mutaileb has therefore possibly to be looked for some 72 km west of el-Arish and some 6 km east of Bir el-Abd<sup>2647</sup>.

#### **Identifications**

Without any real arguments Clédat identifies el-Mutaileb with one of the stations on the Karnak relief and in the itinerary of P.Anastasi. He also tentatively locates el-Mutaileb in el-Breidj<sup>2648</sup>, but the distances in the itineraries point out a location some 10 km west of el-Breidj.

Cytryn-Silverman tentatively identifies el-Mutaileb with site C36, where the Israeli survey recorded many medieval pottery sherds<sup>2649</sup>.

#### **Analysis of the sources**

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<sup>2646</sup> Herodotos, 3, 5, 2. See s.v. Ienysos.

<sup>2647</sup> Cf. Abel, 1938, II, p. 218.

<sup>2648</sup> Clédat, 1923b, p. 152.155 for P3 bh̄n n (Mn-m3'̄.t-R'̄) t3 i3[...] s3.f ('The castle of Men-ma'at-Ra. The [...] is his protection') [Karnak, 1986, IV, pl. 5, 18 (I)], P3 n̄htw n (Sty Mr-n-Pth) ('The stronghold of Sethos Mer-n-Ptah') [Karnak, 1986, IV, pl. 5, 19 (J)] and m p3y=f n̄htw (Wsr-m3'̄.t-R'̄) 'n̄h w̄d3 snb ('in his stronghold of Ouser-ma'at-Ra - life, prosperity, health!') [P.Anastasi I, 27, 5 (7)]; cf. Gauthier, 1925, II, p. 30 and 1926, III, p. 101. See s.v. el-Breidj.

<sup>2649</sup> Cytryn-Silverman, 2001, p. 24.

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In a Cairo Geniza letter of ca. 1210 AD a Jewish scholar is detained in el-Mutaileb because of the sabbath, on which a Jew was not supposed to travel. A messenger of the Sultan passed by and invited the scholar to take along a letter for him to Jerusalem (1)<sup>2650</sup>.

In another Cairo Geniza letter a traveller had to pay the large sum of four dirham for his transport from el-Mutaileb to Bilbeis in the Delta (2)<sup>2651</sup>.

In *La devise des chemins de Babiloine* (3), written ca. 1289-1291 AD, a military itinerary goes from Rafah to Cairo. It mentions the station el-Mutaileb at 4 'liues' (ca. 16 km) west of el-Sawada and at 5 'liues' (ca. 20 km) east of Ma'n<sup>2652</sup>:

Item del Soade iusques El Montayleb liues .iv.  
Item de El Montaleb iusques Elmahane liues .v.  
'Next from Soade to El Montayleb 4 liues.  
Next from El Montaleb to Elmahane 5 liues.'

A similar itinerary composed before 1289 AD is found in three different documents: the French *Via ad terram sanctam*, written ca. 1291-1293 (4); the Latin *Memoria terre sancte*, written ca. 1300-1321 (5); the Latin work of the Italian geographer Marino Sanudo (6), written in 1321 AD and based upon the *Memoria*. They also describe the road from Rafah to Cairo, each with some minor variants. They mention el-Mutaileb at 5 'liues' (ca. 20 km) west of el-Sawada and 4 'liues' (ca. 16 km) east of Subaikhat Nakhlat Ma'n. The road to el-Mutaileb is very sandy; there is a bad lodging place and bad, but plenty water<sup>2653</sup>:

(4) De la Saoede au Meteileb, v liues, grant sablon; mauvaise herberge et mauvaise aigue, mes il y a assés.  
'From Saoede to Meteileb, 5 liues, a lot of sand; a bad lodging place and bad water, but plenty of it.'  
(5) de Soede usque ad Merteleb, sunt .V. leuce, habundans in litore, malum herbagium et aque satis et male tamen.  
'From Soede to Merteleb it is 5 liues, an abundance of sand, a bad lodging place and plenty of water, but of bad quality.'  
(6) inde usque Viteleb leuce V; habundantia littoris, malum herbacium et aque satis male, sed in copia.  
'From there to Viteleb 5 liues; an abundance of sand, a bad lodging place and bad water, but plenty of it.'

el-Omari (7-8), who wrote ca. 1345 AD, lists the road stations between Cairo and Gaza, including Subaikhat Nakhlat Ma'n, el-Mutaileb and el-Sawada, while el-Mutaileb is also mentioned as one of the stations for the so-called snow-dromedaries.

<sup>2650</sup> Cairo Geniza letter (mentioned in Goitein, 1967, I, p. 283-284).

<sup>2651</sup> Cairo Geniza letter (mentioned in Goitein, 1967, I, p. 273) [no date is mentioned for this document, which perhaps also dates from the 13th century AD?]; cf. Mouton, 2000, p. 147.

<sup>2652</sup> *La devise des chemins de Babiloine* (Michelant, 1882, p. 242); cf. Schefer, 1884, p. 95.

<sup>2653</sup> *Via ad terram sanctam* (Kohler, 1904, p. 433); *Memoria terre sancte* (Kohler, 1904, p. 455); Marino Sanudo, 3, 14, 12 (Röhrich, 1898, p. 121).

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The same post stations on the same road are still mentioned in Qalqashandi junior (1464 AD) (10), Khalil el-Zahiri (before 1468 AD) (11-12) and Abu'l-Mahasin (before 1470 AD) (13)<sup>2654</sup>.

Ibn Battuta (9) tells in 1355 AD how he travelled in the summer of 1326 AD from Cairo to Gaza and passed through stations as el-Sawada, el-Warrada, el-Mutaileb and el-Arish; it is clear that the position of el-Mutaileb in this list is not to be trusted. Every station had a serai for travellers and their riding animals; outside that serai was a public watering place and a shop where all the necessary things could be bought<sup>2655</sup>.

### **EL-BAQQARA**

#### **Topographical situation**

The station el-Baqqara, situated in the Djifar on the road from Palestine to Egypt, is only attested in the 9th and 10th centuries AD. Bernardus (2) places el-Baqqara in the middle of the desert and he stresses that nothing grows in its immediate neighbourhood. Waqidi (1) mentions the place between the unclear el-Adad and el-Farama. Bernardus (2) and Ya'qubi (3) probably incorrectly place it between el-Arish and el-Warrada, while Qudama (4), Ibn Hauqal (6), Muqaddasi (7-9) and Maqrizi (13, 15) rightly list it between el-Warrada and el-Farama. Qudama (4) locates el-Baqqara 20 miles or about 40 km west of el-Warrada (therefore at about 76 km west of el-Arish) and 24 miles or about 48 km east of el-Farama. The 124 km on the track el-Arish - el-Farama match quite well the actual 132 km and the figures of Qudama seem to be trustworthy, locating el-Baqqara some 2 km east of the present-day Bir el-Abd<sup>2656</sup>.

Waqidi (1) calls el-Baqqara a fortress, but there is some doubt about the value of this designation. It was more likely one of the important road stations in the northern Sinai, a place where travellers could buy the things they needed. It is not

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<sup>2654</sup> el-Omari (translated in Hartmann, 1916a, p. 487.502). Qalqashandi junior (mentioned in Hartmann, 1910, p. 689.691). Khalil el-Zahiri (translated in Gaulmier, 1950, p. 199.201). Abu'l-Mahasin, *Chronicle* (mentioned in Popper, 1955, I, p. 47); cf. Clédat, 1923a, p. 63 and 1923b, p. 152.155; Gaudefroy-Demombynes, 1923, p. 256.

<sup>2655</sup> Ibn Battuta (translated in Gibb, 1958, I, p. 71); cf. Gibb, 1958, I, p. 71, n. 5.

<sup>2656</sup> Cf. Abel, 1940, p. 60, who locates el-Baqqara near Bir el-Abd; on his map 1940, pl. 7, however, el-Baqqara is incorrectly located near the present-day Misfaq (cf. the map Abel, 1939, p. 532).

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clear why the place was abandoned after the 10th century AD. Abel suggests that it has been replaced from the 13th century AD on by el-Sawada<sup>2657</sup>, but this station probably lies some 24 km east of the older el-Baqqara; it is more likely that the functions of el-Baqqara have been transferred to the station of el-Mutaileb, probably only some 4 km more to the east.

### **Identifications**

el-Baqqara is probably not built in the neighbourhood of an ancient site<sup>2658</sup>, because the nearest places Kasion and Pentaschoinon were situated at the coast and not south of lake Bardawil.

Ibn Khurdadbeh mentions a place el-Tha'ama about 36 km east of el-Warrada; since el-Baqqara is situated some 40 km east of the latter place, Hartmann thinks that the name el-Tha'ama is a corrupt form for el-Baqqara<sup>2659</sup>. It is more likely, however, that el-Tha'ama was not situated in the desert on the southern road, but along the coast on the northern road; in that case an identification with el-Baqqara is excluded.

Clédat identifies el-Ghurabi, Umm el-Arab and el-Baqqara and suggests a location in the neighbourhood of Qasr Ghet<sup>2660</sup>. Some remarks. First, while Umm el-Arab lies at the coast and el-Baqqara and el-Ghurabi are situated on the main road through the northern Sinai, Qasr Ghet lies too much south to allow such an identification. Secondly, Umm el-Arab (in Maqrizi / Ibn Khurdadbeh) and el-Baqqara (in Qudama (4)) are indeed both situated at 24 miles or about 48 km east of el-Farama, but the first place is probably at the coast and the second place on the southern road<sup>2661</sup>. Thirdly, since there is no reason to identify Umm el-Arab and el-Baqqara, also el-Ghurabi, which replaces Umm el-Arab in Maqrizi's second quotation of Ibn Khurdadbeh, has no further links with el-Baqqara. The suggestions of Clédat therefore are not to be accepted.

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<sup>2657</sup> Abel, 1940, p. 60, n. 2.

<sup>2658</sup> Against Clédat, 1923a, p. 63 and 1923b, p. 161.189, who identifies el-Baqqara and Kasion. Against Wilkinson, 1977, p. 149.167, who is not aware of any problem with regard to the order of the toponyms in Bernardus (2) and identifies el-Baqqara and Ostrakine. Both suggestions are rightly rejected by Figueras, 2000, p. 160.

<sup>2659</sup> Hartmann, 1910, p. 677. See s.v. el-Tha'ama.

<sup>2660</sup> Clédat, 1910a, p. 237, n. 1. See s.v. el-Ghurabi, s.v. Umm el-Arab and s.v. Qasr Ghet.

<sup>2661</sup> For an identification of el-Udhaib (closely linked with Umm el-Arab) and el-Baqqara, cf. also Sprenger, 1864, p. 95; for an identification of Umm el-Arab and el-Baqqara, cf. also Hartmann, 1910, p. 675.677.



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Musil apparently looks for a link between el-Baqqara of the Arab sources and the present-day Tell el-Baqar situated between Rafah and el-Za'aqa<sup>2662</sup>. It is clear that this position for the el-Baqqara of the 9th and 10th centuries AD is not acceptable.

Cytryn-Silverman tentatively identifies el-Baqqara with the Islamic fortress near Bir el-Abd (site BEA21)<sup>2663</sup>, but as yet no material from the 9th-10th centuries AD has been recorded there.

### **Etymology**

Maqrizi (13) states that the name el-Baqqara is derived from the Arabic word 'el-baqar' or 'cowherds'<sup>2664</sup>. Wright, who does not know Maqrizi, interprets the 'Albachara' of Bernardus (2) as 'el-baqara', 'the pulley', while Tobler apparently looks for a link with 'el-bahr', 'the sea'<sup>2665</sup>.

### **Analysis of the sources**

About 640 AD, during the conquest of Egypt by Amr ibn el-As, Abdallah Yuqana, one of his lieutenants, came from Syria to Egypt. He left the desert and the fortresses that were upon the way to Egypt, on his right hand and so passed el-Arish, el-Adad, el-Baqqara and el-Farama<sup>2666</sup>. This account ascribed to Waqidi (1) has not been considered very reliable and some of the problems involved have already been discussed. Because the manoeuvre of the lieutenant does not make much sense from a military point of view, the designation 'fortress' for el-Baqqara becomes suspicious. Possibly the name el-Baqqara has been taken from an Arab itinerary of the 7th or 8th century AD to be used instead of the name of a Byzantine city at the coast mentioned in the original account of the expedition<sup>2667</sup>, probably even without a geographical link between the Greek and the Arab name. Maybe the original account of the expedition mentioned Kasion, Pentaschoinon or some other place, but this remains speculation.

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<sup>2662</sup> Musil, II 1, 1907, p. 226.303. See s.v. Tell el-Baqar

<sup>2663</sup> Cytryn-Silverman, 2001, p. 23. See s.v. Bir el-Abd.

<sup>2664</sup> Cf. Clédat, 1923b, p. 189.

<sup>2665</sup> Wright, 1848, p. 25, n.; Tobler, 1874, p. 405 in Wilkinson, 1977, p. 142, n. 14.

<sup>2666</sup> Waqidi (translated in Butler, 1978 [= 1902], p. 195-196, n. 3); cf. Maspero, 1912, p. 135. See s.v. Itineraries.

<sup>2667</sup> Cf. Maspero, 1912, p. 135.

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Maqrizi (12) describes how the Muslims (ca. 640 AD?), on their way from the Egyptian Delta to Palestine, converted the inhabitants of el-Baqqara to the Islam, apparently referring to one of the Byzantine cities at the coast<sup>2668</sup>.

Maqrizi (15) mentions the presence of Arabs of the tribe of Gedam or Banu Judham, called Qate', in the places el-Farama, el-Baqqara and el-Warrada. He knows their chef Gera and a certain Abd el-Aziz who died in 820 AD<sup>2669</sup>.

Also according to Maqrizi (14), Anbassah, the emir of Egypt, went from el-Farama to el-Baqqara about 854 AD (?)<sup>2670</sup>.

The Frankish monk Bernardus (2) travelled about 870 AD from Tamiathis to Jerusalem. After Farama (el-Farama) the desert starts, in which there are two road stations, Albara (el-Warrada) and Albachara. Christians and Muslims there sell all things necessary for the trip through the desert. In the immediate neighbourhood of those places nothing grows, but after Albachara a fertile land starts that goes all the way to Gaza<sup>2671</sup>:

sunt autem in medio itinere duo hospitia, unum quod vocatur Albara, alterum quod vocatur Albachara, in quibus negotia exercentur a Christianis et paganis emendi, que necessaria sunt iter agentibus. in eorum vero circuitu nichil preter quod dictum est, gignit terra. ab Albachara invenitur iam terra secunda usque ad civitatem Gazam.

'Along this route are two inns, one called Albara and the other Albachara, and travellers can buy what they need in the Christian and pagan shops there, but nothing grows in the land round them apart from what we have mentioned. After Albachara the fertile land begins and stretches till the city of Gaza.'

The place Albachara can be identified with el-Baqqara, a station that fits very well the description of a major trading centre in the middle of the northern Sinai. The fact that Bernardus places Albachara east of Albara, is probably a mistake; in this respect the fertile land probably did not start east of Albachara, but east of Albara<sup>2672</sup>.

In 891 AD Ya'qubi (3) mentions the same road in reverse order: from el-Arish one goes to the villages el-Baqqara and el-Warrada and finally to el-Farama<sup>2673</sup>. He apparently by mistake places el-Baqqara east of el-Warrada<sup>2674</sup>.

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<sup>2668</sup> Maqrizi (translated in Bouriant, 1900, p. 528), quoting the author of *The history of Damiette*; cf. Mouton, 2000, p. 57.64 and n. 28.43.

<sup>2669</sup> Maqrizi (translated in Bouriant, 1900, p. 628). For the Judham tribe, cf. Bailey, 1985, p. 21 and n. 4; Mouton, 2000, p. 127-129 and p. 182, n. 5.

<sup>2670</sup> Maqrizi (translated in Bouriant, 1900, p. 625).

<sup>2671</sup> *Itinerarium Bernardi Monachi Franci*, 9 (Tobler, 1879, p. 314); cf. the translation in Wilkinson, 1977, p. 142; cf. Oren, 1982a, p. 40.

<sup>2672</sup> Cf. Hartmann, 1910, p. 677; Abel, 1940, p. 239.

<sup>2673</sup> Ya'qubi (translated in Wiet, 1937, p. 183); cf. Sprenger, 1864, p. 95; Butler, 1978 [= 1902], p. 197, n. 1.

<sup>2674</sup> Cf. Hartmann, 1910, p. 677.

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Qudama (4), who wrote shortly after 929 AD, describes the route from Rafah to el-Farama. After the city of el-Arish the road bifurcates. The track goes south through the Djifar desert, passes by el-Warrada and reaches el-Baqqara after 20 miles (ca. 40 km); the next station el-Farama lies 24 miles (ca. 48 km) further to the west<sup>2675</sup>.

According to el-Hamdani (5), who wrote before 945 AD, and the 14th century author Ibn el-Dawadari (11), the Banu Rashada of the Lakhm Beduin tribe were stationed in el-Baqqara<sup>2676</sup>.

Ibn Hauqal (6), who wrote in 978 AD, mentions the village el-Baqqara on the road from Rafah to Bilbeis between el-Warrada and el-Farama<sup>2677</sup>.

According to Muqaddasi, who wrote about 986 AD, there are seven towns residing under el-Farama, including el-Baqqara, el-Warrada and el-Arish (7)<sup>2678</sup>. In another context he mentions the region Djifar immediately west of Syria, with el-Farama as its capital and el-Baqqara, el-Warrada and el-Arish as chief towns in that region (8)<sup>2679</sup>. On the inland road from el-Farama to Rafah, one passes el-Baqqara, el-Warrada and el-Arish, with each place at one 'stage' from the other (9)<sup>2680</sup>.

In 1375 Ibn el-Dji'an mentions a place el-Baqar in the eastern Delta province Sharqiya, which possesses 542 'feddans' of cultivated land, i.e. some 345 ha, and was taxed for 1000 dinar<sup>2681</sup>. Hartmann tentatively identifies this place with el-Baqqara in the northern Sinai and for Clédat there is no doubt at all that the same place is referred to. This is the only source mentioning el-Baqqara after the 10th century AD and because the place does not occur in the numerous itineraries of the 13th-15th centuries AD, one wonders whether el-Baqar is some other town in the eastern Delta.

Maqrizi (13) in the first half of the 15th century AD probably refers to a 10th century source when he states that el-Baqqara is one of the five towns of the Djifar.

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<sup>2675</sup> Qudama (translated in de Goeje, 1889, p. 167).

<sup>2676</sup> el-Hamdani (mentioned in Mouton, 2000, p. 128); Ibn el-Dawadari (mentioned in Mouton, 2000, p. 128).

<sup>2677</sup> Ibn Hauqal (translated in Gildemeister, 1883, p. 12); cf. Quatremère, 1811, I, p. 56. Idrisi (translated in Gildemeister, 1885, p. 123; cf. n. 24), who copies this passage, omits the station el-Baqqara.

<sup>2678</sup> Muqaddasi (translated in Collins, 1994, p. 51).

<sup>2679</sup> Muqaddasi (translated in Collins, 1994, p. 163); cf. Gildemeister, 1884, p. 227. el-Arish, el-Warrada, el-Baqqara and el-Farama are also shown on a map found in a Muqaddasi manuscript; cf. the map in ms. Leiden 2 (Miller, 1986, pl. 2-3 [8, 3]) (10).

<sup>2680</sup> Muqaddasi (translated in Collins, 1994, p. 180-181).

<sup>2681</sup> Ibn el-Dji'an (mentioned in Clédat, 1923b, p.189); cf. Hartmann, 1910, p. 678 [el-bqar]; Figueras, 2000, p. 160.

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According to him the name el-Baqqara is derived from the word 'el-baqar, 'cowherds'<sup>2682</sup>.

### **EL-SADAT**

el-Sadat lies some 6 km east of Bir el-Abd and some 72 km west of el-Arish<sup>2683</sup>.

### **BIR EL-GANADIL**

Bir el-Ganadil lies between el-Breidj and Bir el-Abd, some 5 km east of the latter and some 73 km west of el-Arish<sup>2684</sup>.

### **SABKHAT EL-DERWISH**

Some 5 km east of Bir el-Abd starts Sabkhat el-Derwish, a lake with a length of some 10 km in eastern direction<sup>2685</sup>. It lies south of Sabkhat Bardawil and is apparently no part of it.

### **MABRUKAH**

Mabrukah lies some 3 km east of Bir el-Abd and some 75 km west of el-Arish<sup>2686</sup>.

### **BIR EL-ABD**

#### **Topographical situation**

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<sup>2682</sup> Maqrizi (translated in Bouriant, 1900, p. 544); cf. Maspero, 1919, p. 100-101.

<sup>2683</sup> de Jong, 2000, p. 654-655.

<sup>2684</sup> Clédat, 1910a, map A.

<sup>2685</sup> Cf. Paoletti, 1903, map; Fischer, 1910, pl. 7.

<sup>2686</sup> de Jong, 2000, p. 654-655.

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Bir el-Abd or 'Well of the slave'<sup>2687</sup> lies some 78 km west of el-Arish<sup>2688</sup>, some 27 km east of Qatia<sup>2689</sup>, some 31,5 km east of Rumani and 72,5 km east of el-Qantara<sup>2690</sup>. The well is known from the 15th century AD on, and it is one of the few medieval stations in the central northern Sinai that nowadays still exists. In 1910 there were some palm trees; the stone well, which had salty water, was maintained by the government<sup>2691</sup>.

### Archaeological finds

Clédat noticed that some 2 km southwest of Bir el-Abd the soil was covered with apparently Roman potsherds, but he did not see any constructions<sup>2692</sup>.

In the neighbourhood of Bir el-Abd some Early Bronze Age sites (ca. 3300-2200 BC) have been found<sup>2693</sup>. In 1967-1968 an **important New Kingdom site** was discovered during an Israeli archaeological survey near Bir el-Abd. The place was examined in detail in 1972 and in January 1973 a salvage excavation was carried out. On a raised area in the north (Area A; BEA 10A) a **fortress was found with a mud brick enclosure wall of ca. 40 x 40 m**. Some 200 to 250 m northwest of the fortified enclosure apparently the site of the fort's water reservoir was noticed, an artificial rectangular-shaped depression in the surface of 10 x 15 m; the sides had been lined with thick layers of muddy silt or clay to keep the water from seeping into the sand. Some 40 m south of the fortress a granary composed of four cylindrical domed chambers, each 3,9 m in diameter was excavated (Area B; BEA 10B). It could contain some 40 tons of grain. When the domes caved in, the chambers were used as refuse pits for the fort. Remarkable finds are a vase painted in Amarna style, 18th dynasty scarabs, seal impressions from the 18th dynasty and a jar handle impressed with a seal

<sup>2687</sup> Description, 1826, Atlas, pl. 33; Description, 1830, XVIII, p. 173; cf. Fontaine, 1955, p. 95.

<sup>2688</sup> The distances differ: ca. 76 km (De la Jonquière, 1904, III, p. 184 in Clédat, 1924, p. 44, n. 1: 19 'lieues'); ); 77,5 km (de Jong, 2000, p. 654-655); 78 km (Abel, 1939, the map p. 532); 80 km (Figueras, 1988, p. 55); 82 km (Kümmerly, 1995; the 84 km on the map Baumgarten, 1990 is probably a mistake for 82 km, because this is the sum of the two intermediary distances given).

<sup>2689</sup> The distances differ: ca. 16 km? (De la Jonquière, 1904, III, p. 184 in Clédat, 1924, p. 44, n. 1: 4 'lieues'); ca. 21 km (Paoletti, 1903, p. 105: 13 miles); ca. 27 km (Kümmerly, 1995); for von Troilo (7) the trip from Bir el-Abd to Qatia lasted nine hours.

<sup>2690</sup> de Jong, 2000, p. 654-655. Kümmerly, 1995 distinguishes the settlement Bir el-Abd and the homonymous railway station immediately east of it. The location of Bir el-Abd in the southeastern Sinai on the map Carrez-Maratray, 1988, p. 62-63 is a mistake.

<sup>2691</sup> Clédat, 1910a, p. 234; 1923a, p. 74; 1923b, p. 152. For Bir el-Abd during the First World War, cf. Dalman, 1924, p. 53.

<sup>2692</sup> Clédat, 1910a, p. 234 (cf. map A, with ruins indicated) and 1923b, p. 152.

<sup>2693</sup> Cf. the map Oren, 1989, p. 391, fig. 2, at the abbreviation BEA.

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bearing the name of Sethos I. Some 20 m west of the fortress lies a complex of magazines. Area C is a wide depression to the south. In a radius of 3 to 4 km some thirty small encampments are grouped round the central site. The settlement seems to be created in the 15th century BC during the early 18th dynasty; the seal of Sethos I (ca. 1306-1290 BC) is the latest datable object from the site<sup>2694</sup>.

The site apparently also yielded pottery of the 6th century BC<sup>2695</sup>.

A fortress built of fired bricks was uncovered by the Israeli survey beside the Beduin village of Bir el-Abd (site BEA21). The survey revealed only nine sherds of the Islamic period, all from the 13th-18th centuries AD<sup>2696</sup>.

### **Identifications**

There is little doubt that the New Kingdom fortress excavated is one of the stations and wells mentioned on the Karnak relief and in the itinerary of P.Anastasi, but is impossible to say which exactly is referred to. Clédat's identifications are gratuitous<sup>2697</sup>.

el-Baqqara, a road station attested for the 9th-10th centuries AD, lies in the neighbourhood of Bir el-Abd, possibly at some 6 km east<sup>2698</sup>. Cytryn-Silverman tentatively identifies the Islamic fortress near Bir el-Abd (site BEA21) with el-Baqqara<sup>2699</sup>, but as yet no material from the 9th-10th centuries AD has been recorded there.

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<sup>2694</sup> Oren, 1973a, p. 101-103 (Hebrew), with fig.; Oren, 1973b, p. 112-113 and pl. 28-29a; Oren, 1974, p. 87-89; Oren, 1979b, p. 188-190, with fig. (cf. Fischer-Elfert, 1986, p. 233); Oren, 1980b, p. 111-113, with fig.; Oren, 1982a, p. 10-11, with fig.; Leclant, 1986, p. 250; Oren, 1987a, p. 77-85.108.114-115, with fig. and the maps p. 74.79; Oren, 1989, p. 392, n. 2; Oren, 1993, p. 1389-1390, with fig; cf. Abd el-Maksoud, 1998b, p. 26-27; Morris, 2005, p. 295-299.511. The total surface area given differs: for Oren, 1973b, p. 112 and 1974, p. 88 it is 'about 150 dunams' (Area A: 40; Area B: 30; Area C: 80 dunams), i.e. 19,5 ha, but for Oren, 1979b, p. 188, 1980b, p. 111 and 1987, p. 78 it is only '50 dunams (16 acres)', i.e. 6,5 ha; Oren, 1982a, p. 11 speaks of 5 ha; the main site has a surface of approximately 1 acre, i.e. 0,4 ha (Oren, 1993, p. 1389).

<sup>2695</sup> Cf. Oren, 1984a, p. 18, fig. 21, 4 (BEA 16), fig. 21, 6 (BEA 10A) [cf. p. 24] and p. 22, fig. 25, 5 (BEA 10B).

<sup>2696</sup> Oren, 1980b, p. 152 (Hebrew); Cytryn-Silverman, 2001, p. 21.23.

<sup>2697</sup> Clédat, 1923b, p. 152.155 for W3dy.t n (Sty Mr-n-Pth) ('W3dy.t of Sethos Mer-n-Ptah') [Karnak, 1986, IV, pl. 6, 39 (G)], T3 hnm.t ' n Imy-'(?) ('The well of the region of Imy-'(?)) [Karnak, 1986, IV, p. 21-22, now lost (H)] and ' n W3dy.t (Ssw) 'nh wd3 snb ('Region of W3dy.t of Sese - life, prosperity, health!') [P.Anastasi I, 27, 5 (6)]; cf. Gauthier, 1925, I, p. 146.181. See s.v. Subaikhat Nakhlat Ma'n.

<sup>2698</sup> Cf. Abel, 1940, p. 60. See s.v. el-Baqqara.

<sup>2699</sup> Cytryn-Silverman, 2001, p. 23.

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Clédat tentatively locates the 13th-15th century AD road station Subaikhat Nakhlat Ma'n in Bir el-Abd<sup>2700</sup>, but the distances in the itineraries point to a location for Ma'n 6 km more to the west, between Bir el-Abd and Qatia.

### Homonyms

A settlement Bir el-Abd is known in western Samaria<sup>2701</sup>.

### Analysis of the sources

In 1481 AD rabbi Meshullam of Volterra (1) went from Egypt to Palestine, passing by Qatia, Bir el-Abd, el-Sawada, Arar, Umm el-Hasan en el-Arish. Bir el-Abd is described as a small customs station with a saltwater well<sup>2702</sup>.

In 1482 AD Joos van Ghistele (2) travelled from Gaza to Cairo via Hemelessijn (Umm el-Hasan), Bierlehalt and Cattia (Qatia). In Bierlehalt the caravan found some water and van Ghistele noticed some buildings covered by the sand<sup>2703</sup>. In 1565 AD Johann Helffrich (3) mentions the same stations Hemelesin, Bierlehali and Catie. The name Bierlehalt / Bierlehali is not known elsewhere and because of the position of the station between Umm el-Hasan and Qatia Hartmann probably rightly supposes that Bir el-Abd is referred to<sup>2704</sup>.

Francesco Quaresmi (4) travelled ca. 1616-1626 AD from 'Aris' (el-Arish) to 'Cathia' (Qatia), passing by two nameless wells; on this track he made 145 miles (ca. 217,5 km), but this distance is definitely too high. It is not unlikely that the second nameless station with salty and bitter water was actually Bir el-Abd<sup>2705</sup>.

tertius post istum, peractis quinquaginta milliaribus, qui "Aris Principis" nomine insignitur: ibi dulces aquae inveniuntur; post hunc invenitur quartus puteus, a praecedenti nonaginta milliaribus dissitus; ex isto, peractis aliis triginta milliaribus, quinto pervenimus ad alium similiter aquae salitae et amarae puteum; post quem denique, absolutis adhuc vigintiquinque milliaribus, invenitur Cathia.

'the third place hereafter, fifty miles further, is named Aris Princeps: here one finds fresh water; hereafter a fourth well is found, situated ninety miles from the previous one; next, after another

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<sup>2700</sup> Clédat, 1923b, p. 152.155. See s.v. Subaikhat Nakhlat Ma'n.

<sup>2701</sup> Cf. Tsafirir, 1994, p. 89.

<sup>2702</sup> Meshullam of Volterra (mentioned in Cytryn-Silverman, 2001, p. 14.23); cf. Veronese, 1989, p. 60-63 (non vidi).

<sup>2703</sup> *Tvoyage van Mher Joos van Ghistele* (Gaspar, 1998, p. 170); cf. Demaeckere, 1936, p. 78.

<sup>2704</sup> Johann Helffrich (mentioned in Hartmann, 1910, p. 697). Dalman, 1924, p. 52, however, is apparently not convinced by the identification with Bir el-Abd.

<sup>2705</sup> Francesco Quaresmi (De Sandoli, 1989, p. 432).

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thirty miles, we reach the fifth stage, another well likewise with salty and bitter water; hereafter, finally, after twenty-five miles, one finds Cathia.

About 1655 AD Hadji Khalifa (5) knows the stations el-Arish, Umm el-Hasan, Bir el-Abd and Qatia on that same road<sup>2706</sup>.

Referring to a trip to Egypt in 1661 AD Ferdinand von Troilo (7) mentions the stations Aziz (el-Arish), Beresanni (Qabr el-Sa'i?), Melhesan (Umm el-Hasan), Pozzo Abde (Bir el-Abd) and Calhia (Qatia). It took him eight and a half hours (ca. 32 km?) to go from Melhesan to Pozzo Abde and the next day nine hours to get in Calhia<sup>2707</sup>. Because the distance between Bir el-Abd and Qatia is some 27 km, he apparently had an average speed of only 3 km an hour. The use of the Italian word 'pozzo', 'well', instead of the Arab 'bir' is an indication that Troilo copied an Italian source.

Sechsten Tages nach Aziz 12 Stunden.

Siebenden Tages nach Beresanni 6 Stunden.

Achten Tages nach Melhesan 6 Stunden.

Neunden Tages nach Pozzo Abde 8 1/2 Stunden.

Zehenden Tages Calhia 9 Stunden.

el-Khiyari (6), who wrote before 1671 AD, lists the stations el-Arish, Bir el-Abd and Qatia on the road from Gaza to Cairo<sup>2708</sup>.

About 1697 AD el-Nabulusi (8) travelled from el-Arish to el-Salhiya via Ru'us el-Adrab, Bir el-Abd and Qatia<sup>2709</sup>.

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<sup>2706</sup> Hadji Khalifa (mentioned in Hartmann, 1910, p. 698).

<sup>2707</sup> Troilo (mentioned in Hartmann, 1910, p. 699).

<sup>2708</sup> el-Khiyari (mentioned in Hartmann, 1910, p. 701).

<sup>2709</sup> el-Nabulusi (mentioned in Hartmann, 1910, p. 701); cf. von Kremer, 1850b, p. 824.



*The area between Bir el-Abd and Qatia*

**DJEBEL RUA**

The hill Djebel Rua lies some 3 kilometres west of Bir el-Abd, immediately north of the road from Egypt to Rafah<sup>2710</sup>.

**DJEBEL AKHSUM**

The hill Djebel Akhsun lies some 10 km north of Bir el-Abd, about halfway between Djebel Rua and Mat Iblis<sup>2711</sup>.

**NADJAH**

Nadjah lies some 4 km west of Bir el-Abd<sup>2712</sup>.

**ABU SA'DAN**

Abu Sa'dan lies some 7 km west of Bir el-Abd<sup>2713</sup>.

**KHIRBA (III)**

**Topographical situation**

Abel knows a site named Khirba, 'Ruins', some 8 km west of Bir el-Abd<sup>2714</sup>. Because all further information is lacking, one can only guess whether Khirba is another name for Bir el-Afein, Subaikhat Nakhlat Ma'n or some other ancient site.

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<sup>2710</sup> Clédat, 1910a, map A; cf. Évieux, 1995, p. 419.

<sup>2711</sup> Clédat, 1910a, map A.

<sup>2712</sup> de Jong, 2000, p. 654-655.

<sup>2713</sup> de Jong, 2000, p. 654-655.

<sup>2714</sup> Abel, 1939, p. 532.

## **Homonyms**

The name Khirba, 'Ruins', is quite common in Egypt and is used in the northern Sinai for a site near el-Zaraniq and for another one near Mahammediya<sup>2715</sup>.

## **BIR EL-AFEIN**

### **Topographical situation**

The well Bir el-Afein lies some 8 km (?) west of Bir el-Abd<sup>2716</sup>, nowadays along the road from Egypt to Rafah<sup>2717</sup>.

### **Identifications**

Gaspar tentatively identifies the place 'Hemelessijn' mentioned in the account of van Ghistele (1482 AD) between el-Arish and Bir el-Abd with 'Umm el-Afein, near the oasis el-Afein'<sup>2718</sup>, but Bir el-Afein is situated west and not east of Bir el-Abd, and no doubt the road station Umm el-Hasan is referred to.

## **SUBAIKHAT NAKHLAT MA'N**

### **Topographical situation**

Subaikhat Nakhlat Ma'n is a minor station between el-Mutaileb and Qatia on the road from Rafah to Cairo. The settlement is attested for the 13th-15th centuries AD, but the toponym perhaps survived till the 19th century AD as Bir 'Sat Man'<sup>2719</sup>.

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<sup>2715</sup> See s.v. Khirba (I) (in the chapter on Ostrakine) and s.v. Khirba (II) (in the chapter on the coastal region between Kasion and Pelousion).

<sup>2716</sup> Paoletti, 1903, p. 105 locates Bir el-Afein 3 miles (ca. 5 km) west of Bir el-Abd and 10 miles (ca. 16 km) east of Qatia, but on the map of Kümmerly, 1995 Bir el-Afein lies more west, at some 8 km west of Bir el-Abd. The possibility cannot be ruled out that the Bir el-Afein that is situated south of Mahammediya on the map of Clédat, 1905c, p. 603, is an homonymous well, but most likely its position on that very vague map is not to be trusted.

<sup>2717</sup> Because the course of the road has often changed, also the position of Bir el-Afein with regard to this road varies on the maps.

<sup>2718</sup> Gaspar, 1998, p. 226, n. 10. See s.v. Umm el-Hasan.

<sup>2719</sup> Cf. Hartmann, 1910, p. 691, referring to Salvator, 1879, p. 17.

## 8. *The inland road south of Sabkhat Bardawil*

In the *Devisé* (1) the place is situated 5 'liues' or about 20 km west of el-Mutaileb and 3 'liues' or about 12 km east of Qatia, while the *Via* (2) places it probably more correctly at 4 'liues' or about 16 km west of el-Mutaileb and at 4 'liues' or about 16 km east of Qatia. Ma'n, therefore, has possibly to be looked for some 10 km west of Bir el-Abd and some 88 km west of el-Arish<sup>2720</sup>.

### Identifications

The *Devisé* (1) calls the place El Mahane, while the *Via* (2) gives the name Nahlet Sabiha. Arab sources using the name Subaikhat Nakhlat Ma'n (5, 8) or just Ma'n (6-7) show that the same place is meant<sup>2721</sup>.

Without any real arguments Clédat identifies some of the stations on the Karnak relief and in the itinerary of P.Anastasi with Ma'n. This place he tentatively locates in Bir el-Abd<sup>2722</sup>, but the distances in the itineraries point to a location for Ma'n more to the west, between Bir el-Abd and Qatia.

Cytryn-Silverman tentatively suggests the identification of Subaikhat Nakhlat Ma'n with site BEA66, where the Israeli survey recorded 14th-16th century pottery and some structures of eroded brick.<sup>2723</sup>

### Etymology

The element Nakhlat is possibly linked with the Arab word 'nakhla', 'palm tree'. I have no information about the meaning of the other components<sup>2724</sup>.

### Homonyms

A place Ma'n is also known in the region between the Dead Sea and the Gulf of Aqaba<sup>2725</sup>. The name Nakhla is also used elsewhere in the northern Sinai<sup>2726</sup>.

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<sup>2720</sup> Cf. Abel, 1938, II, p. 218.

<sup>2721</sup> Cf. Hartmann, 1910, p. 691.

<sup>2722</sup> Clédat, 1923b, p. 152.155 for W3dy.t n (Sty Mr-n-Pth) ('W3dy.t of Sethos Mer-n-Ptah') [Karnak, 1986, IV, pl. 6, 39 (G)], T3 hnm.t ' n Imy- '(?) ('The well of the region of Imy- '(?)') [Karnak, 1986, IV, p. 21-22, now lost (H)] and ' n W3dy.t (Ssw) 'nh wd3 snb ('the region of W3dy.t of Sese - life, prosperity, health!') [P.Anastasi I, 27, 5 (6)]; cf. Gauthier, 1925, I, p. 146.181. See s.v. Bir el-Abd.

<sup>2723</sup> Cytryn-Silverman, 2001, p. 24.

<sup>2724</sup> Cf. Hartmann, 1910, p. 691 and 1916, p. 487, n. 4.

<sup>2725</sup> Cf. Fischer, 1910, p. 195.204.209-211.217 and pl. 7.

### Analysis of the sources

In *La devise des chemins de Babiloine* (1), written ca. 1289-1291 AD, a military itinerary goes from Rafah to Cairo. It mentions the station Ma'n at 5 'liues' (ca. 20 km) west of el-Mutaileb and at 3 'liues' (ca. 12 km) east of Qatia<sup>2727</sup>:

Item de El Montaleb iusques Elmahane liues .v.  
Item de El Mahane iusques à la Katye liues .iij.  
'Next from El Montaleb to Elmahane 5 liues.  
Next from El Mahane to Katye 3 liues.'

A similar itinerary composed before 1289 AD is found in three different documents: the French *Via ad terram sanctam*, written ca. 1291-1293 (2); the Latin *Memoria terre sancte*, written ca. 1300-1321 (3); the Latin work of the Italian geographer Marino Sanudo (4), written in 1321 AD and based upon the *Memoria*. They also describe the road from Rafah to Cairo, each with some minor variants. They mention Nakhlat (Subaikhat) at 4 'liues' (ca. 16 km) west of el-Mutaileb and 4 'liues' (ca. 16 km) east of Qatia. The road to Subaikhat Nakhlat Ma'n is very sandy; there is plenty of good water<sup>2728</sup>:

(2) Dou Meteileb a Nahlet Sabiha, IIII liues; bone aigue et assés, grant sablon.  
'From Meteileb to Nahlet Sabiha, 4 liues; plenty of good water, a lot of sand.'  
(3) de Morteieb usque ad Nahlec, .IIII. leuce, aque bone et satis, et de littore satis.  
'From Morteieb to Nahlec, 4 liues, plenty of good water, and a lot of sand.'  
(4) inde usque Naherlersibia leuce IV; satis de littore et de bona aqua.  
'From there to Naherlersibia 4 liues; a lot of sand and plenty of good water.'

el-Omari (5), who wrote ca. 1345 AD, lists the road stations between Cairo and Gaza, including Qatia, Subaikhat Nakhlat Ma'n and el-Mutaileb. The same post stations on the same road are still mentioned in Qalqashandi junior (1464 AD) (6), Khalil el-Zahiri (before 1468 AD) (7) and Abu'l-Mahasin (before 1470 AD) (8). el-Omari and Abu'l-Mahasin give the full name Subaikhat Nakhlat Ma'n, while Qalqashandi and Khalil el-Zahiri only speak of Ma'n; already el-Omari stressed that the place could be referred to with any of the components of its name separately<sup>2729</sup>.

## HOD EL-NAHR

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<sup>2726</sup> See s.v. Nakhla.

<sup>2727</sup> *La devise des chemins de Babiloine* (Michelant, 1882, p. 242); cf. Schefer, 1884, p. 95.

<sup>2728</sup> *Via ad terram sanctam* (Kohler, 1904, p. 433); *Memoria terre sancte* (Kohler, 1904, p. 455); Marino Sanudo, 3, 14, 12 (Röhrich, 1898, p. 121).

<sup>2729</sup> el-Omari (translated in Hartmann, 1916a, p. 487). Qalqashandi junior (mentioned in Hartmann, 1910, p. 688.691). Khalil el-Zahiri (translated in Gaulmier, 1950, p. 201). Abu'l-Mahasin, *Chronicle* (mentioned in Popper, 1955, I, p. 47); cf. Clédat, 1923a, p. 63 and 1923b, p. 152.155.

## 8. *The inland road south of Sabkhat Bardawil*

In 1910 Clédat noticed between Bir el-Abd and Qatia a lot of palm groves, one of which had the name Hod el-Nahr, 'Basin of the river'<sup>2730</sup>. No distances are given. Because these palm groves were more or less lined up east - west in a kind of valley, Clédat considers them an indication for the track of an ancient canal going from the Nile to Sabkhat Bardawil, and he suggests that the toponym Hod el-Nahr is related with the canal<sup>2731</sup>. This canal is completely the figment of Clédat's imagination.

### **EL-NASR**

el-Nasr lies some 10,5 km west of Bir el-Abd<sup>2732</sup>.

### **EL-RUMIYA**

el-Rumiya lies on an island at the southern coast of the part of Sabkhat Bardawil extending between el-Qels and Mahammediya. It is situated some 11 km (?) west of Bir el-Abd and lies - in 1910 - north of the road from Egypt to Rafah<sup>2733</sup>.

Clédat noticed some ruins at el-Rumiya, but he does not provide any information about their date or their extent<sup>2734</sup>.

### **EL-KIFAH**

el-Kifah lies some 6 km north of el-Nasr, near Sabkhat Bardawil<sup>2735</sup>.

### **ANFUSHIYA**

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<sup>2730</sup> For the word 'hod', a basin of a river or sea, a pool, or a patch of land surrounded by dikes, flooded by high water, cf. Wehr, 1979, p. 249. The word is also used with regard to other toponyms in the northern Sinai: (Hod) el-Sadjia; Hod el-Sufia; (Hod) Abu Gharab [cf. el-Ghurabi]. For 'nahr', 'stream, river', cf. Wehr, 1979, p. 1176.

<sup>2731</sup> Cf. Clédat, 1910a, p. 234, n. 1. For the canal, see s.v. Ostrakine.

<sup>2732</sup> de Jong, 2000, p. 654-655.

<sup>2733</sup> Clédat, 1910a, map A and 1923a, p. 67; the map Gon, 1983, p. 539. Évieux, 1995, p. 419 copied Clédat, 1910a, map A, but incorrectly located el-Rumiya too far northeast.

<sup>2734</sup> Clédat, 1923a, p. 67.

<sup>2735</sup> de Jong, 2000, p. 654-655.

### **Topographical situation**

Anfushiya lies some 11 km (?) southwest of Bir el-Abd, south of the road from Egypt to Rafah<sup>2736</sup>. In 1910 it was a large village of the Bayadin Beduin tribe, with a sweet water well and a palm grove<sup>2737</sup>.

### **Archaeological finds**

Clédat noticed in Anfushiya that the eastern side of the dune around the palm grove was covered with Roman and Arab potsherds<sup>2738</sup>.

## **EL-FAYDAH**

el-Faydah lies some 13 km west of Bir el-Abd<sup>2739</sup>.

## **BEWASMIR**

In 1849 van Senden passed by the well Bewasmir between Qatia and Bir el-Abd, but further information is missing<sup>2740</sup>.

## **NADJILA**

### **Topographical situation**

Nadjila lies some 15 km west of Bir el-Abd and some 16,5 km east of Rumani<sup>2741</sup>.

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<sup>2736</sup> Cf. Clédat, 1910a, map A; on this map, which has no scale (!) and whose eastern longitude is incorrectly indicated, the distance Bir el-Abd - Qatia is excessively high (ca. 42 km); Anfushiya is so situated some 17 km west of Bir el-Abd and some 25 km east of Qatia; if one adjusts these figures to the more likely distance of 27 km between Bir el-Abd and Qatia, Anfushiya possibly lies some 11 km southwest of the former and 16 km east of the latter.

<sup>2737</sup> Clédat, 1910a, p. 234.236. For the Bayadin tribe, see s.v. el-Arish and s.v. Qatia.

<sup>2738</sup> Clédat, 1910a, p. 236.

<sup>2739</sup> de Jong, 2000, p. 654-655.

<sup>2740</sup> van Senden, 1851, I, p. 73.

### **Archaeological finds**

A cluster of New Kingdom sites was discovered in 1968 near Nadjila. A central fort or station is surrounded by smaller campsites for caravans and huts or tents for local inhabitants<sup>2742</sup>.

### **EL-TA'AWUN**

el-Ta'awun lies some 6 km north of Nadjila, near Sabkhat Bardawil<sup>2743</sup>.

### **EL-SALAM**

el-Salam lies some 17,5 km west of Bir el-Abd and some 11 km east of Rumani<sup>2744</sup>.

### **AMM UGBAH**

Amm Ugbah lies some 20,5 km west of Bir el-Abd and some 11 km east of Rumani<sup>2745</sup>.

### **RAB'AH**

Rab'ah lies some 23,5 km west of Bir el-Abd and some 7 km east of Rumani<sup>2746</sup>.

### **DJBARAH**

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<sup>2741</sup> de Jong, 2000, p. 654-655; on the map in Oren, 1993a, p. 1387 Nadjila seems to be situated too far to the east.

<sup>2742</sup> Oren, 1987a, p. 77 (cf. the map p. 79, but it is not clear which site is referred to) and 1993, p. 1389; cf. Valbelle, 1993b, p. 20; Abd el-Maksoud, 1998b, p. 26.

<sup>2743</sup> de Jong, 2000, p. 654-655.

<sup>2744</sup> de Jong, 2000, p. 654-655.

<sup>2745</sup> de Jong, 2000, p. 654-655.

<sup>2746</sup> de Jong, 2000, p. 654-655.

Djbarah lies some 3 km north of Rab'ah<sup>2747</sup>.

## OGHRATINA EL-SERIRI

Oghratina el-Seriri lies some 8 km east of Qatia<sup>2748</sup>.

## QATIA

### Topographical situation

The Qatia oasis, known for its numerous palm trees, lies some 15 km southeast of Mahammediya<sup>2749</sup>, some 25 km east of Tell el-Heir<sup>2750</sup>, some 27 km west of Bir el-Abd<sup>2751</sup> and some 60 km southwest of el-Qels<sup>2752</sup>. Yaqut (7) places Qatia in the neighbourhood of el-Farama, but 'neighbourhood' must be a rather broad concept since Qatia in fact lies about 20 km southeast of el-Farama<sup>2753</sup> or - according to Abu'l-Feda (16) - at almost one day's distance. The caravan track going from Petra to Qasr Ghet and Pelousion probably also passed by Qatia<sup>2754</sup>. Abd el-Maksoud situates the place at the junction of a canal coming from Sabkhat Bardawil and another from el-Qantara<sup>2755</sup>, but the existence of these canals cannot be confirmed. In the first half of the 19th century AD Ibrahim Pasha built a telegraph tower and a large well in Qatia, which were still visible in the early 20th century<sup>2756</sup>. Nowadays Qatia is no longer

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<sup>2747</sup> de Jong, 2000, p. 654-655.

<sup>2748</sup> Hartmann, 1916b, p. 373.

<sup>2749</sup> Clédat, 1923a, p. 159. Prétot, 1860, p. 94 in Clédat, 1923b, p. 164 mentions a distance of three hours between the two places.

<sup>2750</sup> Alt, 1943, p. 68.

<sup>2751</sup> The distances on the maps differ significantly; Kümmerly, 1995 has ca. 27 km, which seems an acceptable distance; cf. Paoletti, 1903, p. 105: 13 miles (ca. 21 km); De la Jonquière, 1904, III, p. 184 in Clédat, 1924, p. 44, n. 1: 4 'lieues' (ca. 16 km?); for Ferdinand von Troilo (93) the trip from Bir el-Abd to Qatia lasted nine hours.

<sup>2752</sup> Clédat, 1909a, p. 765.

<sup>2753</sup> Alt, 1943, p. 65; Figueras, 1988, p. 55 and 2000, p. 231.

<sup>2754</sup> Clédat, 1916a, p. 9.

<sup>2755</sup> Abd el-Maksoud, 1981, p. 40.

<sup>2756</sup> Paoletti, 1903, p. 104; Clédat, 1916a, p. 10 and 1923a, p. 64; cf. the indication 'semaphore' and 'Bir Ibrahim Pacha' / 'Bīr Ibrāhīm Bāschā' on the maps of Paoletti, 1903 and Fischer, 1910, pl. 7 (cf. p. 213).



## 8. *The inland road south of Sabkhat Bardawil*

situated along the modern road from Egypt to Israel, but the oasis is situated some 2 km more to the south<sup>2757</sup>.

Probably in northern or northwestern direction the lake of Tennis is reached after 2 'liues' or about 8 km (10). Yaqut (7) and Semeonis (18) mention fish available from the sea in the neighbourhood. A similar position near the sea is given by Dimashqi (13). Possibly the Mediterranean could be reached via the lake of Tennis or maybe the fish came out of this brackish swamp.

Qatia is known certainly from 1067 AD on (1) as one of the more important stations in the northern Sinai on the road from Rafah to Egypt, situated somewhat halfway between el-Warrada and el-Salhiya. The distance between el-Warrada and Qatia is 17 'liues' or about 68 km in both the *Devise* (9) and the *Via* (10), and Qatia therefore lies some 104 km west of el-Arish, which matches the actual distance of some 109 km<sup>2758</sup>; the figures for this track in Breydenbach (64) are not to be trusted. The distance between Qatia and el-Salhiya is 18 'liues' or about 72 km in the *Devise* (9) and 17 'liues' or about 68 km in the *Via* (10), while also the figure of 50 miles or about 75 km in Breydenbach (64) is quite acceptable. The first smaller station east of Qatia is Subaikhat Nakhlat Ma'n at a distance of 3 or - more likely - 4 'liues', about 12 or 16 km; the first smaller station west of Qatia is el-Ghurabi at a distance of 5 or - more likely - 4 'liues', about 20 or 16 km (9-10).

According to the *Via* (10) two roads started from Qatia leading both to el-Abbasa in the Egyptian Delta and so further on to Cairo. The usual road, which has been mentioned already, goes more north and passes by el-Ghurabi and el-Salhiya. The other one goes more south and possibly passes through the Wadi Tumilat; on this track the first station southwest of Qatia is Ahras<sup>2759</sup> at 5 'liues' or about 20 km.

While Yaqut (7) in the early 13th century AD still described Qatia as a rather poor village in the midst of the sand with houses made of dried palm leaves, with a salt water well and with terrible bread, conditions soon changed for the better. Near the end of the century the place was called 'a good city' with plenty of good water (10) and in the early 14th century AD there was an abundance of food, especially of sea

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<sup>2757</sup> Cf. Figueras, 2000, p. 231 and Baumgarten, 1990, map.

<sup>2758</sup> According to the map of Kümmerly, 1995.

<sup>2759</sup> This is probably the el-Aras mentioned on Description, 1809, *État moderne*, I, pl. 10; Description, 1826, Atlas, pl. 2.31; Ebers, 1881, map p. 72; Fischer, 1910, pl. 7; Nibbi, 1985, p. 153.237 and the maps p. 42.50.56.182 (with its position very inconsequently indicated by Nibbi).

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fish and fruit (18), and Abu'l-Feda (17) considered it even the most important and most renowned station in the Djifar. Semeonis (18) knew there a governor with troops and also for Ibn Battuta (23) it was a well-known place, where tax was collected from merchants in government offices and where the governor lived.

From the 13th century AD on (12) the Akharsa and Bayadin Beduin tribes lived near Qatia. In the early 20th century also other Beduin tribes are staying in the immediate neighbourhood, sc. the Sama'nah, the 'Ugayli and the Sa'adiyin<sup>2760</sup>. At least from the 11th to the 18th century AD a Jewish community was living in Qatia (1, 35, 88-89). According to Oren the Sama'nah Beduin tribe perhaps descends from these Jews, since their name might be translated as 'Descendants of Simeon' and since they are sometimes also called Yahud or 'Jews'<sup>2761</sup>. Bailey, however, suggests that the Sama'nah originally came from Trans-Jordan<sup>2762</sup>, which makes a link with the Jewish community of Qatia very unlikely.

### **Archaeological finds**

Dimashqi (13) describes how in the 13th century AD an ancient temple - probably a tomb - has been opened in the district of Qatia, but it is difficult to get more pertinent information out of the folk tales that rose from this discovery.

In 1903 Paoletti noticed in Qatia some scattered concentrations of potsherds on the ground, an indication of ancient ruins, and some Roman wells<sup>2763</sup>. Clédat in 1909 speaks of huge tells of some 6 or 7 m high, spread over a large surface and covered with pottery, glass, fragments of marble columns and granite blocs. One of these tells is named Tell el-Kenisa, 'Hill of the church'<sup>2764</sup>; the wely or burial chapel with the name Amzain<sup>2765</sup> built on top of it was constructed and decorated with small marble columns and other sculptured fragments of the Roman and Byzantine periods, but also with two old Arab steles written in Kufic characters. Another tell in the neighbourhood was also covered by a modern cemetery. When Clédat states that limestone was used in Qatia as building material, he probably refers to the wely,

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<sup>2760</sup> Cf. Bailey, 1985, p. 20-22.47-49 and the map p. 23.

<sup>2761</sup> Oren, 1982a, p. 46.

<sup>2762</sup> Bailey, 1985, p. 21, n. 6.

<sup>2763</sup> Paoletti, 1903, p. 104.

<sup>2764</sup> Cf. Clédat, 1912a, p. 147, n. 1 ('Tell-el-Kénisseh'). Near Mahammediya another place with the name el-Kenisa is known (see s.v. el-Kenisa / el-Mallaha / Khirba).

<sup>2765</sup> Cf. Clédat, 1912a, p. 147, n. 1 ('le ouély nommé Amzaïen [in Arabic spelling: el-mzin]').

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because he does not mention any further constructions. Clédat supposes that the place was inhabited from the Roman to the Arab period<sup>2766</sup>.

For Oren the largest walled town on the Northern Sinai caravan route is found at the Qatia oasis. The extensive ruins (D10) occupy an area of approximately 2 km<sup>2</sup>, including sections of a massive wall, large buildings constructed of baked mud bricks, arches, granite columns, and industrial waste of glazed pottery, faience and glass. Four bronze coins are dated to the late 14th-16th centuries. The pottery studied dates mainly to the 14th-18th century AD, so the site of the earlier phases has apparently not been found. Oren considers Qatia part of a defensive system designed in the 13th to 15th centuries against the Franks and against nomadic incursions<sup>2767</sup>. Early in 1799 AD the French army destroyed these fortifications to build a new fortress<sup>2768</sup>. Abd el-Maksoud investigated the remains of a small mosque, with coins dated to 'the first centuries of the Islam'<sup>2769</sup>. Three ancient alabaster pillars were reused as thresholds or as a step, while a fourth one and a pink granite column served as foundations for the minaret. Abd el-Maksoud is in doubt whether they came from Qatia itself or were transported from elsewhere. He refers to Roman ruins, without going into details<sup>2770</sup>. It is remarkable that none of the archaeological surveys reports any important Roman constructions in situ. I get the impression that Qatia only became an important centre from the 11th century AD on and that the ancient architectural elements were imported from Pelousion<sup>2771</sup> or from one of the other nearby sites.

### **Identifications**<sup>2772</sup>

Some scholars identify Qatia with toponyms in Egyptian sources from the First Intermediate period, the Middle Kingdom and the New Kingdom, but there are no arguments whatsoever for these identifications.

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<sup>2766</sup> Clédat, 1909a, p. 765-766.769; 1912a, p. 147 and n. 1; 1916a, p. 9; 1923a, p. 73; 1923b, p. 152; cf. Abel, 1940, p. 61.

<sup>2767</sup> Oren, 1993, p. 1396; Cytryn-Silverman, 2001, p. 20.23.

<sup>2768</sup> Cf. Description, Jacotin, 1824, XVII, p. 568; De la Jonquière, 1904, III, p. 470 in Clédat, 1923a, p. 70, n. 1; Watson, 1917, p. 23.31; Clédat, 1923b, p. 152; Abel, 1940, p. 58, n. 2.

<sup>2769</sup> For this mosque, cf. Adil Abd al-Hafiz Hamza, 1993, p. 40-47 (non vidi) (Arabic); Abd al-Malik, 1998, p. 171-176, with the ground plan fig. 137.

<sup>2770</sup> Abd el-Maksoud, 1981, p. 39-40; cf. Abd el-Maksoud, 1986, p. 15; Valbelle, 1993b, p. 19. Also Figueras, 2000, p. 116, n. 38 refers to 'possible remains of Roman military structures' in Qatia.

<sup>2771</sup> Cf. Wagner, 1993a, p. 11.

<sup>2772</sup> Fontaine, 1955, p. 67, n. 1 (cf. p. 230) is in doubt whether the toponym 'Cassis' (or 'Cassia')? between el-Salhiya and el-Farama on the map of Duval of 1672 (cf. Munier, 1929, p. 216, no. 2416), refers to Qatia or to Kasion, but the former suggestion seems me to be more likely.

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When Sinouhe fled from Egypt, he reached Peten (P-t-n) somewhere between the Walls-of-the-ruler and the Isle-of-Kem-Wer<sup>2773</sup>. Clédat locates Peten in Qatia<sup>2774</sup>, but the place most likely has to be looked for in the Wadi Tumilat, possibly near Tell el-Maskhuta<sup>2775</sup>.

Several toponyms mentioned on the Karnak relief of Sethos I have been located in Qatia. A tree is shown near the well T3 ḥnm.t ʿ n Imy-ʿ(?) ('The well of the region of Imy-ʿ(?)')<sup>2776</sup>; Gardiner therefore tentatively identifies the place with Qatia, which is known for its palm groves<sup>2777</sup>, but this argument is hardly convincing. Clédat locates P3 mktr n (Mn-m3ʿ.t-Rʿ) ('The migdol of Men-ma'at-Ra') and the accompanying T3 ḥnm.t Ḥpn ('The well Ḥpn') in Qatia<sup>2778</sup>; this station is situated west of T3 ḥnm.t ʿ n Imy-ʿ(?), but again this suggestion is not supported by any archaeological evidence.

The name Ḥpn has been linked with the toponym Hebenou (Ḥbnw), mentioned in *The instruction for King Merikare*<sup>2779</sup>, and therefore also this place has been located in Qatia<sup>2780</sup>. There is some discussion whether Hebenou is the well-known capital of the 16th nome of Middle-Egypt<sup>2781</sup> or an unknown place in the eastern Delta<sup>2782</sup>, but even in the latter case an identification of Hebenou and Qatia is unacceptable, as rightly pointed out by Schlott-Schwab.

In a demotic topographical onomasticon of the 4th-2nd centuries BC Daressy locates T3 ʿ.t p3 šḥnwti, 'the place of encounter' or 'the place of stationing', in Qatia,

<sup>2773</sup> Sinouhe, B, 20 (Koch, 1990, p. 19); cf. Lichtheim, 1973, I, p. 224.

<sup>2774</sup> Clédat, 1919b, p. 215 and 1923b, p. 146; cf. Gauthier, 1925, II, p. 155; Figueras, 1988, p. 55 and 2000, p. 13.232; rejected by Goedicke, 1992, p. 28, n. 4.

<sup>2775</sup> Cf. Goedicke, 1992, p. 28-29.

<sup>2776</sup> Karnak, 1986, IV, p.21-22, now lost (H). This well belongs to the fortress called W3dy.t n (Sty Mr-n-Pth) ('W3dy.t of Sethos Mer-n-Ptah') on the relief (Karnak, 1986, IV, pl. 6, 39 (G)) and ʿ n W3dy.t (Ssw) ʿnh wq3 snb ('Region of W3dy.t of Sese - life, prosperity, health!') in P.Anastasi I, 27, 5 (6).

<sup>2777</sup> Gardiner, 1920, p. 110.113; cf. Clédat, 1923b, p. 151; Helck, 1971, p. 311; Abd el-Maksoud, 1981, p. 38; Fischer-Elfert, 1986, p. 233.

<sup>2778</sup> Karnak, 1986, IV, p. 21-22, now lost (E-F); the place probably corresponds with the Ḥṭyn of P.Anastasi I, 27, 5 (4). Cf. Clédat, 1923b, p. 154-155; Gauthier, 1928, IV, p. 202; Daressy, 1931a, p. 216, n. 2; Abel, 1940, p. 61; Alt, 1943, p. 65; Scharff, 1943, p. 151-152 (cf. Schlott-Schwab, 1981, p. 94). See s.v. Migdol / Magdolos.

<sup>2779</sup> *The instruction for Merikare* (P.Ermitage 1116A Vo, l. 88-89) (Volten, 1945, p. 44-45; Helck, 1977, p. 53-55, § 33; Quack, 1992, p. 52-53.183).

<sup>2780</sup> Alt, 1943, p. 65, n. 2; Scharff, 1943, p. 152; cf. Schlott-Schwab, 1981, p. 94; Timm, 1984, I, p. 139, n. 3; Gomaà, 1987, p. 221.

<sup>2781</sup> Cf. Helck, 1939, p. 23, n. 7; Kees, 1962, p. 6; Pritchard, 1969, p. 416, n. 31; Simpson, 1972, p. 187, n. 38; Lichtheim, 1973, I, p. 108, n. 13; Kees, 1977, p. 64-65; Valbelle, 1994, p. 382 (in doubt); Winnicki, 2000, p. 167, n. 7.

<sup>2782</sup> Cf. Scharff, 1936, p. 19.29-30.43 and 1943, p. 150-152; Volten, 1945, p. 46; Montet, 1957, I, p. 189; Bietak, 1975, p. 135, n. 592 and p. 164-165; Schlott-Schwab, 1981, p. 93-94; Gomaà, 1987, p. 217.219-222; Quirke, 1989, p. 271, n. 18 (in doubt); Quack, 1992, p. 53.

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but his reading is no longer accepted and the place is probably to be situated in the central Delta<sup>2783</sup>.

There are no reasons to follow Clédat's suggestion that Qatia is built on the place of an Amalekite city<sup>2784</sup>.

According to some scholars from the 18th century AD on Qatia is the place where the temple and the station of Kasion was situated, while mount Kasion was located north of lake Bardawil<sup>2785</sup>. This distinction has no base in the evidence. One sometimes even supposes that the names Kasion and Qatia are etymologically linked<sup>2786</sup>, but the name Kasion probably became el-Qass in Arab sources<sup>2787</sup>, while the name Qatia only occurs from the 11th century AD on; there are therefore no arguments for onomastic continuity.

Andréossy locates *Castra Alexandri*, which is the place near Pelousion where Alexander camped in 332 BC, in Qatia because that was in 1799 AD the only major oasis in the neighbourhood<sup>2788</sup>. Such an argument, which does not take into account the changing environmental conditions, is hardly convincing. Clédat, on the other hand, supposes that *Castra Alexandri* extended over a distance of some 15 km from Mahammediya (Gerra) to Qatia, including the enclosure of Khirbet el-Mard, but none of his identifications in this dossier is acceptable.

Other scholars of the French expedition identified Pentaschoinon and Qatia<sup>2789</sup>, but since this place is situated at the coastal road between Pelousion and Kasion, an identification is impossible.

Abel identifies Qatia with Aphnaion<sup>2790</sup>, but also that place probably lay along the coastal road.

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<sup>2783</sup> P.Cairo dem. 31169, 2, 16; cf. Spiegelberg, 1908, p. 271; Daressy, 1911a, p. 162; Gauthier, 1925, I, p. 161; Zauzich, 1987a, p. 85.86.90 and handout; DBL, 2005, p. 134.

<sup>2784</sup> Clédat, 1920, p. 108. For this biblical, nomadic tribe living in the Negev south of Palestine, cf. Odelain, 1978, p. 21, s.v. Amalécites.

<sup>2785</sup> See s.v. Kasion. Cf. d'Anville, 1766, p. 98; d'Anville, 1769, p. 193 in Clédat, 1909a, p. 765 and 1910a, p. 212; this point of view has been followed by Hazlitt, 1851, p. 96; Donne, William Bodham, s.v. Casius mons, in Smith, 1854, I, p. 558; Sepp, 1863, II, p. 534-535; Boettger, 1879, p. 81; Müller, 1901, I 2, p. 682; Pape, 1911, p. 631.

<sup>2786</sup> van Senden, 1852, I, p. 73.321 (Qatia < Kasiotis); Hartmann, 1899, p. 341; cf. Wiegand, 1920a, col. 88.

<sup>2787</sup> See s.v. el-Qass.

<sup>2788</sup> Description, Andréossy, 1822, XI, p. 550; cf. Clédat, 1923a, p. 158-159. See s.v. *Castra Alexandri* and s.v. Khirbet el-Mard.

<sup>2789</sup> Description, 1830, XVIII, p. 174; Schlumberger, 1906, p. 76-77; Lesquier, 1918, p. 401, n. 6; see also other references s.v. Pentaschoinon; rejected by Abel, 1940, p. 233, n. 6.

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Figueras tentatively identifies Qatia with the city of Hephaistos, which is attested in the 5th-7th centuries AD<sup>2791</sup>. In Coptic lists Hephaistos is rendered as Psenhor (P3-šy-n-Ḥr, 'The water of (the god) Horos') - in Arabic Sanhur -, a name that is not attested for the northern Sinai. All the sources point out that this place has to be looked for in the eastern Delta<sup>2792</sup>, which makes an identification with Qatia impossible.

### **Orthographic variants**

In the official spelling the name Qatia ends with an aleph ('Qatiā'), while local people pronounce 'Qatiah', with the mark of the feminine. This discrepancy has already been noticed by the Arab authors Ibn Battuta (23) and el-Nabulusi (94).

### **Analysis of the sources**

According to the mythical epic of the Banu Hilal (2) Qatia was conquered by this Arab tribe on their way west in 1034/1035 AD<sup>2793</sup>.

In 1067 AD a letter (1) was sent from Qatia by a Jewish merchant who got stuck there with his caravan and suffered greatly from the heat. He tells about a quarrel about a Jewish house, which was torn down, next to the local mosque, which implies that there was a Jewish community in the road station<sup>2794</sup>.

In the early 13th century AD Yaqut mentions an itinerary going through the Djifar via el-Arish, el-Warrada and Qatia, places where travellers in a number of shops can buy whatever they need (3)<sup>2795</sup>. Yaqut also describes Qatia itself in some detail. The village lies in the midst of the sand in the neighbourhood of el-Farama. The people live in huts made of dried palm leaves; the deep well has salt water. On the small market one buys bread that is impossible to chew because of the sand in it;

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<sup>2790</sup> Abel, 1940, p. 61-62; Alt, 1943, p. 65.68; Scharff, 1943, p. 152; Évieux, 1995, p. 34 and the map p. 419; cf. Schlott-Schwab, 1981, p. 94; Timm, 1984, I, p. 138; Figueras, 1988, p. 58, n. 12 and 2000, p. 163; Donner, 1992, p. 78. See also the other references s.v. Aphnaion.

<sup>2791</sup> Figueras, 1987, map p. 766 and 2000, p. 13.196.232.

<sup>2792</sup> Cf. Timm, 1991, V, p. 2286-2289, s.v. Sanhur (I).

<sup>2793</sup> *Banu Hilal epic* (mentioned in Hartmann, 1898b, p. 302); cf. Hartmann, 1898b, p. 312 and 1899, p. 341; Hartmann, 1916b, p. 377.

<sup>2794</sup> Cairo Geniza letter (translated in Gottheil, 1927, p. 228-235, no. 47); cf. Golb, 1974, p. 146 (who dates the document to the 16th or 17th century); Oren, 1982a, p. 46; Cytryn-Silverman, 2001, p. 10.23.

<sup>2795</sup> Yaqut (Wüstenfeld, 1867, II, p. 90; translated in Toussoun, 1926, I, p. 101); cf. Wüstenfeld, 1864, p. 465; Gaudefroy-Demombynes, 1923, p. 6-7, n. 2.

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there is a lot of fish available from the sea in the neighbourhood (7)<sup>2796</sup>. One merchant in Qatia sold a kind of fish typical of Hittin, a place between el-Farama and Tennis (4)<sup>2797</sup>. Yaqut situates the sandy region Raml el-Ghurabi between Qatia and el-Salhiya (5)<sup>2798</sup> and he locates el-Farama at the coast between el-Arish and el-Fostat (Cairo), in the neighbourhood of Qatia (6)<sup>2799</sup>.

In 1242/1243 AD some Franks arrived with their ships in el-Warrada and pillaged the place. They continued their raid to Qatia, where they plundered the market and took prisoners. An Egyptian army unit, which happened to be present in Qatia, managed to defeat the looters (11)<sup>2800</sup>.

Under the Mameluke sultan Baibars I (1260-1277) a (second?) mosque was built in Qatia according to Ibn Shaddad (8) and Ibn Duqmaq (27)<sup>2801</sup>.

In *La devise des chemins de Babiloine* (9), written ca. 1289-1291 AD, a military itinerary goes from Rafah to Cairo. It mentions the station Qatia at 3 'liues' (ca. 12 km) west of Ma'n and at 5 'liues' (ca. 20 km) east of el-Ghurabi<sup>2802</sup>:

Item de El Mahane iusques à la Katye liues .iij.

Item d'El Katye iusques El Gorabi liues .v.

'Next from El Mahane to Katye 3 liues.

Next from El Katye to El Gorabi 5 liues.'

A similar itinerary composed before 1289 AD is found in three different documents: the French *Via ad terram sanctam*, written ca. 1291-1293 (10); the Latin *Memoria terre sancte*, written ca. 1300-1321 (14); the Latin work of the Italian geographer Marino Sanudo (15), written in 1321 AD and based upon the *Memoria*. They also describe the road from Rafah to Cairo, each with some minor variants. They mention Qatia at 4 'liues' (ca. 16 km) west of Subaikhat Nakhlat Ma'n and - along the northern road - 4 'liues' (ca. 16 km) east of el-Ghurabi. From Qatia also leaves another road to the Delta going more south and probably following the Wadi Tumilat till el-Abbasa; the first station after Qatia is Ahras at 5 'liues' (ca. 20 km). The

<sup>2796</sup> Yaqut (Wüstenfeld, 1869, IV, p. 144; translated in Toussoun, 1926, I, p. 124); cf. Wüstenfeld, 1864, p. 467; Schefer, 1884, p. 95; Hartmann, 1898b, p. 302, n. 4; Hartmann, 1910, p. 685; Hartmann, 1916b, p. 375; Gaudefroy-Demombynes, 1923, p. 6-7, n. 2; Golb, 1974, p. 146.

<sup>2797</sup> Yaqut, *Mu'qam al-buldan* (Wüstenfeld, 1867, II, p. 292; translated in Toussoun, 1926, I, p. 104-105); cf. Wüstenfeld, 1864, p. 467.

<sup>2798</sup> Yaqut, *Mu'qam al-buldan* (Wüstenfeld, 1868, III, p. 780; translated in Toussoun, 1926, I, p. 100); cf. Hartmann, 1916b, p. 375.

<sup>2799</sup> Yaqut, *Mu'qam al-buldan* (Wüstenfeld, 1868, III, p. 883; translated in Toussoun, 1926, I, p. 88).

<sup>2800</sup> *History of the patriarchs of Alexandria* (mentioned in Blochet, 1904, X, p. 350-351, n. 2); see also Maqrizi, *History* (mentioned in Clédat, 1916a, p. 8) (34); cf. Clermont-Ganneau, 1906b, p. 199; Clédat, 1920, p. 108; Abel, 1940, p. 60.

<sup>2801</sup> Ibn Shaddad (mentioned in Abd al-Malik, 1998, p. 176, n. 5.27.37); Ibn Duqmaq (mentioned in Abd al-Malik, 1998, p. 176, n. 5.27).

<sup>2802</sup> *La devise des chemins de Babiloine* (Michelant, 1882, p. 242).

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road to Qatia is very sandy; it is a 'good city' and there is plenty of good water. The 'baherie' or lake of Tennis can be reached at 2 'liues' (ca. 8 km), probably in northern or northwestern direction<sup>2803</sup>:

(10) De Nahlet Sabiha a Catie, IIII liues, grant sablon. Catie est bone ville, aigue assés et bone, et si est a II liues de la baherie de Tennis. De Catie se prenent deus chemins [por] aler au Caire, l'un bas et l'autre haut; et les deus fierent a une bone ville qui a a nom la Habesce.

'From Nahlet Sabiha to Catie, 4 liues, a lot of sand. Catie is a good city, plenty of good water, and it lies at 2 liues from the lake of Tennis. From Catie there are two roads to go to Cairo, a lower and an higher one, and both lead to a good city named Habesce.'

(14) de Nahlec Siberia usque ad Cathie <IIII. leuce>, que est bona villa, aque satis et bone, et distat a duabus leucis a Boere de Thenis. a Catha sunt duo camini ad locum dictum Cayre, unus altus et alius bassus, et uterque veniunt ad optimam villam vocatam Habesse.

'From Nahlec Siberia to Cathie, 4 liues; it is a good city, with plenty of good water, and it lies at two liues from the Boere of Thenis. From Catha there are two roads to Cayre, a higher and a lower one, and both lead to the very good city named Habesse.'

(15) inde usque Catie leuce (IV); bona villa est et aque satis bone et ibi via dividitur in superiorem et inferiorem, utraque perducit ad Habesse, villa optima.

'From there to Catie 4 liues; it is a good city with plenty of good water; there the road splits into a higher and a lower one; both lead to Habesse, a very good city.'

According to the 13th century author el-Hamadani (12), also quoted by Maqrizi (33), the Akharsa and the Banu Bayadin Beduin tribes lived near the Qatia oasis, where they were still staying in the early 20th century AD<sup>2804</sup>.

Dimashqi (13) in the early 14th century AD tells a puzzling story. In the district of Qatia, situated in the sand near to the sea, there was an old temple. About 1260-1277 AD the governor of Qatia opened it and found a marble coffin with a corpse in it. Around its neck it had a golden chain with a golden tablet inscribed with unknown characters. Next to the dead lay a golden bracelet, on which eleven letters were inscribed; when somebody wearing the bracelet touched poison, the bracelet squeezed his hand till it dropped the poison<sup>2805</sup>. It is clear that not a temple, but a tomb has been found. It is difficult to determine the date of the findings. No mention is made of a mummy or a mummy mask and the dead apparently wore a golden necklace and a bracelet. The unknown characters might have been Egyptian hieroglyphs, but one can imagine that Arabs of the 13th century AD were neither

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<sup>2803</sup> *Via ad terram sanctam* (Kohler, 1904, p. 433); *Memoria terre sancte* (Kohler, 1904, p. 455-456); Marino Sanudo, 3, 14, 12 (Röhricht, 1898, p. 121-122). For the two roads to the Delta, see also the reconstruction on the map of d'Anville, 1766, p. 218 (cf. Fontaine, 1955, p. 78.80).

<sup>2804</sup> el-Hamadani (mentioned in Bailey, 1985, p. 21); Maqrizi (mentioned in Gildemeister, 1881, p. 86). For the Bayadin tribe, see also s.v. el-Arish and s.v. Anfushiya. For the Akharsa tribe, cf. Bailey, 1985, p. 21-22.31.47 and the map p. 23; Mouton, 2000, p. 129-130.142 and the map p. 202.

<sup>2805</sup> Dimashqi (translated in Mehren, 1874, p. 328); cf. Wiet, 1953, p. 99; Mouton, 2000, p. 177, n. 20 (who incorrectly ascribes the story to Qazwini). Mouton states that the Nabataean temple of Qasr Ghet is involved, but this identification is not compatible with the location near the sea nor with the marble coffin.



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familiar with for instance the Nabataean or the Greek alphabet. The story about the magic bracelet is definitely a folk tale.

In 1294 AD according to the governor of Qatia 82.000 people passed by in Qatia during seven months, even without counting the people who managed to go around the oasis in order to evade the taxes<sup>2806</sup>.

In 1309 AD the Beduin horsemen guarding Qatia were defeated by a Syrian force and Qatia itself was pillaged (44)<sup>2807</sup>.

Qatia became crown property in 1317 AD (24)<sup>2808</sup>.

Abu'l-Feda (16-17), who wrote in 1321 AD, states that Qatia is the most important and most renowned road station of the Djifar. It has some habitation and there are palm trees. It lies at almost one day from el-Farama<sup>2809</sup>.

In December 1323 AD Semeonis (18) on his way from Cairo to Gaza places the 'villa' Cathia in the middle of the desert. The place is by no means fortified, but the road is guarded by the governor and his troops to see that nobody passes by without permission. Semeonis finds an abundance of food available in the city, especially sea fish and fruit, but he also mentions dangerous animals that attack people on the two-day's track between el-Salhiya and Qatia<sup>2810</sup>:

hic autem est sciendum quod per memoratum desertum, flantibus ventis validis, itinerare est impossibile, quia arena propter suam nimietatem inexplicabilem et subtilitatem, ventis ipsis in aere rapitur et elevatur in tantum quod via ambulanti non patet nec oculus celi serenitatem gaudere valet. (87) et inde properantes venimus villam nomine Cathiam, que est quasi in corde deserti, undique arena profundissima vallata, que distat a Salathia per duas dietas, per desertum tediosissimas. ubi inveni quendam nobilem admiraldum christianum, ore tamen renegatum, natione Armenum, vie publice custodem et pedagii collectorem, peregrinorum pium benefactorem et clementem elemosinarum largitorem. viam autem custodit sic quod nullus potest in Egiptum de terra Inda descendere, nec inde absque sua licentia remeare. et hoc [facit] satis elenchice sive cautelose; nam ipsa villa, ut dictum est, est totaliter in deserto sita, et undique ipso vallata, et in nulla parte munita, nec in aliquo obstaculo dotata, quominus possunt transeuntes impediri. et hinc est quod omni nocte post solis occasum, nunc prope ipsam villam, nunc remote ab ea, nunc in uno loco nunc in alio, ex transverso vie ad caudam equi trahitur unum storium aut natta in longum per sex vel octo miliaria, vel per aliud spatium majus vel minus, secundum predicti admiraldi dispositionem, quod ita ipsam arenam planam reddit, quod impossibile est hominem vel bestiam transire, cujus vestigia ipsum non accusabunt transeuntem. et communiter omni die ante solis ortum, cum equitibus ad hoc deputatis, diligenter de capite ad aliud visitatur, et quando peditum vestigia vel equitum per eos reperiuntur, statim transeuntes insecuntur, et capti velut transgressores mandatorum Soldani graviter puniuntur. (88) predicta autem villa in comestibilibus summe habundat, et signanter in

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<sup>2806</sup> Cf. Mouton, 2000, p. 94-95.

<sup>2807</sup> Abu'l-Mahasin, *Annals* (mentioned in Mouton, 2000, p. 133; cf. p. 93).

<sup>2808</sup> Mufaddal (translated in Kortantamer, 1973, p. 51).

<sup>2809</sup> Abu'l-Feda, *Geography* (translated in Reinaud, 1848, II 1, p. 146.149).

<sup>2810</sup> Semeonis, 86-89 (Esposito, 1960, p. 102-105); cf. Golubovich, 1919, p. 279-280; Deluz, 1997, p. 994-995 (with a French translation).

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piscibus marinis et in fructibus, et potissime in dactylis et pomis paradisi, de quibus superius dictum est. hic autem est sciendum quod inter Salathiam et istam Cathiam morantur quedam animalia periculosa, que homines libenter invadunt et interficiunt, que quamvis ad quantitatem luporum se non extendunt, tamen infinita ferocitate et malitia totaliter conveniunt. (89) de predicta autem villa, habita consolatione spirituali et recreatione corporali cum predicto admiraldo, profecti fuimus per memoratum sepedictum desertum, et venimus civitatem nomine Gazaram.

'It may be here remarked that on windy days it is impossible to travel through the desert, because the sand, on account of its lightness and minuteness, is whirled high into the air to such an extent that travellers are unable to see the way or to enjoy the light of day. (87) Hastening on, we reached the village named Cathia in the very heart of the desert, entirely surrounded by sand, and distant two most tedious days' journey from Salathia. Here I found a Christian nobleman acting as admiral, outwardly a renegade and an Armenian by nation. His duty is to guard the route through the desert and to collect the tax on travellers. He is a worthy benefactor to pilgrims and a generous alms-giver. He guards the route in order that no one may pass into Egypt from India or vice versa without his authorization. This he accomplishes in a comprehensive and cautious manner. The village, as we have said, is entirely surrounded by the desert and is furnished with neither fortifications nor natural obstacles of any kind that might impede the passage of travellers. Every evening after sunset a straw-mat or carpet is drawn at the tail of a horse, sometimes near the village, sometimes far from it, now in one place, now in another, transversely to the route, for a distance of six or eight miles, more or less, according to the admiral's orders. This renders the sand so smooth that it is impossible for either man or beast to pass without leaving traces to expose their passage. Every morning before sunrise the plain is scoured in all directions by specially appointed horsemen, and whenever any traces of pedestrians or of horsemen are discovered, the guards hasten in pursuit and those who have passed are arrested as transgressors of the Sultan's regulations and are severely punished. (88) This village is very rich in provisions of all kinds, especially in fish, in fruit, chiefly dates and apples of paradise, of which we have spoken above. It is worthy of mention that between Salathia and Cathia there linger certain dangerous animals which readily attack men and kill them. Though not as large as wolves they are quite equal to them in ferocity and cunning. (89) Having participated in spiritual consolation and rested our bodies with the admiral, we departed, and continued our route through the desert, reaching the town named Gazara.'

Ibn Battuta (23) tells in 1355 AD how he travelled in the summer of 1326 AD from Cairo to Gaza. Among the stations he passed, he mentions 'the well-known place' Qatia, where tax was collected from merchants, its daily revenue being a thousand gold dinar. There are government offices, with officers, clerks, notaries and the governor himself, who commands the Arab Beduin that guard the road. Ibn Battuta states that the name Qatia (Qatiā) is pronounced by the people as 'Qatiah', with a change of the final aleph into the mark of feminine<sup>2811</sup>.

According to Mufaddal (25) all post-couriers had to be checked in Qatia in 1341 AD whether they illegally transported - together with the official mail - cloth or other commodities to sell<sup>2812</sup>.

el-Omari (19-22), who wrote ca. 1345 AD, lists the road stations between Cairo and Gaza, including el-Ghurabi, Qatia and Subaikhat Nakhlat Ma'n, while Qatia is also mentioned as one of the stations for the carrier pigeons and for the so-called snow-dromedaries. The same post stations on the same road are still mentioned in

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<sup>2811</sup> Ibn Battuta (translated in Gibb, 1958, I, p. 72-73); cf. Defrémery, 1969 [= 1854], I, p. 112-113; Levanoni, 1995, p. 148; Mouton, 2000, p. 95.141-142

<sup>2812</sup> Mufaddal (translated in Kortantamer, 1973, p. 251); cf. Mouton, 2000, p. 164.

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Qalqashandi junior (1464 AD) (37), Khalil el-Zahiri (before 1468 AD) (40-42) and Abu'l-Mahasin (before 1470 AD) (43)<sup>2813</sup>. el-Omari (19) adds that this place in the sands is responsible for the collecting of taxes and the protection of the road and has an extensive administration.

According to the land register of Ibn el-Dji'an (26), composed about 1375 AD, Qatia, taxed for 480 dinars, was situated in the Djifar region<sup>2814</sup>.

Abu'l-Mahasin in his *Annals* (45-61) mentions Qatia several times between 1389 and 1467 AD as a major place on the road between Egypt and Syria<sup>2815</sup>. In 1389 AD Qatia is considered the entrance of the sand dunes extending towards Syria (46). In 1404 AD the Banu A'idh Beduin clan is attested in Qatia (49)<sup>2816</sup>. During a revolt in 1407 AD Qatia was destroyed (51)<sup>2817</sup>, but the place was apparently rebuilt. In 1421 AD the Beduin guardians of the desert roads, probably stationed in Qatia, prevented an emir fleeing for Syria to reach the place, so he had to go to el-Tina and take a ship, abandoning his horses and luggage (58)<sup>2818</sup>. In 1425 AD el-Tina, north of el-Farama, received a garrison, because travellers on the track between Qatia and el-Arish could easily be kidnapped by Franks landing with their ships on the shore of el-Tina, since there were no troops in the whole region (57).

Between 1395 and 1453 AD six members of the Banu Abi l-Faraj, an Egyptian family of Armenian origin, held important (military) offices in Qatia or dwelt at the place<sup>2819</sup>.

Qalqashandi in the early 15th century AD describes Qatia as producing the largest yield of taxes of all points of entry, and the most harassing for the merchants

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<sup>2813</sup> el-Omari (translated in Hartmann, 1916a, p. 22.487.500.502); cf. Gaudefroy-Demombynes, 1923, p. 253.256. Qalqashandi junior (mentioned in Hartmann, 1910, p. 688.691). Khalil el-Zahiri (translated in Gaulmier, 1950, p. 197.199.201). Abu'l-Mahasin, *Chronicle* (mentioned in Popper, 1955, I, p. 47); cf. Clédat, 1923a, p. 63 and 1923b, p. 152.154-155.

<sup>2814</sup> Ibn el-Dji'an (mentioned in Clédat, 1923a, p. 64); cf. Maspero, 1919, p. 70.

<sup>2815</sup> Abu'l-Mahasin, *Annals* (translated in Popper, 1954, I (13), p. 30.34.149-150; 1954, II (14), p. 28.83.97.132.186.188.203; 1954, III (17), p. 19-20.72; 1958, IV (18), p. 22.197; VII (23), p. 8.60.133).

<sup>2816</sup> Cf. Mouton, 2000, p. 129 and p. 183, n. 14. For the Banu A'idh, cf. Mouton, 2000, p. 127-164 passim.

<sup>2817</sup> Cf. Mouton, 2000, p. 93, who dates this event in 1404 AD.

<sup>2818</sup> The story is told in a necrology for the year 1433 AD; for the original events of 1421 AD, where Qatia is not referred to, cf. Abu'l-Mahasin, *Annals* (translated in Popper, 1954, III (17), p. 124). Cf. Mouton, 2000, p. 133.

<sup>2819</sup> Cf. Martel-Thoumian, 1992, p. 226-237; Mouton, 2000, p. 94. See e.g. Abu'l-Mahasin, *Annals* (translated in Popper, 1954, II (14), p. 203) (54).

(28)<sup>2820</sup>. Just as Ibn Battuta (23), he mentions the presence of Arab guards in the city (29)<sup>2821</sup>.

Emmanuel Piloti (30) describes in 1441 AD how the sultan organizes the water supply when his army marches from Cairo to Jerusalem. Qatia, which has plenty of water, is one of the key supply stations. The place lies halfway Cairo and Jerusalem, at about four days from both cities<sup>2822</sup>.

'... Mais certainement, du Caire besoine qu'il passe par désers, premièrement par environ .iiij. journées; et arrive en ung lieu habité qui s'appelle Cactia [Qatia], laquel a habondance d'eaue. Et de partir de celluy lieu, pour aller jusques à la cité qui s'appelle Gasara, est environ aultre .iiij. journées, ... Puis, de lieu de Cactia pourvoit similement avecque grant nombre de gambels, et mandet lez eaues envers le Caire. ... Et quant il est joint au lieu de Cactia, puis, dudit lieu, avecque grant nombre de gambels, il mande similement en avant les eaues de lieux en lieux, là où semblablement treuvent lez sexternez de cuyr de beuf; et cessi par environ deux journées. ...'

For Maqrizi, who wrote in the first half of the 15th century AD, Qatia is a point of reference in the northern Sinai. He locates el-Farama in the neighbourhood of Qatia, Umm el-Arab in the region between Qatia and el-Warrada (31)<sup>2823</sup> and the ruins of Hatein - probably incorrectly - in the region between Qatia and el-Arish (32)<sup>2824</sup>.

About 1450 AD there was possibly a Jewish community in Qatia, which made important donations to the Jews of Cairo (35)<sup>2825</sup>. About 1500 AD a Jewish synagogue was built, but it was destroyed in the 16th or 17th century AD<sup>2826</sup>. In the 16th-18th centuries AD Jews were apparently still present in Qatia (88-89)<sup>2827</sup>.

In the register of toponyms of William Wey (36), composed in 1462 AD, the names Zacca (el-Za'qa), Galachia (el-Salhiya), Saris, Bilbes (Bilbeis), Alariff (el-Arish) and Catria (Qatia) follow each other without much logic<sup>2828</sup>.

According to Khalil el-Zahiri, who wrote before 1468 AD, Qatia is part of the province el-Sharqiya, but does not belong to one of its districts. This 'rampart of Egypt' is situated on the road to Syria, where everybody has to pass by, and has a

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<sup>2820</sup> Qalqashandi (mentioned in Gibb, 1958, I, p. 72, n. 9).

<sup>2821</sup> Qalqashandi (mentioned in Gibb, 1958, I, p. 72, n. 13).

<sup>2822</sup> Emmanuel Piloti (Dopp, 1958, p. 237); cf. Régnier-Bohler, 1997, p. 1277. The spelling 'Cactia' is probably a mere reading mistake for 'Cattia'.

<sup>2823</sup> Maqrizi (translated in Bouriant, 1900, p. 670); followed by Ibn Iyas (translated in von Kremer, 1850a, p. 78) (67); cf. Hartmann, 1910, p. 677.

<sup>2824</sup> Maqrizi (translated in Bouriant, 1900, p. 672). See s.v. Hittin / Hatein.

<sup>2825</sup> Cairo Geniza letter (translated in Gottheil, 1927, p. 138-141, no. 30); cf. Golb, 1974, p. 146 (who dates the document to possibly the 17th century); Oren, 1982a, p. 46.

<sup>2826</sup> Cf. Mouton, 2000, p. 75.

<sup>2827</sup> Cairo Geniza letters (mentioned in Oren, 1982a, p. 46).

<sup>2828</sup> William Wey (Röhricht, 1901, p. 133).

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permanent garrison. It produces a lot of dates. Qal'at el-Tina is considered its harbour (38)<sup>2829</sup>. The taxes gathered in Qatia are among the most important of Egypt (39)<sup>2830</sup>.

According to Ibn Iyas (69) sultan Qaitbay ordered the suspension of customs collection at Qatia in 1470 AD<sup>2831</sup>.

In 1477/1478 AD sultan Qaitbay gave audience to the governor of Qatia in Umm el-Hasan and went the next day from that place to 'Qatia the well guarded', where he received other people in audience. The following day he continued via el-Ghurabi to Bir el-Duwaidar (62)<sup>2832</sup>.

In 1481 AD rabbi Meshullam of Volterra (63) went from Egypt to Palestine, passing by Bir el-Duwaidar, Qatia and Bir el-Abd. Qatia is described as a beautiful place with many date trees and no protecting wall; the emir lived there<sup>2833</sup>.

In 1482 AD Joos van Ghistele (85-86) travelled from Gaza to Cairo via Bierlehalt (Bir el-Abd?), Cattia (Qatia) and Bierdodare (Bir el-Duwaidar). Qatia, situated some four or five days west from Gaza and some four days east of Burbays (Bilbeis), is described as a small village in the middle of the desert, which seemed poor from the outside, but where a lot of wealthy people were living. It was possible to buy there whatever one needed. The place was surrounded by date palms<sup>2834</sup>.

The map of Bernhard von Breydenbach (64), drawn up between 1483 and 1486 AD, is not very trustworthy. In his enumeration of small 'oppida' between Gaza and Bilbeis, he incorrectly list Zaceha (el-Za'aqa) between Allariff (el-Arish) and Cattia (Qatia) at 36 miles (ca. 54) km west from the former and 46 miles (ca. 69) east of the latter; also the distances are not to be trusted. The distance between Qatia and the next station Salachia (el-Salhiya) is 50 miles (ca. 75 km)<sup>2835</sup>.

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<sup>2829</sup> Khalil el-Zahiri (translated in Gaulmier, 1950, p. 52); cf. Mouton, 2000, p. 92.93.

<sup>2830</sup> Khalil el-Zahiri (translated in Gaulmier, 1950, p. 159).

<sup>2831</sup> Ibn Iyas, *Histoire des Mamlouks circassiens* (Wiet, 1945, p. 59 in Cytryn-Silverman, 2001, p. 14, n. 76).

<sup>2832</sup> Ibn el-Dji'an (translated in Devonshire, 1922, p. 32); see also Ibn Iyas, *History* (translated in Devonshire, 1922, p. 39) (68); cf. Gildemeister, 1880, p. 249; Hartmann, 1910, p. 696; Abel, 1938, II, p. 218 and 1939, p. 220.

<sup>2833</sup> Meshullam of Volterra (mentioned in Cytryn-Silverman, 2001, p. 14.23); cf. Veronese, 1989, p. 60-63 (non vidi).

<sup>2834</sup> *Tvoyage van Mher Joos van Ghistele* (Gaspar, 1998, p. 170.172); cf. Demaeckere, 1936, p. 78-79; Letts, 1946, p. 184, n. 2 (who incorrectly translates 'lijftocht' (i.e. provisions) as 'livestock') and p. 185, n. 1.

<sup>2835</sup> Breydenbach (Röhrich, 1901, pl. 3); cf. Röhrich, 1898, p. 120, n. 5 and Hartmann, 1910, p. 688, n. 1.

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In 1488 AD rabbi Obadiah of Bertinoro, travelling in the northern Sinai, described Qatia as a town in the desert, where there is nothing to see but date palms (65)<sup>2836</sup>.

According to Ibn Iyas (70) Qatia and the Egyptian territory were devastated by a plague in 1497 AD<sup>2837</sup>.

In 1499 AD Arnold von Harff (66) noticed some deserted houses and wells from one day's journey to another on the track between el-Salhiya and Gaza, but Kathia (Qatia) is the only place mentioned nominatim. He describes it as a great village in the desert inhabited by people living on date plantations<sup>2838</sup>.

Ibn Iyas mentions Qatia several times between 1505 and 1515 AD (71-73)<sup>2839</sup>. The commander of the newly built fortress of el-Tina is to reside in Qatia and has to make preparations against an attack of the Europeans using the income of Qatia.

A Greek portulanus (82), composed before 1534 AD, discusses the Mediterranean coast of Egypt and mentions εἰς τὴν Κάτιαν ('to Katia'), but the context is not clear to me<sup>2840</sup>.

In October 1533 AD Greffin Affagart went in three days from Cairo to Qatia and nine days later he arrived in Gaza, apparently travelling along Sabkhat Bardawil. In February 1534 AD he made the same journey in the opposite direction, and stayed again half a day in Qatia. This place he calls a small village in the sand where the houses are built from palm branches, but one could find there plenty of dates, chicken and eggs. Qatia was under the control of 'a high Turkish lord' who collected the taxes and who lived in 'a very beautiful and strong castle' (83-84)<sup>2841</sup>:

(83) Le tiers nous arivasme à Cathie qui est ung petit villaige dedans les sablons dont les maisons sont faictes de branches de palmes ainsi comme les logeis des charbonniers en France. Toutesfoiz il y a ung gros seigneur turc qui est là député pour gouverner ce pays et pour garder le passaige contre les Arabes, lequel se tient en ung très beau et fort chasteau, et si tost que la caravenne fut arivée il vint bien en ordre avecques ses gens pour faire payer capharre ou péage. Adonc nous luy fismes la révérence, et le père gardien luy fist ung très beau présent, pour laquelle chose il nous fist ung très bon recueil à son chasteau. En ce lieu là y avoyt grand marché de dattes, car alentour y avoyt si grand multitude de palmes qu'il s'employt estre une forest de pouletz et oeufs assez bon marché, et de cela nous convint faire provision et d'eau aussi car de ce lieu là nous convenoyt cheminer neuf ou dix journées sans trouver ville, ne villaige, ny maison, ny arbre, ny herbe, ne autre chose qui eust

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<sup>2836</sup> Obadiah of Bertinoro (mentioned in Cytryn-Silverman, 2001, p. 15); cf. Oren, 1982a, p. 46; Busi, 1991, p. 44 (non vidi).

<sup>2837</sup> Ibn Iyas, *Histoire des Mamlouks circassiens* (Wiet, 1945, p. 427 in Cytryn-Silverman, 2001, p. 14, n. 77).

<sup>2838</sup> Arnold von Harff (translated in Letts, 1946, p. 184-185); cf. Hartmann, 1910, p. 697.

<sup>2839</sup> Ibn Iyas, *Journal d'un bourgeois du Caire* (Wiet, 1955, I, p. 78.186.400). I did not see Ibn Iyas, *Journal d'un bourgeois du Caire* (Wiet, 1960, II, p. 2.38.50.128.131.275.359.366) (74-81).

<sup>2840</sup> Greek portulanus (Delatte, 1947, p. 140-141).

<sup>2841</sup> Greffin Affagart (Chavanon, 1902, p. 60-61.157-158); cf. Mouton, 2000, p. 94.

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peu donner substance ny confort au corps humain, mays quant la nuict nous prenoyt, nous convenoyt reposer et coucher tous ensemble sur le sablon comme ung troppeau de brebiz.

(84) ... et tant cheminasmes que nous passasmes les déserts en neuf journées desquelz avons parlé au premier voyage et arivasmes à Cathie à laquelle nous refraichismes un demy jour, car depuys Gazera n'avions trouvé aucun lieu où nous eussions peu nous mettre en l'ombre, mays là nous trouvasmes force palmes qui portoient les dattes, de quoy nous mengeasmes, poules et eufs aussi, et pain cuyt en leur manière. Le cappitaine du chasteau vint au davant de nous bien en ordre, luy et ses gens, pour recepvoir son tribut et recueillir la carevenne, mays singullièrement pour recepvoir et faire la révérence à ung prince turc lequel estoyt venu en nostre compaignye, et après que nous fusmes poséz soubz les palmiers, combien que les gens du cappitaine affligeassent et batissent les autres de nostre compaignye, et Turcs et Mores, pour les faire payer tribut, les ransonnant outre mesure, néanlmoins jamais ne nous firent rien payer aucune chose. Les serviteurs du prince prédicit luy amenèrent ung paoure homme de village, lequel les avoyt trompéz en vendant de l'orge. Adonc la sentence fut donnée qu'il auroyt cent coups d'une houssine par la plante des piedz, et ainsi font à tous les larons, qui est une justice fort aspre.

In 1565 AD Johann Helffrich (87) mentions the road stations between Gaza to el-Salhiya, including Bierlehali (Bir el-Abd?), Catie and Bierdodare (Bir el-Duwaidar)<sup>2842</sup>.

Francesco Quaresmi (90) travelled ca. 1616-1626 AD from 'Aris' (el-Arish) to 'Cathia' (Qatia). The distance from Gaza to Qatia amounts to 240 miles (ca. 360 km) and from el-Arish to Qatia 145 miles (ca. 217,5 km), but these figures are definitely too high. Qatia is considered the most important road station between Gaza and Cairo<sup>2843</sup>.

Relicta Gaza, dirigunt gressus peregrini versus Cathiam Cairum profecturi ... post quem denique, absolutis adhuc vigintiquinque miliaribus, invenitur Cathia. Sicque computando, colligimus, Cathiam a Gaza dissitam esse miliaribus ducentis et quadraginta. Cathia civitas est a Mauris possessa et habitata, praecipuusque locus eorum qui offenduntur in via inter Gazam et Cairum ... Cathia relictas, versus Cairum gressus dirigentes peregrini, septem sequentia inveniunt loca. Primus est, puteus aquae salitae et amarae, qui triginta miliaribus distat a Cathia; ... Quare huius itineris milliarum resumendo, conficiuntur a Cathia usque ad Cairum milliarum 170 ...

'Having left Gaza, the pilgrims that are travelling to Cairum head for Cathia ... hereafter, finally, after twenty-five miles, one finds Cathia. And therefore, adding up, we summarize that Cathia is situated 240 miles from Gaza. The city of Cathia is occupied and inhabited by the Moors, and it is the most important place that one meets on the road between Gaza and Cairum ... Having left Cathia, the pilgrims that are heading for Cairo, find the seven following places. The first is a well with salty and bitter water at 30 miles from Cathia; ... Therefore, summarizing the miles on this track, there are 170 miles from Cathia to Cairum ...'

About 1655 AD Hadji Khalifa (91) knows the stations Bir el-Abd, Qatia and Bir el-Duwaidar on the road from Gaza to Cairo<sup>2844</sup>.

Referring to a trip to Egypt in 1661 AD Ferdinand von Troilo (93) mentions the stations Pozzo Abde (Bir el-Abd), Calhia (Qatia) and Pozzo Devedar (Bir el-

<sup>2842</sup> Johann Helffrich (mentioned in Hartmann, 1910, p. 697).

<sup>2843</sup> Francesco Quaresmi (De Sandoli, 1989, p. 432).

<sup>2844</sup> Hadji Khalifa (mentioned in Hartmann, 1910, p. 698).

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Duwaidar). It took him nine hours to go from Pozzo Abde to Calhia and the next day fifteen hours to get in Pozzo Devedar<sup>2845</sup>:

Neunden Tages nach Pozzo Abde 8 1/2 Stunden.

Zehenden Tages Calhia 9 Stunden.

Eilfften Tages durch die Wüsten nach Pozzo Devedar 15 Stunden.

el-Khiyari (92), who wrote before 1671 AD, lists the stations Bir el-Abd, Qatia and Bir el-Duwaidar on the road from Gaza to Cairo<sup>2846</sup>.

About 1697 AD el-Nabulusi (94) travelled from el-Arish to el-Salhiya via Bir el-Abd, Qatia and Bir el-Duwaidar. Qatia was still a toll station, while el-Nabulusi stresses that the name is pronounced 'Qatiah', rather than 'Qatīā'<sup>2847</sup>.

In the 18th-19th centuries Qatia continued to exist, but it lost every importance.

## OQTAHIA

### Topographical situation

The Description knows a well Oqtahia immediately southeast of Qatia<sup>2848</sup>. In 1910 Clédat noticed a palm grove Iktaia with a sweet water well between Qasr Ghet and Qatia<sup>2849</sup>. There is little doubt that actually the same place is referred to.

### Archaeological finds

In 1910 Clédat noticed some unimportant Roman ruins in Iktaia<sup>2850</sup>.

### Identifications

In 1912 Clédat does not link the Oqtahia of the Description with the Iktaia that he noticed himself in 1910, but he identifies the place with Qasr Ghet<sup>2851</sup>. Oqtahia /

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<sup>2845</sup> Ferdinand von Troilo (mentioned in Hartmann, 1910, p. 699).

<sup>2846</sup> el-Khiyari (mentioned in Hartmann, 1910, p. 701).

<sup>2847</sup> el-Nabulusi (mentioned in Hartmann, 1910, p. 701); cf. von Kremer, 1850b, p. 824; Flügel, 1862, p. 672-673; Golb, 1974, p. 146.

<sup>2848</sup> Description, 1809, *État moderne*, I, pl. 10; Description, 1826, Atlas, pl. 2.34.

<sup>2849</sup> The location in Clédat, 1910a, p. 237 between Qasr Ghet and Qatia does not really match the position of Iktaia on map A, where the place seems to be located incorrectly at a few kilometres east of Qatia.

<sup>2850</sup> Clédat, 1910a, p. 237.



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Iktaia, however, seems to be situated much closer to Qatia than to Qasr Ghet, so there are few arguments for such an identification.

Évieux tentatively identifies Oqtahia / Iktaia with Aphnaion<sup>2852</sup>, but that place probably lay along the coastal road.

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<sup>2851</sup> Clédat, 1912a, p. 145.

<sup>2852</sup> Évieux, 1995, p. 34 and the map p. 419. See s.v. Aphnaion.

## *The area of Qasr Ghet southeast of Qatia*

### **QASR GHET**

Nabataean name: Awiti (?)

#### **Topographical situation**

Qasr Ghet lies some 8 km southeast of Qatia, some 10 km south of the road from Egypt to Rafah, some 30 km southeast of Tell el-Farama and some 50 km east of el-Qantara<sup>2853</sup>. The place is apparently situated on a caravan route from the Negev to Pelousion, which goes via the Wadi Maghara, and most likely also on one of the routes across the isthmus between the Mediterranean and the Red Sea<sup>2854</sup>.

#### **Archaeological finds**

Clédat visited the site of Qasr Ghet in February 1910 and returned for excavations in May - June 1911<sup>2855</sup>. More extensive excavations were carried out by Oren in January-May 1975 and January-February 1976<sup>2856</sup>. The site extends over an area of some 30 ha and is surrounded by high, mobile sand dunes. The central site (D50) contains a Nabataean temenos with two monumental temples, an extensive necropolis and nearby a Roman fortified settlement. More east and southeast lie the

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<sup>2853</sup> Cf. Kirkbride, 1960, p. 89; Oren, 1982a, p. 28; Oren, 1982b, p. 203-209 (incorrectly situated southwest of Qatia); Oren, 1993, p. 1213; Figueras, 2000, p. 229. For Clédat, 1910a, p. 236-237 and 1912a, p. 145 Qasr Ghet lies three hours by camel southeast [read: southwest] of Anfushiya and two hours and a half southeast of Qatia. The position south of Bir el-Abd, suggested on Berg, 1973, map 5 as an alternative location for Qasr Ghet, is to be rejected. On the map of Stern, 1993 Qasr Ghet lies south of el-Felusiyyat, which is much too far east. On the maps of Valbelle, 1993b, p. 20 and Wagner, 1993a, p. 1 (cf. also the road description of Wagner, 1993a, p. 11) Qasr Ghet lies southeast of Bir el-Abd, which is too far east. On the map of Alston, 1995, p. 34 Qasr Ghet lies southeast of el-Qantara, which is too far southwest, and also his description on p. 201 ('on the borders of Upper Egypt') is a mistake.

<sup>2854</sup> Cf. Clédat, 1916a, p. 9; Abel, 1940, p. 62, n. 4; Strugnell, 1959, p. 35; the map Meshel, 1973b, p. 208; Oren, 1982a, p. 34; Oren, 1982b, p. 208-209; Tsafirir, 1982, p. 212; Wenning, 1987, p. 185-186; Jones, 1988, p. 53 (incorrectly locating Qasr Ghet on a track between Ismailia and Djebel Maghara).

<sup>2855</sup> Cf. Clédat, 1910a, p. 234-237 and 1912a, p. 145-168; Valbelle, 1999a, p. 75.

<sup>2856</sup> Cf. especially Oren, 1982a, p. 28-35; 1982b, p. 203-211; 1993, p. 1213-1218.

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sites D51 - D54. The buildings found in Qasr Ghet are constructed either with blocs of gypsum from the Sabkhat Bardawil area or from Suez, or with limestone<sup>2857</sup>.

The smaller, western temple (12,7 x 5,7 m) was constructed in the 1st century BC (A1). It remained in use till the late 2nd or early 3rd century AD, with some major additions and alterations in the 1st century AD. It was oriented east-west and at first only consisted of a cella (6,5 x 4,4 m). In a later stage the building was enlarged with an entrance hall, and characteristic Nabataean cult steles (betyls) were affixed inside the three niches that surrounded the altar in the cella. The temple is Egyptian both in ground plan and architectural elements. A Jewish coin with the inscription 'Year 3. Freedom of Sion' (68 AD) was found on the floor<sup>2858</sup>.

(1) Inside this temple Clédat discovered a small alabaster altar in the form of a column, in front of the large niche in the back wall of the cella. It has a Nabataean inscription<sup>2859</sup>:

ḥwyrw br grm l' lktb'

Huwairu son of Grm to (the goddess) al-Kutba'

Palaeographically the text can be dated to the 1st century BC<sup>2860</sup>. The confusion about this inscription has been enormous: there is not only discussion about the reading of the patronymic (Zakem; Garmalla; Qrm; Grm) and of the last name, which is considered the name of the grandfather (Zuy(ainat)) or the name of a god (Zeus Kasios; Rabel; al-Ba'lay; the god or goddess al-Kutba'), but also the place of origin has often been misinterpreted. In a short preliminary report of 1911 (unfortunately copied in RES) de Vogüé mentions how Clédat, the director of the excavations at mount Kasion [!], discovered a Nabataean inscription on an alabaster altar niche [!] dedicated to Zeus Kasios [!]. Its content is extremely misleading. de Vogüé in fact

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<sup>2857</sup> Cf. Clédat, 1910a, p. 236 (the great temple in nummulite limestone); Clédat, 1912a, p. 149 and 1923a, p. 73 (gypsum); Oren, 1982a, p. 29 ('pierres de calcaire cristallisé'); Oren, 1982b, p. 206 (gypsum); Wenning, 1987, p. 185 (limestone and gypsum / alabaster) and p. 187 (the great temple in limestone); Oren, 1993, p. 1213 (gypsum slabs); Wagner, 1993a, p. 11 ('gypse cristallisé').

<sup>2858</sup> Clédat, 1910a, p. 237; Clédat, 1912a, p. 147-158; Kirkbride, 1960, p. 89-91; Oren, 1982a, p. 29; Oren, 1982b, p. 202-206; Wenning, 1987, p. 186-187; Oren, 1993, p. 1213.1215; Carrez-Maratray, 1999a, p. 11. See also § Illustrations. Similar coins has been found in Tell el-Heir; for this type of coins in general, cf. Meshorer, 1982, p. 96-131.

<sup>2859</sup> Now in the Ismailia Museum. Cf. Clédat, 1911, p. 433; Clédat, 1912a, p. 146.148.157 (with a facsimile fig. 8); Chabot, RES III, 1916, p. 164-165, no. 1487 (from a squeeze, independently from Clédat, 1912a); Aimé-Giron, 1939, p. 347; Littmann, 1954, p. 230-232, no. 82-83 (with a facsimile); Starcky, 1955, p. 153.156; Starcky, 1957, p. 225; Strugnell, 1959, p. 34-35 (with a facsimile p. 32, fig. 2), whose transcription is followed; Kirkbride, 1960, p. 89-91; Starcky, Jean, s.v. Pétra et la Nabatène, in DB, Suppl. VII, 1966, col. 980.993; Oren, 1982a, p. 31; Wenning, 1987, p. 187.188; Zayadine, 1990, p. 155; Oren, 1993, p. 1215; Figueras, 2000, p. 123.125.

<sup>2860</sup> Cf. Clédat ('before the 1st century AD'), Starcky and Kirkbride. Against Littmann, who dated 1st or 2nd century AD (and its so-called parallel inscription even after 425 AD; cf. Littmann, 1954, p. 243).

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refers to Clédat's previous excavations in Mahammediya, which Clédat at that moment identified with Kasion; the description of the column has been completely distorted; the mention of Zeus Kasios was probably caused by the alleged place where the inscription was found<sup>2861</sup>. The publication of 1912 of de Vogüé and Clédat, which did not refer to the previous report, often remained unnoticed and the ghost inscription started a life of its own. It not only found its way into a lot of works about Zeus Kasios, but also in some earlier studies on Nabataean inscriptions<sup>2862</sup>.

Some 2,5 m<sup>2863</sup> east of the small temple a more elaborate one (19 x 19 m<sup>2864</sup>) has been erected in the 1st century AD (A2) on roughly the same axis and orientation. Its plan consisted of two square structures, one encased by the other, which is perhaps one of the most characteristic features of Nabataean religious architecture. The entrance is to the east, through an elaborate system of facades and doorways. Above the main entrance is a wall or pylon (9,7 m high), topped by an Egyptian cornice and a series of mushroom-like steles. At a later stage a forecourt was added, which included three doorways bearing Egyptian-style lintels. With regard to the Egyptian features of the temple it is difficult to determine whether they result from Qasr Ghet's close relationship with Egypt or are inherent to the Nabataean architecture, which generally shows a lot of Egyptian influences. Because the small temple was apparently dedicated to the goddess al-Kutba', it is not impossible that the large temple was dedicated to goddess al-'Uzza, which is elsewhere linked with al-Kutba<sup>2865</sup>.

The temenos (ca. 70 x 45 m according to Clédat) also contains an altar (?), two parallel lines of eight columns that once supported statues or cult symbols (possibly along a brook or a holy source?), and a wide, open space ending in a pavilion (A10;

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<sup>2861</sup> Cf. the analysis of the mistake in Strugnell, 1959, p. 34, n. 23.

<sup>2862</sup> Clédat, 1911, p. 433; cf. Chabot, RES III, 1916, p. 164, no. 1487; Clermont-Ganneau, 1919, p. 3; Salač, 1922, p. 166-167; Cook, 1925, II 2, p. 985; Abel, 1940, p. 236; Bonnet, 1952, p. 370; Littmann, 1953, p. 28 and 1954, p. 211-215.230-232.242-244 (incorrectly distinguishing no. 82 from no. 83); Cazelles, 1987 [= 1955], p. 201; Lipinski, Édouard, s.v. Baal-Çephôn, in Bogaert, 1987, p. 174; Lipinski, Édouard, s.v. šāpôn, in TWAT, VI, 1989, col. 1098; Fauth, 1990, p. 111. Eissfeldt, 1932, p. 41, n. 1 was the first to wonder whether the inscription of Qasr Ghet was referred to, but his remark went unnoticed. Oren, 1993, p. 1213 incorrectly supposes that the toponym Awiti can be read in this inscription.

<sup>2863</sup> Cf. Clédat, 1910a, p. 237 (4 m); 1912a, p. 148 (2 m); p. 151 (2,5 m).

<sup>2864</sup> Cf. Clédat, 1910a, p. 237 (16,5 x 16,5 m); Clédat, 1912a, p. 151 and Oren, 1993, p. 1215 (19 x 19 m). Clédat did not recognize the construction as a temple.

<sup>2865</sup> Clédat, 1910a, p. 236-237; Clédat, 1912a, p. 147-151; Starcky, 1955, p. 153; Kirkbride, 1960, p. 89-91; Starcky, Jean, s.v. Pétra et la Nabatène, in DB, Suppl. VII, 1966, col. 980; Oren, 1982a, p. 29.31; Oren, 1982b, p. 203-206; Wenning, 1987, p. 186-188; Oren, 1993, p. 1213.1215; Gawlikowski, 2003, p. 195-199. See the list in § Illustrations.

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10,5 x 5 m, with an Egyptian cornice). Around the temple lay service buildings with large courtyards and installations (B1, B2, B18)<sup>2866</sup>.

The Nabataean settlements in Qasr Ghet were apparently not walled, nor is there any evidence for defensive measures, such as a tower or fort. The Nabataeans seem to have enjoyed security and considered fortifications unnecessary. Also ordinary dwellings or private houses are rare and Oren concludes that Qasr Ghet was no city in the true sense, but rather an administrative, commercial and religious centre. It was probably designed to provide caravans with religious and other services, and with storage facilities; the larger part of its area was used as tribal burial ground. It appears that the dwellings were tents or huts in the open areas, or even outside the main centre. One of these settlements is D54, where over an area of some 3 ha the surface was dotted with cooking and baking installations, but without any architectural remains. The pottery consisted of storage jars, wine amphorae from Knidos, Kos and Rhodos, bowls from Megara and lamps, all dating from the 2nd century BC. Similar pottery has also been found on the main site (D50)<sup>2867</sup>. Qasr Ghet therefore seems to be created as a caravan station in the 2nd century BC<sup>2868</sup>. On another site in the neighbourhood a Nabataean building was excavated that was probably a smaller local sanctuary. Nearby a building was found with spacious rooms and courtyards and cooking and baking installations. The changeover in the 1st century BC from tent-dwellers to builders of monumental architecture corresponds with the evolution of other Nabataean centres. The place flourished in the 1st and 2nd centuries AD, but was abandoned, possibly because of raids of Thamudic and other nomadic tribes, in the late 2nd or the early 3rd century AD<sup>2869</sup>.

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<sup>2866</sup> Clédat, 1910a, p. 236; Clédat, 1912a, p. 151; Oren, 1982b, p. 202-205; Wenning, 1987, p. 186.187; Oren, 1993, p. 1213.1215. See also § Illustrations.

<sup>2867</sup> One of the amphorae from Qasr Ghet contained some remains of fishes (cf. Zemer, 1977, p. 61.113 (non vidi); Riley, 1979, p. 222 (non vidi); Vogt, 1997, p. 14), which implies that the amphorae found were not only used to transport wine, but also garum (i.e. fish sauce).

<sup>2868</sup> Clédat, 1912a, p. 146 incorrectly supposes that the site was not inhabited before the 1st century AD.

<sup>2869</sup> Oren, 1977b, p. 100-101; Oren, 1982a, p. 33 and p. 34, fig. 40; Oren, 1982b, p. 206-208; Oren, 1993, p. 1215. Figueras, 2000, p. 229-230, however, links the abandonment of the site with the incorporation of the Nabataean kingdom into the Roman empire in 106 AD.

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Already in 1911 Clédat published 24 Greek and Latin amphora stamps from Qasr Ghet, without specifying the exact spot where they were found<sup>2870</sup>. The stamps can be dated to the Ptolemaic and Roman periods, the earliest certain example being from the second half of the 2nd century BC. Clédat only gave a transcription, no facsimile, so new readings or identifications with other stamps remain hypothetical.

### *Amphora stamps from Rhodos*

(2) SB I, 5737 (Clédat, 1912a, p. 166, no. 11): a Greek rectangular stamp:

[...]σχι  
[...]α  
[Δα]λίου  
'[ ]'. In (the month) Dalios'

If the lacunae indicated by Clédat are inaccurate, possibly [ἐπὶ Αἰ]σχί[ι]α - 'Under (the priesthood of) Aischinas' can be restored. This eponymous priest lived in Rhodos ca. 146-100 BC<sup>2871</sup>.

(3) SB I, 5738 (Clédat, 1912a, p. 167, no. 14): a Greek round stamp, in the centre probably the rose of Rhodos ('un fleuron'):

ἐπὶ Ἀπολλωνίου. Θεσμοφορίου  
'Under (the priesthood of) Apollonios. In (the month) Thesmophorios'

An eponymous priest Apollonios is known on Rhodos about 100-80 BC<sup>2872</sup>.

(4) SB I, 5732 (Clédat, 1912a, p. 165, no. 1): a Greek round stamp:

ἐπὶ Ἀριστοφάνεως? - 'Under (the priesthood of) Ari[stophanes?]'

The second part of the legend, which was written after an image, is broken off; Clédat tentatively identifies the image as a star. An eight-pointed star does indeed occur in Nilsson's list of round stamps from Rhodos, and the only priest's name starting with 'Ari-' that accompanies this image, is Aristophanes<sup>2873</sup>. This stamp therefore might be supplemented accordingly.

(5) SB I, 5741 (Clédat, 1912a, p. 168, no. 23): a Greek rectangular stamp:

Δρακοντίδα - 'Of Drakontidas'

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<sup>2870</sup> Clédat, 1912a, p. 165-168, no. 1-24; Preisigke, SB I, 1915, p. 629-630, no. 5732-5741; Meredith, David and Jones, A. H. M. in Littmann, 1954, p. 244 and n. 1-2; Kirkbride, 1960, p. 90; Criscuolo, 1982, p. 128.131; Desy, 1989, p. 33-34.136.144.162. I would like to thank Henri Melaerts for some valuable suggestions.

<sup>2871</sup> Cf. Melaerts, 1994, p. 336-337, no. 3 with further literature.

<sup>2872</sup> Cf. Grace, 1970, p. 307; Criscuolo, 1982, p. 92.

<sup>2873</sup> Cf. Nilsson, 1909, p. 118-119. The possibility cannot be ruled out that the symbol in fact was not a star, but a cornucopia, but also in this case Aristophanes is the only possible supplement. Such a stamp with a cornucopia mentioning the name Aristophanes is also found in the nearby Tell el-Mufariq in the northern Sinai (cf. Abdallah, 1996, p. 144, TATEM 2; see s.v. Tell el-Mufariq).

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Under the name an anchor is written. A parallel stamp has been found in the nearby Tell el-Heir<sup>2874</sup>. Clédat supplements Δράκοντ[ος], but the anchor is the attribute of the manufacturer Drakontidas of Rhodos, who lived ca. 150-140 BC<sup>2875</sup>.

(6) Clédat, 1912a, p. 168, no. 24: a Greek retrograde rectangular stamp:

Εἰρη[[νίδα?] or Εἰρη[[ναίου?] - 'Of Eire[nidas?] or 'Of Eire[naios?]

The second part of the legend, which was written after the radiant head of Helios, is broken off. Clédat supplements Εἰρη[[νίδα?], but also the name Eirenaios is known for a manufacturer of Rhodos<sup>2876</sup>.

(7) SB I, 5740 (Clédat, 1912a, p. 167, no. 21): a Greek rectangular stamp originating from Rhodos and to be dated after 240 BC:

Πανάμ[ου] - 'In (the month) Panamos'

A parallel stamp has been found in the nearby Tell el-Farama (Pelousion)<sup>2877</sup>.

### *Latin stamps and amphora stamps from southern Italy (3rd-1st century BC?)*

(8) Clédat, 1912a, p. 167, no. 18: a Latin rectangular stamp with rounded sides:

ASCEIL

(9) Desy, 1989, no. 1112 (Clédat, 1912a, p. 167, no. 16; CIL I 2.4, 3494a b2): a Latin rectangular stamp with rounded sides, probably originating from southern Italy<sup>2878</sup>; the 'T' is written upside down in ligature with the 'E':

Aen(eas) Betil(ieni) - 'Aeneas (slave) of Betilienus'

(10) Desy, 1989, no. 1115 (Clédat, 1912a, p. 167, no. 15): a Latin rectangular stamp with rounded sides, probably originating from southern Italy:

P(h)il( ) Betil(ieni) - 'Phil( ) (slave) of Betilienus'

The abbreviation Phil( ) might stand for Philemon of Philippos<sup>2879</sup>.

(11) Desy, 1989, no. 1114 (Clédat, 1912a, p. 167, no. 19): a Latin rectangular stamp with rounded sides, probably originating from southern Italy:

[... Betil(ieni)?] M(arci)-s(ervus) - '[ ]', slave of Marcus Betilienus (?)<sup>2880</sup>

(12) Clédat, 1912a, p. 166, no. 3: a Latin rectangular stamp, probably originating from southern Italy<sup>2881</sup>:

<sup>2874</sup> Cf. Carrez-Maratray, 1996b, p. 191, TATEH 1. See s.v. Tell el-Heir.

<sup>2875</sup> Cf. Nilsson, 1909, p. 161.

<sup>2876</sup> Cf. Börker, 1998, p. 154.

<sup>2877</sup> Cf. Carrez-Maratray, 1996b, p. 182 and p. 185, TAFE 27.

<sup>2878</sup> Cf. also Criscuolo, 1982, p. 128, no. 181; Desy, 1989, p. 166.171. For the manufacturer Betilienus, who had several potters working for him, cf. Desy, 1989, p. 166. Clédat incorrectly considered 'Betil' a Semitic name.

<sup>2879</sup> Cf. Desy, 1989, p. 177.

<sup>2880</sup> For the supplement M(arci) s(ervus), cf. Desy, 1989, p. 81.

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Δeme[trii] (?) - 'Of Demetrios (?)'

(13) Clédat, 1912a, p. 166, no. 10: a Latin rectangular stamp:

Digene - 'By Di<o>genes (?)'<sup>2882</sup>

(14) Desy, 1989, no. 1113 (Clédat, 1912a, p. 166, no. 9; SB I, 5736): a Greek rectangular stamp:

Διοκλε[ ] - 'Of Diokle[ ]'

Clédat supplemented Διοκλε[ῦς]<sup>2883</sup>, but also the name Διοκλε[ίας], known for a manufacturer of Rhodos, does not seem impossible<sup>2884</sup>. Desy looks for a link with the Italian stamps 'Diocles' and 'Dioclei'.

(15) Desy, 1989, no. 1275 (Clédat, 1912a, p. 166, no. 6): a Greek rectangular stamp:

[.]ΑΓΓ[...]

Desy tentatively restores [SAR]ΑΠΙ - 'Of Sarapi(on)'. If the lacuna at the beginning is indeed larger than indicated by Clédat, also [Νικ]αγ[ί]δος - 'Of Nikagis' can be restored, the name of a manufacturer from Rhodos in the 3rd or 2nd century BC<sup>2885</sup>.

(16) Desy, 1989, no. 1116 (Clédat, 1912a, p. 166, no. 7; SB I, 5734; CIL I 2.4, 3535c c): a Latin rectangular stamp, probably originating from southern Italy:

Scopa - 'By Skopas'

An amphora is known with on one handle the inscription 'Scopa' and on the other the inscription 'Viselli', which also occurs on stamp (17)<sup>2886</sup>.

(17) Desy, 1989, no. 1117 (Clédat, 1912a, p. 166, no. 5; CIL I 2.4, 3543c a11): a Latin rectangular stamp, possibly from the early 1st century BC from southern Italy<sup>2887</sup>:

[Vis]elli - 'Of Visellius'

(18) Clédat, 1912a, p. 166, no. 4: a Latin rectangular stamp:

[...]sei

Desy suggests that perhaps [Vi]se[li] - 'Of Visellius' is to be read, as in stamp (17)<sup>2888</sup>.

*Unidentified amphora stamps*

(19) SB I, 5733 (Clédat, 1912a, p. 165, no. 2): a Greek rectangular stamp:

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<sup>2881</sup> Cf. Criscuolo, 1982, p. 129, no. 183; Desy, 1989, p. 136.173.

<sup>2882</sup> Cf. Desy, 1989, no. 107 and p. 174 for a potter with the name Diogenus (Diogenes).

<sup>2883</sup> Cf. Nilsson, 1909, p. 80 for a manufacturer of Rhodos with the name Diokles.

<sup>2884</sup> Cf. Grace, 1970, p. 308.376.

<sup>2885</sup> Cf. Grace, 1952, p. 527; Abdallah, 1996, p. 146, TATEM 10.

<sup>2886</sup> Cf. Criscuolo, 1982, p. 131, no. 195; Desy, 1989, p. 138.139.

<sup>2887</sup> Cf. Criscuolo, 1982, p. 132, no. 197-198; Desy, 1989, p. 170.

<sup>2888</sup> Desy, 1989, p. 144.



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ι[.]φρακι  
ινι[.]τι[.]

On the first line Ὑακι(νθίου) - 'In (the month) Hyakinthios' can perhaps be restored.

(20) SB I, 5735 (Clédat, 1912a, p. 166, no. 8): a Greek rectangular stamp, with the first three letters written upside down:

ΑΥΤΕ

(21) Clédat, 1912a, p. 166, no. 12: a Greek rectangular stamp:

ΥΛ or ΛΥ

Perhaps the number '430'<sup>2889</sup>?

(22) Clédat, 1912a, p. 167, no. 13: a Greek rectangular stamp:

[..]ιδιο[...]  
[...]ινλι[...]

A reading [Κν]ιδιον in l. 1 does not match the traces of the last letter as it is reproduced by Clédat.

(23) Desy, 1989, no. 1274 (Clédat, 1912a, p. 167, no. 17): a Greek rectangular stamp:

ΓΛΑΒΓΙ (Clédat) - Γ ΓΛΑΒΓΙ (Desy) - Γ (ἔτους) λβ ΓΙ (Verreth)

Desy supposes that the stamp has broken off, but this does not show on Clédat's transcription; he tentatively looks for a link with the name 'Glauci' - 'Of Glaukos'. Instead of an inscription written in a mixed Latin and Greek alphabet, however, it is more likely that Γ (ἔτους) λβ ΓΙ' has to be read and that the stamp has an Egyptian origin; year 32 possibly refers to Augustus' government, which gives a date of 2/3 AD<sup>2890</sup>.

(24) SB I, 5739 (Clédat, 1912a, p. 167, no. 20): a Greek rectangular stamp:

Ἀράτο[υ] - 'Of Aratos'<sup>2891</sup>

(25) Clédat, 1912a, p. 167, no. 22: a Greek rectangular stamp; the second letter looks like a reversed digamma:

Θ.αυ

Three cemeteries belonging to the Nabataean settlement are known in the area of Qasr Ghet, one of them situated west and southwest of the temenos. It are mostly cist tombs, but some elaborate family mausoleums are found. Some of the graves

<sup>2889</sup> For another stamp containing only a number, cf. Abdallah, 1996, p. 145, TATEM 4.

<sup>2890</sup> For Egyptian stamps containing a year, cf. SB, III, 6576 [(ἔτους) κθ E, i.e. the year 2/1 BC?]; Criscuolo, 1982, p. 122-123, no. 166 [(ἔτους) θ NI] and no. 167 [(ἔτους) ιε "Ωρο(υ)]; P.Fayum, 1900, p. 60, no. 114 [(ἔτους) ις χε( )]; no. 115 [(ἔτους)] δ α χε( )]; no. 119 [(ἔτους) ια/ γ χε( )]; no. 123 [(ἔτους) ζ α χδ( )].

<sup>2891</sup> An eponymous priest Aratos is known on Rhodes (cf. SB III, 6355: [ἐπὶ] Ἀράτο[υ] | [Δ]αλίου), but for a manufacturer Aratos I did not find any parallels. The name Aratophanes, however, does occur for a manufacturer on Rhodes (cf. Börker, 1998, p. 153).

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contained golden jewellery and in one of the mausoleums a Ptolemaic coin was found<sup>2892</sup>.

Partly over the Nabataean site, which was buried entirely under the sand, a new settlement was established, occupying some 3 ha, east of the Nabataean temenos. It was enclosed by a massive fortification wall more than 2,5 m thick<sup>2893</sup>, with square towers at 40 m intervals. The houses were either built against the wall or in 'insulae', usually opening to narrow alleys and streets or to open squares. They all show two clear stages of construction that included repairs and a raising of the floor. A lot of archaeological findings and coins advocate an occupation in the 4th century AD. The place was suddenly abandoned at the end of that century. The houses usually had thick mud brick walls, often on stone foundations and completed with stone doorposts and sills. Some of the walls bore stuccoed decoration, illustrating characteristic desert scenes such as caravans, camels, dogs, gazelles and palm trees laden with dates. Some lamps were decorated in relief either with Jewish symbols as the menorah or with Christian monogrammatic crosses. Oren suggests that the fortification was inhabited by 'limitanei', who possibly defended the eastern border of Egypt against Beduin raids, although it is remarkable that Qasr Ghet was not situated on a first line of defence, nor on a strategic road<sup>2894</sup>.

(26) In the 4th century settlement, on the upper floor of the easternmost house B15, a hardly legible Greek ostrakon has been found, whose contents is not clear<sup>2895</sup>:

Rokéah:

1 Ψ.ιομ.ιασις Φαιήσιος Ἄ-  
κῆ ἀδελφὸς Ἀζαζίου σχολ(α)ρίου  
[...]ου[...].]αὶ κόλπος Καραν(δ)ρα) ὄς  
ἀεὶ ἔσχατα πρὸς τω.ιος  
5 εἰς κάστρον ἐν[...].εν  
6 [...].δ[...].ο[...].

'Ps. iom. iasis Phaiesios son of Akes, brother of Azazios, a scholarius, [ ] bay of Karan(dra), which always is furthest [ ] towards Kastron in [ ]'.

Verreth: 'Ps. iom. iasis(?) son of Phaiesis [ ] and brother of Azazios(?) ...'

Some remarks. Ps. iom. iasis seems to be an Egyptian name. Rokéah considers Phaiesios the nominative of an 'oriental' name, but I rather see a patronymic in the

<sup>2892</sup> Clédat, 1910a, p. 237; 1912a, p. 158-164; 1916b, p. 28; Oren, 1982a, p. 31.33; Wenning, 1987, p. 188; Oren, 1993, p. 1215-1216. See also § Illustrations.

<sup>2893</sup> Cf. Oren, 1993, p. 1216; '12,5 m' in Oren, 1982a, p. 31 is a mistake.

<sup>2894</sup> Clédat, 1910a, p. 236; Clédat, 1912a, p. 146.147 (who did not notice the wall); Oren, 1982a, p. 31.33; Oren, 1982b, p. 209-211; Oren, 1993, p. 1216-1218; Arthur, 1998, p. 194-212 (on the amphorae found at the site). See also § Illustrations.

<sup>2895</sup> Oren, 1982b, p. 209; Tsafirir, 1982, p. 214; Rokéah, 1983, p. 93-96 and pl. 10a; Oren, 1993, p. 1213.1218. Rokéah also lists the suggested readings of other scholars he consulted.

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genitive of the Egyptian name Phaiesis<sup>2896</sup>. Also the name Akes, claimed to be 'oriental in origin', is well-known in Egyptian documents; it is not clear, however, whether really a name is involved; the letter (?) written after the name Phaiesis is hardly legible, but at the beginning of l. 2 Strugnell reads καλ, which is perhaps to be preferred. Rokéah links the name Azazios with the Semitic name Azizos, but other readings have been suggested. Even the editor remains hesitating about his own reading σχολλαρχ[ιου], and one rather expects a verb. I would therefore suggest for l. 1-2 the translation 'Ps.iom.iasis(?) son of Phaiesis [ ] and brother of Azazios(?) ...'. For l. 3-4 also a lot of other readings have been suggested. In Rokéah's view it contains a reference to the Gulf of Karandra, which is possibly identical with the Gulf of Suez. This toponym, however, is only attested once in the 1st century AD<sup>2897</sup>, and especially because καραν does not seem to be followed by an abbreviation mark, I remain very sceptical about this suggestion. The 'kastron' in l. 5 might refer to Qasr Ghet itself, but also other 'camps' in the area come into account. Anyway, Rokéah's conclusion that l. 3-5 contain a description of a route in the Egyptian border region, seems very hazardous and a 'non liquet' is probably more appropriate.

Clédat especially draws attention to some objects he found in Qasr Ghet, but he does not indicate the exact spot where they were found<sup>2898</sup>. It are a fragment of a blue enamelled vase in Persian style; Roman imperial coins and a small lead coin with on one side a crab and on the other a barbed (?) head; a terra cotta barque on which a Horos is kneeled; six Roman lamps with the images of a wheel, a Silenus, the Roman labarum between two griffins, a winged deer, a Roman soldier and the Nile (?).

### **Identifications**

Some scholars identify Qasr Ghet with the place Awiti, where according to a Nabataean inscription from the 1st century AD, found in Tell el-Shuqafiya in the Wadi Tumilat, also the goddess al-Kutba' was worshipped<sup>2899</sup>. The hypothesis is tempting, but should be confirmed by further epigraphic evidence.

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<sup>2896</sup> Cf. the name Paiesis in P.Hamb. I, 117, 17 (Philadelphieia, ca. 263-227) [gen. Παίσιος].

<sup>2897</sup> Cf. Plinius, *Naturalis historia*, 6, 33, 167; Iuba, FGrHist no. 275, F 34 ['in sinu Carandra'].

<sup>2898</sup> Clédat, 1912a, p. 164-165 and fig. 17-25.

<sup>2899</sup> See s.v. Awiti.

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Tsafrir points out that the region of Qasr Ghet in the 1st century AD was most likely inhabited by the Arab tribe of the Autaioi<sup>2900</sup>, but every specific link with the city of Qasr Ghet is a mere hypothesis. In any case, it is odd that Plinius only mentions the tribe of the Autaioi and not a city on the track between mount Kasion and the Red Sea, because Qasr Ghet, which was certainly a flourishing settlement in that period, must have been situated on that same route.

Strabon knows the region of Arabia of the Nabataeans (ἡ Ἀραβία ἡ Ναβαταίων) immediately east of Egypt and west of Judaea, and also Plinius uses the name 'Arabia' for the area between Pelousion and Ostrakine, where Idumaea starts<sup>2901</sup>. Qasr Ghet was most likely situated in this Arabia.

Negev proposes the identification of Qasr Ghet with the city of Arabia, but this place lies in the eastern Delta, near the entrance of the Wadi Tumilat<sup>2902</sup>.

Clédat incorrectly identifies the road stations el-Ghurabi, Umm el-Arab and el-Baqqara and tentatively locates them in the area of Qasr Ghet<sup>2903</sup>. This place, however, lies too far south of the main road from Egypt to Rafah to be identified with one of these Arab road stations.

Clédat identifies the 'Oqtahiyeh' of the Description with Qasr Ghet<sup>2904</sup>. The Description, however, closely links this place with Qatia, so it is better to identify Oqtahia with the Iktaia noticed by Clédat himself on an earlier expedition<sup>2905</sup>.

### Etymology

The link between the element 'qasr' or 'fortress' and the 'kastron' mentioned in the ostrakon of the 4th century AD found in Qasr Ghet (**26**) is only hypothetical. The name 'qasr' can just as well be a recent local interpretation of the important ruins on the spot.

The name Qasr Ghet can perhaps be translated as 'Fortress of (the) field'<sup>2906</sup>. Because the name Qasr Ghet is also pronounced Qasr Wit by local Beduin<sup>2907</sup>, an

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<sup>2900</sup> Tsafrir, 1982, p. 212-214; cf. Kasher, 1988, p. 8; Graf, 1998, p. 110; Winnicki, 2000, p. 171. See s.v. Autaioi.

<sup>2901</sup> Strabon, 17, 1, 21 (C 803); Plinius, *Naturalis historia*, 5, 14, 68. See s.v. Itineraries.

<sup>2902</sup> Negev, 1980, p. 377-378, n. 21 in Oren, 1982b, p. 211, n. 17 (cf. Wenning, 1987, p. 185).

<sup>2903</sup> Clédat, 1910a, p. 237, n. 1. See s.v. Umm el-Arab, s.v. el-Baqqara and s.v. el-Ghurabi.

<sup>2904</sup> Clédat, 1912a, p. 145.

<sup>2905</sup> See s.v. Oqtahia.

## 8. *The inland road south of Sabkhat Bardawil*

etymological link with the reconstructed name 'Castrum Awiti' has been proposed, referring to the Nabataean inscription found in Tell el-Shuqafiya<sup>2908</sup>. This, however, is not convincing. There is only a vague phonetic similarity between the names Ghet / Wit and Awiti, while there are no ancient or Arab sources that can testify for the survival of the name for the two thousand years that separate them. Furthermore, because there are no indications that the Nabataean Qasr Ghet or Awiti was fortified, the element 'qasr' can only refer to the 4th century AD fortifications found on the spot. But since the previous Nabataean settlement (Awiti?) had already been abandoned for some time, there is no compelling reason to assume that the old name was then reused by the Romans<sup>2909</sup>.

Similar objections can be made against Tsafir's suggestion that the name Qasr Ghet has been derived from the reconstructed ancient name 'Castrum Autaei' or Κάστρον Αὐταῖοι (sic)<sup>2910</sup>.

### **Homonyms**

Daressy knows a 'bahr el Gheit' in the central Delta near the Damiette Nile branch<sup>2911</sup>.

### **AWITI**

Modern name: Qasr Ghet (?)

### **Topographical situation**

The inscription found in Tell el-Shuqafiya in the Wadi Tumilat and possibly dated in 54 BC (1) does not contain any geographical information about the city (?) of Awiti. It only mentions a dedication 'in her presence (i.e. in the presence of the scribal

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<sup>2906</sup> Cf. Wehr, 1979, p. 809, s.v. *ḡaiṭ*, 'field'.

<sup>2907</sup> Cf. Clédat, 1912, p. 145; Abd el-Maksoud, 1981, p. 40.

<sup>2908</sup> See § Identifications.

<sup>2909</sup> Cf. Oren, 1982b, p. 211.

<sup>2910</sup> Tsafir, 1982, p. 214; followed by Graf, 1998, p. 110; Winnicki, 2000, p. 171; cf. Figueras, 2000, p. 230. Grammatically, however, one expects at least 'Castrum Autaeorum' or Κάστρον Αὐταίων. Tsafir's suggestion, which is not elaborated 'plenis verbis', can be summarized as such: the city of Awiti [1st century BC] > the tribe of the Autaiοι [1st century AD] > \*Kastron Awiti / Autaiον [4th century AD] > Qasr Ghet / Wit [20th century AD].

<sup>2911</sup> Daressy, 1930, p. 95-97 and map.

goddess al-Kutba' probably residing in a temple in Tell el-Shuqafiya) and in Awiti'. Most likely that same goddess had also a temple in Awiti.

### Identifications

The possibility cannot be ruled out that Awiti is the name of Tell el-Shuqafiya itself<sup>2912</sup>, although more likely a place in the neighbourhood is referred to.

Some scholars identify Awiti with the Nabataean town of Qasr Ghet, where the goddess al-Kutba' was worshipped in the 1st century BC<sup>2913</sup>. The hypothesis is tempting, but should be confirmed by further epigraphic evidence.

Clermont-Ganneau's suggestion that the name Awiti is a deformation of the Egyptian toponym Ipt, Thebes<sup>2914</sup>, has little to recommend it.

### Etymology

The etymology of the name Awiti ('wytw) is not clear. The same name probably occurs in the personal name 'wytyw, which is attested for a Nabataean or Sinaitic Arab<sup>2915</sup>.

### Analysis of the sources

In 1914 in Tell el-Shuqafiya in the Wadi Tumilat a Nabataean inscription has been found on a limestone block, which was probably part of a temple (1)<sup>2916</sup>:

1 [dnh by]t' d[y bnh X]  
[br ..]bw l'lkth' '[lht']

<sup>2912</sup> Clermont-Ganneau, 1919, p. 29; Strugnell, 1959, p. 33.

<sup>2913</sup> Starcky, 1955, p. 156; Strugnell, 1959, p. 34-35; Tsafirir, 1982, p. 212; Wenning, 1987, p. 185; Jones, 1988, p. 52; Zayadine, 1990, p. 155; Oren, 1993, p. 1213; Winnicki, 2000, p. 171. See s.v. Qasr Ghet.

<sup>2914</sup> Clermont-Ganneau, 1919, p. 24-26; rejected by Littmann, 1954, p. 228 and Strugnell, 1959, p. 33. Clermont-Ganneau himself had already rejected a link with the Egyptian Abydos (3bdw) and the eighth nome of Lower Egypt ('Nofr Abti', i.e. the Nfr (?) i3b of Gauthier, the Hwww i3b of Montet).

<sup>2915</sup> Cf. Strugnell, 1959, p. 33.

<sup>2916</sup> Museum of Cairo, CG 45053; cf. Clermont-Ganneau, 1919, p. 1-29, with a photo p. 1 and a facsimile p. 2 [= 1924, p. 229-257 and pl. 7 (non vidi)]; Albright, 1937, p. 166; Aimé-Giron, 1939, p. 347; Littmann, 1953, p. 28 and 1954, p. 212-215.227-230.241-242.246; Starcky, 1955, p. 153.155-156; Starcky, 1956, p. 522, fig. 2 and p. 524-525; Starcky, 1957, p. 224-225; Strugnell, 1959, p. 31-35, whose translation is followed; Albright, 1959, p. 37-38; Cross, 1961, p. 161.196-197 and p. 164, fig. 7, 1; Starcky, Jean, s.v. Pétra et la Nabatène, in DB, Suppl. VII, 1966, col. 929-930 (with a photo) and col. 993, whose reading of the date is followed; Tsafirir, 1982, p. 212; Wenning, 1987, p. 127.185.186; Jones, 1988, p. 47-57; Fiema, 1990, p. 248; Zayadine, 1990, p. 154-155; Hammond, 1997, p. 72.

## 8. The inland road south of Sabkhat Bardawil

- [‘l]ḥyy mr’n syw ’pkl’  
[wḥ]yy npšh wdy yhwš šm[h]  
5 [dk]yr qdmyh wb’wytw  
bšlm. b21 lphnšy dy[š]  
[nt ]7 ltlmy mlk’dy hy [šn]

8 [t 1] lmr’n syw ’pkl’. šlm

'This is the temple (?) which [X son of Y] built for al-Kutba', the goddess, for the life of our lord Seyo, the priest, and for his own life, and in order that his name be remembered in her presence and in Awiti. Peace. On the 21st of Pachons in the [twenty-]seventh (?) year of Ptolemaios the King, which is the [first (?)] year of our lord Seyo, the priest. Peace.'

Since the year used to be read as 'four', the text has been dated to the reigns of Ptolemaios XII to XV, but because of the absence of queen Kleopatra VII in the dating formula<sup>2917</sup>, a date under Ptolemaios XII was to be preferred. This reign is confirmed by the new reading, which gives year 7, [1]7 or [2]7; because the younger date is palaeographically preferable, the text might be dated to 24 May 54 BC. The absence of dating by Nabataean regnal years shows that the dedication was not made in territory under Nabataean political control, and perhaps the temple served a population that was not specifically Nabataean, but Arab<sup>2918</sup>. The priest Seyo, whose name possibly corresponds with the Egyptian Ḍd-ḥr, rendered in Greek as Teos<sup>2919</sup>, is not known elsewhere.

The reference to Awiti has been interpreted differently. Clermont-Ganneau suggested to change the text of the inscription into 'in his presence, in Awiti', which would identify the place with Tell el-Shuqafiya itself<sup>2920</sup>. Littmann, who incorrectly considered the text a contract, did not look for a toponym at all and translated 'before him and in (the presence of) a company'<sup>2921</sup>. Most likely, however, Awiti is another place in the area where the goddess al-Kutba' is worshipped.

## AUTAIOI

### Topographical situation

The name Autaioi is apparently widely spread in the Arabian world. Iuba (2) mentions Arab Autaioi along the roads from mount Kasion and Gerra to Arsinoe at

<sup>2917</sup> Cf. the mention of Kleopatra VII in the dating formula of a second Nabataean inscription from Tell el-Shuqafiya, dated to 37/36 BC and published by Jones, 1988, p. 47-57 (see especially p. 54-56).

<sup>2918</sup> Cf. Strugnell, 1959, p. 33, n. 22.

<sup>2919</sup> Cf. Albright, 1959, p. 37-38.

<sup>2920</sup> Clermont-Ganneau, 1919, p. 29.

<sup>2921</sup> Littmann, 1954, p. 229.

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the Red Sea, which probably live somewhat southeast of Pelousion<sup>2922</sup>. Possibly a second group of Autaioi stays in the inland of Arabia Felix (4); their relationship with the northern Sinai Autaioi is not clear. Agatharchides (1) and Iuba (3), finally, mention another group of Autaioi south of Egypt near Berenike along the coast of the Arabian Gulf. Lesquier apparently supposes that they formed one group with the Autaioi of the northern Sinai, living along the Arabian Gulf and the Red Sea<sup>2923</sup>, but this is not confirmed in the sources.

### **Identifications**

Tsafrir points out that the northern Sinai Autaioi lived in the region of Qasr Ghet<sup>2924</sup>, which is indeed quite plausible. He also considers Qasr Ghet the capital after which they are named, but the area of distribution of the Autaioi is so large that his hypothesis, which is mainly based upon a vague phonetic similarity, is maybe hazardous.

Clédat tentatively identifies the Autaioi with the mythical people of the Adites, who according to the 15th century author Maqrizi had a flourishing culture between Egypt and Syria; God punished them for their pride and turned the Djifar into a sandy desert<sup>2925</sup>. The hypothesis that Maqrizi's story contains some elements referring to the Autaioi or to other previous inhabitants of the region, is indeed tempting.

### **Etymology**

Tsafrir suggests that the Autaioi are named after their 'capital' Awiti in the northern Sinai, a place mentioned in a Nabataean inscription of the 1st century BC, and that both names survive in the name (Qasr) Ghet<sup>2926</sup>. The relationship between

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<sup>2922</sup> Cf. the map Ortelius, 1595 in Baines, 1981 [= 1980], p. 23.

<sup>2923</sup> Lesquier, 1918, p. 419; cf. the Autaioi situated immediately west of Klysmā on the map of Müller, 1855, pl. 6.

<sup>2924</sup> Tsafrir, 1982, p. 212-214; cf. Oren, 1982b, p. 209; Wenning, 1987, p. 185; Oren, 1993, p. 1213. See s.v. Qasr Ghet.

<sup>2925</sup> Maqrizi (translated in Bouriant, 1900, p. 523-524; cf. p. 544); cf. Clédat, 1923a, p. 150-151. See s.v. Djifar.

<sup>2926</sup> Tsafrir, 1982, p. 212-214. See s.v. Qasr Ghet and s.v. Awiti.



these three toponyms, however, is not certain; this etymology of the name Autaioi therefore remains hypothetical.

### **Analysis of the sources**

According to Agatharchides (1), quoted by Photios (7), the Autaioi live south of Egypt at the coast of the Arabian Gulf<sup>2927</sup>:

ὅτι παρὰ τὴν νότιον τῆς Αἰγύπτου κλίσιν τέσσαρα ἔστι φῶλα τὰ μέγιστα, ... ἀπὸ γὰρ Αὐταίων, οἱ τὸν ἔσχατον μυχὸν κατοικοῦσιν, ὃν τῇ μεγάλῃ συμβέβηκε συγκλείεσθαι θαλάττῃ, ...

'In the region south of Egypt there are four major population groups ... from the Autaioi, who inhabit the innermost recess of the gulf, which ends at the great sea (sc. the Indian Ocean), ...'

Plinius (5), following Iuba (2), describes three roads from the Mediterranean across the isthmus to Arsinoe at the Red Sea. The first road goes from Pelousion, the second from the neighbourhood of mount Kasion passing by the Arab tribe of the Autaioi and the third from Gerra, passing through those same Arabs<sup>2928</sup>:

nihilominus iter totum terreno frequentatur, a mari Aegyptio, quod est triplex: unum a Pelusio per harenas ...; alterum ultra Casium montem, quod a LX p. redit in Pelusiacam viam - accolunt Arabes Autaei; tertium a Gerro, quod Agipsum vocant, per eosdem Arabas LX propius, sed asperum montibus et inops aquarum. eae omnes viae Arsinoen ducunt conditam sororis nomine in sinu Carandra a Ptolomaeo Philadelpho ...

'Nevertheless the whole journey from the Egyptian sea is constantly performed by land, there being three routes: one from Pelusium across the sands ...; another route beyond mount Casium, after 60 miles rejoining the road from Pelusium - along this route dwell the Arab tribe of the Autaei; and a third starting from Gerrum, which is called Agipsum, passing through the same Arab tribe, which is 60 miles shorter but rough and mountainous, as well as devoid of watering-places. All these routes lead to Arsinoe the city on Carandra bay founded and named after his sister by Ptolomaeus Philadelphus ...'

Because the Autaioi are only mentioned for the second and the third road, it is most likely that they lived in the northern Sinai east of the road from Pelousion to Arsinoe, i.e. south and southwest of Gerra and mount Kasion.

In a second context Iuba (3) and Plinius (6) mention the Arab Autaioi immediately south of Berenike at the Red Sea<sup>2929</sup>:

... portus multi, Berenice oppidum matris Philadelphi nomine, ad quod iter a Copto diximus, Arabes Autaei et Gebadaei.

<sup>2927</sup> Photios, *Bibliotheca*, 250, 30-31 [448b] (Henry, 1974, p. 156); Agatharchides, 30-31 (Müller, 1855, I, p. 129-130); cf. the translation of Burstein, 1989, p. 69-70, F 31a. Müller, David Heinrich, s.v. Autei, in RE, II 2, 1896, col. 2594 locates these Autaioi at the eastern side of the Arabian Gulf, but most likely the western side south of Egypt is referred to.

<sup>2928</sup> Plinius, *Naturalis historia*, 6, 33, 166-167; Iuba, FGrHist no. 275, F 34 (2) [with the form 'Antaei']. Clédat, 1924, p. 37-39 (against his earlier view expressed in 1923a, p. 96) incorrectly thinks that the roads lead to the Gulf of Aqaba; cf. Tsafir, 1982, p. 213; Rokéah, 1983, p. 95.

<sup>2929</sup> Plinius, *Naturalis historia*, 6, 33, 168; Iuba, FGrHist no. 275, F 34. Müller, David Heinrich, s.v. Autei, in RE, II 2, 1896, col. 2594, quoting an older edition, speaks of 'Arathes Autei'. The location of the Autaioi north of Berenike (Lesquier, 1918, p. 419) or along the road from Koptos to Berenike (Burstein, 1989, p. 69, n. 2) does not match Plinius' description.

## 8. *The inland road south of Sabkhat Bardawil*

'... a number of harbours, the town of Berenice named from the mother of Philadelphus, the road to which from Coptus we have described, and the Arab tribes of the Autaei and Gebadaei.'

Plinius (4), possibly quoting Iuba again, mentions the 'Autaei' a third time in a list of places and people from the interior of Arabia Felix<sup>2930</sup>.

iam et reliqua mediterranea eius dicantur. ... Autaei, Ethravi, ...

'The rest of the inland places also must be stated. ... the Autaei, the Ethravi, ...'

### **EL-DHEISH**

#### **Topographical situation**

el-Dheish is a palm grove immediately east of Qasr Ghet and el-Farsh<sup>2931</sup>.

#### **Archaeological finds**

In 1911 Clédat noticed that in el-Dheish the soil was covered with potsherds, which he dated to the Roman period<sup>2932</sup>.

### **EL-FARSH**

el-Farsh is a palm grove immediately east of Qasr Ghet and el-Hasua<sup>2933</sup>.

### **EL-HASUA**

el-Hasua is a palm grove between Qasr Ghet and el-Farsh, immediately east of the former<sup>2934</sup>.

### **EL-SADJIA**

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<sup>2930</sup> Plinius, *Naturalis historia*, 6, 32, 157-158; cf. Iuba, FGrHist no. 275, p. 337 (Jacoby's commentary at F 34).

<sup>2931</sup> Cf. Clédat, 1910a, p. 236, n. 1 and 1912a, p. 145. According to the first itinerary el-Dheish lies west of Qasr Ghet, but the second one locates it more correctly east of that place.

<sup>2932</sup> Clédat, 1912a, p. 145.

<sup>2933</sup> Cf. Clédat, 1910a, p. 236, n. 1 and 1912a, p. 145. According to the first itinerary el-Farsh lies west of Qasr Ghet, but the second one locates it more correctly east of that place.

<sup>2934</sup> Cf. Clédat, 1910a, p. 236, n. 1 and 1912a, p. 145. According to the first itinerary el-Hasua lies west of Qasr Ghet, but the second one locates it more correctly east of that place.

## 8. *The inland road south of Sabkhat Bardawil*

el-Sadjia is a palm grove with three stone-lined wells between Qasr Ghet and el-Hasua, a few hundred metres east of the former<sup>2935</sup>.

### **EL-M'ZAHAMIYA**

el-M'zahamiya is a palm grove between el-Mahari and Qasr Ghet, situated immediately west of the latter<sup>2936</sup>.

### **EL-MAHARI**

#### **Topographical situation**

el-Mahari is a palm grove situated immediately west of el-M'zahamiya and Qasr Ghet<sup>2937</sup>.

#### **Archaeological finds**

In 1910 Clédat noticed an area near el-Mahari covered with potsherds, which he dated to the Roman period<sup>2938</sup>.

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<sup>2935</sup> Cf. Clédat, 1912a, p. 145; Oren, 1982b, p. 203 and 1993, p. 1213.

<sup>2936</sup> Cf. Clédat, 1910a, p. 236, n. 1. According to Clédat el-M'zahamiya lies east of Qasr Ghet, but the itinerary given in Clédat, 1912a, p. 145 implies that it lies west of that place.

<sup>2937</sup> Cf. Clédat, 1910a, p. 236, n. 1. According to Clédat el-Mahari lies east of Qasr Ghet, but the itinerary given in Clédat, 1912a, p. 145 implies that it lies west of that place.

<sup>2938</sup> Clédat, 1910a, p. 236, n. 1.

*The area northwest of Qatia*

## **KHIRBET EL-MARD**

### **Topographical situation**

Khirbet ('ruin') el-Mard lies some 2 km northwest of Qatia<sup>2939</sup>.

### **Archaeological finds**

Possibly about 1909-1910 Clédat noticed in Khirbet el-Mard the traces of a large enclosure, surrounded by the remains of a reed palisade and containing some mud brick structures<sup>2940</sup>. No date has been suggested.

### **Identifications**

Clédat supposes that *Castra Alexandri* in 332 BC extended over a distance of some 15 km from Mahammediya (Gerra) to Qatia, including the enclosure of Khirbet el-Mard<sup>2941</sup>, but none of his identifications in this matter is acceptable.

### **Etymology**

According to Clédat the name el-Mard is linked with the Syriac 'Marda' and the Hebrew 'Masada', which mean 'fortified place'<sup>2942</sup>. In his view Khirbet / Kom el-Mard can therefore be translated as 'Ruin / Hill of the fortress'.

## **EL-GHABAI**

### **Topographical situation**

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<sup>2939</sup> Clédat, 1923a, p. 158 and 1910a, map A.

<sup>2940</sup> Clédat, 1923a, p. 158 and 1923b, p. 165.

<sup>2941</sup> Clédat, 1923a, p. 158-159. See s.v. *Castra Alexandri* and s.v. *Qatia*.

<sup>2942</sup> Clédat, 1923a, p. 158. Cf. the etymology of the toponym Khirbet Mird in Palestine in van Haelst, 1991, p. 301, n. 13.

## 8. The inland road south of Sabkhat Bardawil

el-Ghabai is a small palm grove somewhat northwest of Qatia<sup>2943</sup>. Its position with regard to Khirbet el-Mard is not clear.

### Archaeological finds

In 1910 Clédat noticed in el-Ghabai the ruins of mud brick constructions and a lot of sherds of coarse pottery<sup>2944</sup>.

## DJEBEL ABU DAREM

The hill Djebel Abu Darem lies between Qatia and Djebel Aenni, immediately east of the latter<sup>2945</sup>.

## DJEBEL AENNI

### Topographical situation

Djebel Aenni, a succession of dunes covered with bushes, lies a few kilometres west of Qatia, north of the road from Egypt to Rafah<sup>2946</sup>.

### Archaeological finds

On one of the dunes of Djebel Aenni a large area is covered with potsherds and fragments of stone. Clédat did not notice any constructions in the neighbourhood, but found a fragmentary Greek inscription written on black marble (sic), possibly the indication of a cemetery (1)<sup>2947</sup>:

1 [ ]ισ[ ]  
[ ]ατ[ ]  
[ ]εστρ[ ]  
4 [ ]υσσ.α.[ ]

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<sup>2943</sup> Clédat, 1910a, p. 237.

<sup>2944</sup> Clédat, 1910a, p. 237.

<sup>2945</sup> Clédat, 1915b, p. 37.

<sup>2946</sup> Clédat, 1915b, p. 37: 'à moins d'une heure de marche à l'ouest de Qatia en se dirigeant au nord de la grande route d'Égypte', rendered by Figueras, 2000, p. 158 as 'about 5 km northwest of Qatia'.

<sup>2947</sup> Clédat, 1915b, p. 37 and fig. 12.

## **EL-KARAMAH**

el-Karamah lies some 26,5 km west of Bir el-Abd and some 5 km east of Rumani<sup>2948</sup>.

## **BIR ABU HAMRA**

Bir Abu Hamra lies some 4 km northwest of Qatia and some 3 km east of Rumani<sup>2949</sup>.

## **HOD EL-SUFIA**

Daressy mentions Hod ('Basin') el-Sufia between Bir Abu Hamra and Rumani<sup>2950</sup>, but further information is lacking.

## **RUMANI**

### **Topographical situation**

Rumani lies some 8 km northwest of Qatia and some 32 km west of Bir el-Abd<sup>2951</sup>, some 8 km south of the Mediterranean<sup>2952</sup>, some 13 km southeast of el-Farama<sup>2953</sup> and some 41 km northeast of el-Qantara<sup>2954</sup>. In 1880 Chester noticed a few palm trees growing in the desert near the well of Rumani, and he stresses that Rumani is no real place but a desert district of considerable extent; he adds that the name Cape Rumani, which appears on some maps instead of el-Qels Hammediya, is not strictly

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<sup>2948</sup> de Jong, 2000, p. 654-655.

<sup>2949</sup> de Jong, 2000, p. 654-655; cf. the maps Daressy, 1930, pl. and Bietak, 1975, pl. 4.

<sup>2950</sup> Daressy, 1931a, p. 220.

<sup>2951</sup> de Jong, 2000, p. 654-655; cf. Baumgarten, 1990, map; Kümmerly, 1995.

<sup>2952</sup> Figueras, 1988, p. 58, n. 12.

<sup>2953</sup> Figueras, 1988, p. 58, n. 12. Dalman, 1924, p. 50 gives a distance of some 10 km between Rumani and el-Farama, but on his map p. 42 he locates Rumani too far west.

<sup>2954</sup> de Jong, 2000, p. 654-655; cf. Baumgarten, 1990, map (36 plus 5 km).

## 8. *The inland road south of Sabkhat Bardawil*

correct<sup>2955</sup>. Later on Rumani became a real village and in the early 20th century the place was situated on the railway line between Egypt and Israel, which is now dismantled<sup>2956</sup>. According to Daressy there is a 'sabkhat' Rumani in the neighbourhood<sup>2957</sup>, probably one of the lakes belonging to Sabkhat Bardawil.

### **Archaeological finds**

A cluster of New Kingdom sites was discovered near Rumani, in which a central fort or station is surrounded by smaller campsites for caravans and huts or tents for local inhabitants<sup>2958</sup>.

Near Rumani are the remains of a fortified site (T291) from the Persian period (5th-4th centuries BC)<sup>2959</sup>, but further details are lacking. It is perhaps identical with the 'ancient built-up area', mentioned by Figueras, who also knows a cemetery with plenty of Hellenistic, Roman and Byzantine pottery<sup>2960</sup>.

Between Rumani and the Mediterranean some thirty sites from the Persian period (a.o. S10) have been found in each other's neighbourhood, probably trading or camping sites, without a fixed habitation. The findings include Attic pottery and amphorae from Chios and Samos<sup>2961</sup>.

### **Identifications**

On the 4th century BC (?) hieratic papyrus Louvre I.3079 Brugsch reads the name 'Ro-mun', which Maspero corrects in Rmn s.wt, 'Support des emplacements (?)'. Therefore the name cannot be linked with Peremoun, the Coptic name of Pelousion, or with the toponym Rumani, as suggested by Brugsch<sup>2962</sup>.

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<sup>2955</sup> Chester, 1880, p. 147.150 and the map p. 144. See also s.v. Anb Diab / el-Qels.

<sup>2956</sup> Cf. Dalman, 1924, p. 50-51 and the map p. 42; Gauthier, 1931, VII, map 1; Kümmerly, 1995.

<sup>2957</sup> Daressy, 1931a, p. 220.

<sup>2958</sup> Oren, 1987a, p. 77 (probably referring to the sites T263, T287 and T291a on the map p. 79) and 1993, p. 1389.

<sup>2959</sup> Oren, 1993, p. 1393; 1998, p. 76; cf. Oren, 1982a, p. 14; 1984a, p. 28; 1993, p. 1394.

<sup>2960</sup> Figueras, 1988, p. 58, n. 12 and 2000, p. 116.244.

<sup>2961</sup> Oren, 1998, p. 80-81, with fig. 72-73.

<sup>2962</sup> P.Louvre I.3079, 84; Brugsch, 1880, p. 1242-1243 (cf. p. 1089-1091.1195); Maspero, 1883, p. 63-64; cf. Gauthier, 1926, III, p. 136.

## 8. *The inland road south of Sabkhat Bardawil*

Rumani has been identified by Figueras with the city of Aphnaion, which is attested for the 4th-7th centuries AD<sup>2963</sup>. Because this place probably lay along the coast between Mahammediya and el-Uqsor or el-Qels, Rumani is too far south to come into account.

### **Etymology**

According to Clédat the name Rumani means 'The land of the pomegranate', after the fruit that is frequently found in the region<sup>2964</sup>.

### **BIR ETMALIR**

Bir Etmalir lies some 2 km west of Rumani and some 3 km east of Bir el-Arais<sup>2965</sup>.

### **EL-SHOADA**

#### **Topographical situation**

The small village el-Shoada lies some 3 km west of Rumani, some 6 east of Baluza, and some 7 km south of the Mediterranean<sup>2966</sup>, and seems to be a recent creation near the modern road between el-Arish and el-Qantara.

#### **Archaeological finds**

In 1991 some Beduin found in el-Shoada a funerary stele in nummulite limestone, decorated with a fronton and two akroteria in the form of a naiskos or an altar. The inscription gives the name of the deceased - 'Hegesandros son of

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<sup>2963</sup> Figueras, 1987, map p. 766; 1988, p. 58, n. 12; 1999, p. 212; 2000, p. 163.244. See s.v. Aphnaion.

<sup>2964</sup> Clédat, 1923a, p. 98 and 1923b, p. 161; cf. Wehr, 1979, p. 418, s.v. rummān, 'pomegranate'.

<sup>2965</sup> Cf. the map Bietak, 1975, pl. 4.

<sup>2966</sup> de Jong, 2000, p. 654-655; cf. Abd el-Maksoud, 1992a, p. 86.



## 8. *The inland road south of Sabkhat Bardawil*

Artemidoros' - and can palaeographically be dated in the late 4th or, more likely, in the 3rd century BC (SEG XLII, 1578) (1)<sup>2967</sup>:

1 Ἡγήσα-  
νδρος  
'Ἀρτεμ-  
4 ιδώρου  
'Hegesandros son of Artemidoros'

Abd el-Maksoud sees 'a martial connotation' in both the name Hegesandros, 'Leader of men', and Artemidoros, 'Gift of (the hunting goddess) Artemis' and supposes that Hegesandros was a soldier in one of the garrisons in or near Pelousion. One has to be careful, though, with conclusions mainly based upon an onomastic analysis<sup>2968</sup>. If the inscription belongs to the late 4th century BC, it is indeed quite plausible that most foreigners living in that area were in military service, but if the inscription dates e.g. from the second half of the 3rd century BC, when Syria and the northern Sinai were Ptolemaic, the military aspect is less compelling. Carrez-Maratray, who supposes that the stele originates from the cemeteries east of el-Qana'is, also often stresses the importance of this stele for the study of the city of Pelousion, but one has to bear in mind that el-Shoadā is at quite a distance of that place.

### **Identifications**

Abd el-Maksoud tentatively identifies el-Shoadā with the military camps Chabriou Charax and Castra Alexandri<sup>2969</sup>, but if el-Shoadā is really a military settlement, which can only be established by archaeological excavations, the place might just as well be part of the nearby Gerra or be identical with Skenai.

### **Etymology**

The name el-Shoadā, 'The martyrs', is a recent creation, referring to casualties there made in the wars between Egypt and Israel since 1967<sup>2970</sup>.

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<sup>2967</sup> For this inscription, cf. Abd el-Maksoud, 1992a, p. 85-88.90, with a facsimile p. 87; Bingen, BE, 1993, p. 566, no. 659; Carrez-Maratray, 1994, p. 162, n. 13; Carrez-Maratray, 1995, p. 146; SEG XLII, 1992 [= 1995], p. 466, no. 1578; Valbelle, 1995b, p. 31.41; Carrez-Maratray, 1996c, p. 195; Carrez-Maratray, 1999b, p. 200-201, no. 389, with a facsimile.

<sup>2968</sup> Cf. the remarks of Bingen, BE, 1993, p. 566, no. 659.

<sup>2969</sup> Abd el-Maksoud, 1992a, p. 88; cf. Carrez-Maratray, 1999b, p. 201, n. 131.

<sup>2970</sup> Abd el-Maksoud, 1992a, p. 86.

## **BIR EL-ARAIIS**

Bir el-Arais lies some 3 km west of Bir Etmalir and 1 km northeast of Bir Abu Diyuk<sup>2971</sup>. There is a sweet water well and an important palm grove inhabited by Kharsa Beduin. North of the well the hill Djebel el-Arais is known<sup>2972</sup>.

## **DJEBEL ABU GANID**

Djebel Abu Ganid probably lies immediately north of Bir el-Arais<sup>2973</sup>.

## **BIR ABU DIYUK**

Bir Abu Diyuk lies 1 km southwest of Bir el-Arais, some 8 km southeast of el-Farama and some 11 km northeast of Tell el-Heir<sup>2974</sup>.

## **T267**

Site T267 lies approximately 6 km south of el-Farama. Five Umayyad fals or bronze coins (658-750 AD) were recovered during the Israeli survey, although no Islamic pottery was recorded<sup>2975</sup>.

## **EL-BAHRIA**

### **Topographical situation**

el-Bahria lies some 9 km southwest of Bir el-Arais and some 3 km northeast of Tell el-Heir<sup>2976</sup>.

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<sup>2971</sup> Cf. the map Bietak, 1975, pl. 4.

<sup>2972</sup> Clédat, 1913b, p. 116-117, n. 1.

<sup>2973</sup> Clédat, 1913b, p. 116-117, n. 1.

<sup>2974</sup> Cf. the map Bietak, 1975, pl. 4.

<sup>2975</sup> Cf. Cytryn-Silverman, 2001, p. 21 and p. 33, map 2.

<sup>2976</sup> Cf. Clédat, 1910a, map A.

### **Etymology**

The element el-Bahria occurs also in the toponym el-Wahat el-Bahria, 'The northern oasis', but a meaning as 'the northern one' does not seem appropriate here. Perhaps the name is related with the word 'baḥr', 'sea', or with one of its derivatives that indicates a water surface<sup>2977</sup>.

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<sup>2977</sup> Cf. Wehr, 1979, p. 54.

*The area southwest of Qatia*

**BIR NAGID**

The well Bir Nagid lies some 4 km southwest of Qatia<sup>2978</sup>.

**BIR ABU RAML**

The well Bir Abu Raml lies some 10 km southwest of Qatia and some 3 km east of Bir el-Dahaba<sup>2979</sup>.

**TELL EL-DAB'A**

**Topographical situation**

Tell el-Dab'a lies some 10 km southwest of Qatia and some 8 km south of Baluza<sup>2980</sup>.

**Archaeological finds**

During a survey in 1991 Caneva noticed in Tell el-Dab'a some Islamic green glazed pottery and 'millefiori' bracelets<sup>2981</sup>.

**Homonyms**

In the eastern Delta there are at least two other sites with the name Tell el-Dab'a<sup>2982</sup>.

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<sup>2978</sup> Cf. Baumgarten, 1990, map; Kümmerly, 1995.

<sup>2979</sup> Cf. Bietak, 1975, pl. 4.

<sup>2980</sup> de Jong, 2000, p. 654-655.

<sup>2981</sup> BIA, 1991, IV, p. 56.

<sup>2982</sup> Cf. Bietak, 1975, pl.; one Tell el-Dab'a lies between Tell Timai (Mendes) and San el-Hagar (Tanis); the other one is the well-known site of the ancient Auaris.

## **BIR EL-DAHABA**

Bir el-Dahaba lies some 3 km west of Bir Abu Raml and some 2 km east of Bir el-Nuss<sup>2983</sup>.

## **BIR EL-NUSS**

Bir el-Nuss lies some 2 km west of Bir el-Dahaba, some 15 km southwest of Qatia and some 5 km east of Bir Kasiba (II)<sup>2984</sup>. The well, which had salty water, is situated in the middle of the dunes of Debbet el-Ghurabiat, and there grew some fifty palm trees in 1903<sup>2985</sup>.

## **DJEBEL CHALRA**

Djebel Chalra lies some 700 m north of Bir el-Nuss and some 400 m southeast of el-Kheit Nagar<sup>2986</sup>.

## **EL-KHEIT NAGAR**

The palm grove el-Kheit Nagar lies some 1000 m northwest of Bir el-Nuss, some 400 m northwest of Djebel Chalra and some 300 m north of el-Rehemi<sup>2987</sup>.

## **EL-REHEMI**

The palm grove el-Rehemi lies some 800 m northwest of Bir el-Nuss, some 300 m south of el-Kheit Nagar and some 500 m east of el-Morzugat<sup>2988</sup>.

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<sup>2983</sup> Cf. Bietak, 1975, pl. 4.

<sup>2984</sup> Cf. Bietak, 1975, pl. 4. For Figueras, 2000, p. 13.168 Bir el-Nuss lies some 12 km west of Qatia.

<sup>2985</sup> Paoletti, 1903, p. 104. Clédat, 1910a, p. 210 mentions Bir el-Nuss as one of the major present-day wells; this description is incorrectly interpreted by Figueras, 1988, p. 55, who thinks that Clédat considered Bir el-Nuss also an ancient site.

<sup>2986</sup> Cf. the map on Clédat, 1913b, p. 117.

<sup>2987</sup> Cf. the map on Clédat, 1913b, p. 117.

<sup>2988</sup> Cf. the map on Clédat, 1913b, p. 117.

## **EL-MORZUGAT**

el-Morzugat lies some 1200 m northwest of Bir el-Nuss, some 500 m west of el-Rehemi and some 300 m north of el-Machar<sup>2989</sup>.

## **EL-MACHAR**

el-Machar lies some 1200 m west of Bir el-Nuss, some 300 m south of el-Morzugat and some 1000 m east of Djebel Marguni<sup>2990</sup>.

## **DJEBEL MARGUNI**

Djebel Marguni lies some 2200 m west of Bir el-Nuss and some 1000 m west of el-Machar<sup>2991</sup>.

## **EL-BEDA**

### **Topographical situation**

The palm grove el-Beda lies some 1500 m northwest of Bir el-Nuss and some 500 m southeast of el-Lagia. There is a sweet water well<sup>2992</sup>.

### **Archaeological finds**

In April 1910 some Beduin, planting a new palm grove in el-Beda, found five or six vases from the late Predynastic period about 1 m under the surface. In May 1911 Clédat made some excavations on the spot, but he only found some silex objects and therefore concluded that the vases must have been transported and for unknown

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<sup>2989</sup> Cf. the map on Clédat, 1913b, p. 117.

<sup>2990</sup> Cf. the map on Clédat, 1913b, p. 117.

<sup>2991</sup> Cf. the map on Clédat, 1913b, p. 117.

<sup>2992</sup> Cf. Clédat, 1913b, p. 116-117 and the map on Clédat, 1913b, p. 117. Clédat specifies that it takes six hours by camel to get from Mahammediya to el-Beda. According to Baines, 1981 [= 1980], p. 233 el-Beda lies at 30° 55' north latitude and 32° 35' eastern longitude.

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reasons left in el-Beda. For Oren they possibly belong to a tomb at a temporary campsite, but it was impossible to investigate the spot in 1972 because it was buried under a sand dune. Meurice, on the other hand, supposes that the vases came from a depot, not from a tomb or a settlement. One complete vase with a royal serech and three serechs of other fragmentary vases are preserved in the Ismailia Museum. In three instances two falcons are sitting opposite to each other on top of the nameless serech. To the right of the serech in each of the four cases a different symbol is engraved, possibly the name of the king, reflecting an older stage in the evolution of writing, or an indication that the vases belonged to the palace household<sup>2993</sup>.

The Israeli northern Sinai survey discovered parallel examples and contemporary pottery all over the northern Sinai<sup>2994</sup>.

### **Etymology**

According to Clédat the name el-Beda means 'new', 'a new thing'. It seems to be given to a newly planted palm grove, and is therefore not much older than 1910<sup>2995</sup>.

### **Homonyms**

The name el-Beda is also used for a cliff in the neighbourhood of Suez<sup>2996</sup>.

### **EL-LAGIA**

The palm grove el-Lagia lies some 500 m northwest of el-Beda and some 500 m east of el-Uash, on an important hill named Djebel el-Lagia<sup>2997</sup>.

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<sup>2993</sup> Clédat, 1913b, p. 115-121 with fig. 2-6 and pl. 13; Oren, 1973c, p. 200, n. 4; Kaiser, 1982, p. 263.265-269 with fig. 14, 1-3.12; Oren, 1989, p. 389.393-400 and the map p. 391 (sites H1, H2, H11); Caneva, 1992a, p. 34; Dils, 1993, p. 150.164-165.254 with fig. 9, 1; Valbelle, 1999a, p. 75; Meurice, 2004, p. 457-476, with fig.; van den Brink, 2004, p. 489.493.500.

<sup>2994</sup> Cf. Oren, 1973c, p. 198-205 and pl. 52-54; Oren, 1979b, p. 183-185 with fig. 37 and pl. 57; Oren, 1980b, p. 104-108 (Hebrew) with fig. 2; Kaiser, 1982, p. 263.266-267 with fig. 14, 5; Oren, 1989a, p. 389-405 with fig. 6, 1; Oren, 1993, p. 1387-1388 with fig; Abd el-Maksoud, 1998b, p. 26, n. 11 ('in the region of el-Arish'); Meurice, 2004, p. 463.466 and p. 474, fig.10; van den Brink, 2004, p. 498.500-501.503 with fig. 6 (referring to sites B50, A4, A25, A56 and C51).

<sup>2995</sup> Clédat, 1913b, p. 116; Meurice, 2004, p. 458 (and Clédat's handwritten card on p. 476, fig. 14).

<sup>2996</sup> Cf. Fontaine, 1955, p. 110, referring to a map of 1855-1856.

<sup>2997</sup> Cf. Clédat, 1913b, p. 116-117 and the map on Clédat, 1913b, p. 117.

## **EL-KHASANA**

The palm grove el-Khasana lies immediately northwest of el-Lagia, between el-Uash and el-Shohat<sup>2998</sup>. North of el-Khasana lies an Arab cemetery and more to the south lies the tomb of Sheikh Saba el-Fil<sup>2999</sup>.

## **EL-UASH**

The small palm grove el-Uash lies some 1000 m west of el-Beda, some 500 m west of el-Lagia and some 500 m south of el-Shohat<sup>3000</sup>.

## **EL-SHOHAT**

The small palm grove el-Shohat lies some 800 m north of el-Beda, some 500 m north of el-Lagia and some 800 m northeast of el-Uash<sup>3001</sup>. It seems not impossible that the place later became the small village Sho(h)att attested in 1993 south of Baluza<sup>3002</sup>.

## **KHEIT SALA**

Kheit Sala, a palm grove with a sweet water well, lies between the palm groves el-Uash and el-Shohat in the south and Bir el-Arais in the north<sup>3003</sup>.

## **DJEBEL LISSAN**

### **Topographical situation**

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<sup>2998</sup> Cf. Clédat, 1913b, p. 116-117, n. 1.

<sup>2999</sup> Cf. Meurice, 2004, p. 459.

<sup>3000</sup> Cf. Clédat, 1913b, p. 116-117, n. 1 and the map on Clédat, 1913b, p. 117.

<sup>3001</sup> Cf. Clédat, 1913b, p. 116-117, n. 1 and the map on Clédat, 1913b, p. 117.

<sup>3002</sup> Cf. Caneva, 1993, p. 38; Wagner, 1993a, p. 8-9; an identification of this village with the settlement el-Shoada west of Rumani seems less likely.

<sup>3003</sup> Cf. Clédat, 1913b, p. 116-117, n. 1.



## 8. *The inland road south of Sabkhat Bardawil*

Djebel Lissan lies between el-Beda and Bir el-Arais. In the immediate neighbourhood Clédat knows some ruins<sup>3004</sup>.

### **Archaeological finds**

Clédat mentions a site with a concentration of Roman pottery between Kheit Sala and el-Beda in the south and Bir el-Arais in the north<sup>3005</sup>. It is not impossible that he refers to the ruins near Djebel Lissan.

### **EL-DJESUHA**

el-Djesuha probably lies some 1000 m south of Bir el-Nuss<sup>3006</sup>.

### **TELL EL-NAGA**

The (prehistoric?) site of Tell el-Naga, which has apparently been surveyed in 1990-1991, lies south of Bir el-Nuss, some 20 km east of Tell Habwa and immediately north of Tell el-Nisseya<sup>3007</sup>.

### **TELL EL-NISSEYA**

#### **Topographical situation**

The site of Tell el-Nisseya lies south of Bir el-Nuss, some 20 km east of Tell Habwa and immediately south of Tell el-Naga and north of Abu Zedl<sup>3008</sup>.

#### **Archaeological finds**

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<sup>3004</sup> Cf. Clédat, 1910a, map A.

<sup>3005</sup> Cf. Clédat, 1913b, p. 116-117, n. 1.

<sup>3006</sup> Cf. the map Clédat, 1913b, p. 117. On the less detailed Clédat, 1910a, map A (apparently copied in Fontaine, 1947a, map) el-Djesuha is probably incorrectly located some 5 km southwest of Bir el-Nuss.

<sup>3007</sup> Cf. the map Marcolongo, 1992, p. 26-27.

<sup>3008</sup> Cf. the map Marcolongo, 1992, p. 26-27.

## 8. *The inland road south of Sabkhat Bardawil*

During a survey in 1991 Caneva noticed in Tell el-Nisseya some Neolithic (?) and late Islamic material, including garlic, pottery and pieces of ostrich eggs<sup>3009</sup>.

### **ABU ZEDL**

#### **Topographical situation**

The site of Abu Zedl lies south of Bir el-Nuss, some 20 km east of Tell Habwa and immediately south of Tell el-Nisseya and east of Abu Ghendi<sup>3010</sup>.

#### **Archaeological finds**

During a survey in 1991 Caneva noticed in Abu Zedl some Neolithic (?) silex together with different kinds of pottery that range from the predynastic to the late Islamic period<sup>3011</sup>.

### **ABU GHENDI**

The (prehistoric?) site of Abu Ghendi, which has apparently been surveyed in 1990-1991, lies south of Bir el-Nuss, some 20 km east of Tell Habwa and immediately west of Abu Zedl and east of Umm Negm<sup>3012</sup>.

### **UMM NEGM**

The (prehistoric?) site of Umm Negm, which has apparently been surveyed in 1990-1991, lies south of Bir el-Nuss, some 20 km east of Tell Habwa and immediately west of Abu Ghendi<sup>3013</sup>.

### **EL-GHURABI**

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<sup>3009</sup> BIA, 1991, IV, p. 56.

<sup>3010</sup> Cf. the map Marcolongo, 1992, p. 26-27.

<sup>3011</sup> BIA, 1991, IV, p. 56; Caneva, 1993, p. 40-41; Meurice, 2004, p. 465.

<sup>3012</sup> Cf. the map Marcolongo, 1992, p. 26-27.

<sup>3013</sup> Cf. the map Marcolongo, 1992, p. 26-27.

### **Topographical situation**

el-Ghurabi is a station on the road from Gaza to el-Salhiya. In the *Devise* (2) it is situated at 5 'liues' or about 20 km west of Qatia and at 4 'liues' or about 16 km east of el-Qusair, while the *Via* (3) probably more correctly gives the distances just the other way around and adds that the water there is rather salty. Abu'l-Mahasin (12) mentions the station Habwa between el-Ghurabi and el-Qusair, while Ibn el-Dji'an (14) only a few years later omits Habwa and el-Qusair and instead mentions Bir el-Duwaidar and el-Aqula.

el-Ghurabi, known from the early 13th century AD on, apparently lost every importance after the 15th century AD. A group of palm trees and three wells with the name (Bir) el-Ghurabi<sup>3014</sup> or Abu Gharab<sup>3015</sup> are still known in the 19th and 20th centuries. The place lies some 17 km west of Qatia, which well matches the position of el-Ghurabi in the *Via* (3); according to Daressy it is situated 11,5 km south of el-Farama and 5 km east of Bir el-Duwaidar. The place gave its name to a sandy region between Qatia and Bir el-Duwaidar, which is called Raml (sc. 'sand') el-Ghurabi (1, 8, 15)<sup>3016</sup>. Between Qatia and Bir el-Goga is also a high dune with the name Debbet el-Ghurabiat<sup>3017</sup>.

### **Archaeological finds**

Clédat noticed in el-Ghurabi an ancient brick well and Roman potsherd on the surface. In one report he explicitly states that he had seen no traces of any constructions, in another he mentions the remains of ancient walls; Clédat did not visit the site in the meantime, so I am inclined to suppose a mistake in the second report<sup>3018</sup>.

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<sup>3014</sup> Salvator, 1879, p. 9 in Hartmann, 1910, p. 691; Schefer, 1884, p. 95; Röhricht, 1898, p. 122, n. 11; Daressy, 1930, map.

<sup>3015</sup> Daressy, 1929, p. 300.322; Abel, 1938, II, p. 217 and the map 1939, p. 532.

<sup>3016</sup> Cf. also Schefer, 1884, p. 95; Kohler, 1904, p. 433, n. 6. For the element 'raml', cf. Wehr, 1979, p. 418, s.v. raml, 'sand'.

<sup>3017</sup> Cf. Paoletti, 1903, p. 103-104 and map; Clédat, 1910a, map A; Clédat, 1923b, p. 152; Daressy, 1929, p. 322 and 1931, p. 221, n. 1.

<sup>3018</sup> Clédat, 1923a, p. 63 and 1923b, p. 153.

## Identifications

Clédat suggests an identification of el-Ghurabi with the station T3 ʿ.t p3 m3i ('The dwelling of the lion') on the Karnak relief and the corresponding T3 ʿ.t n (Ssw) ʿnh wd3 snb ('The dwelling of Sese - life, prosperity, health!') in P.Anastasi, but this is not based on any evidence<sup>3019</sup>.

Clédat identifies el-Ghurabi with Umm el-Arab and el-Baqqara and looks for a location in Qasr Ghet<sup>3020</sup>. Since he identified el-Baqqara and Kasion, he later also made a link between el-Ghurabi and Kasion<sup>3021</sup>. There are no arguments for any of these suggestions.

## Analysis of the sources<sup>3022</sup>

In 1225 AD Yaqut situates the sandy region Raml el-Ghurabi between Qatia and el-Salhiya (1)<sup>3023</sup>.

In *La devise des chemins de Babiloine* (2), written ca. 1289-1291 AD, a military itinerary goes from Rafah to Cairo. It mentions the station el-Ghurabi at 5 'liues' (ca. 20 km) west of Qatia and at 4 'liues' (ca. 16 km) east of el-Qusair<sup>3024</sup>:

Item d'El Katye iusques El Gorabi liues .v.  
Item d'El Gorabi iusques au Cosair liues .iiiij.  
'Next from El Katye to El Gorabi 5 liues.  
Next from El Gorabi to Cosair 4 liues.'

A similar itinerary composed before 1289 AD is found in three different documents: the French *Via ad terram sanctam*, written ca. 1291-1293 (3); the Latin *Memoria terre sancte*, written ca. 1300-1321 (4); the Latin work of the Italian geographer Marino Sanudo (5), written in 1321 AD and based upon the *Memoria*. They also describe the road from Rafah to Cairo, each with some minor variants. They mention el-Ghurabi - along the usual northern road - at 4 'liues' (ca. 16 km) west

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<sup>3019</sup> Karnak, 1986, IV, pl. 6, 38 (D); P.Anastasi I, 27, 3 (2); cf. Clédat, 1923b, p. 154; Gauthier, 1925, I, p. 161.163; rejected by Daressy, 1929, p. 300, n. 4.

<sup>3020</sup> Clédat, 1910a, p. 237, n. 1. See s.v. el-Baqqara, s.v. Umm el-Arab and s.v. Qasr Ghet.

<sup>3021</sup> Clédat, 1920, p. 118 and 1923b, p. 161.189.

<sup>3022</sup> I have no information for the moment about the exact contents of Maqrizi, *History* (mentioned in Hartmann, 1916a, p. 487, n. 3) (9) and Suyuti (mentioned in Hartmann, 1916a, p. 487, n. 3) (13).

<sup>3023</sup> Yaqut, *Mu'qam al-buldan* (Wüstenfeld, 1868, III, p. 780; translated in Toussoun, 1926, I, p. 100); cf. Hartmann, 1916b, p. 375.

<sup>3024</sup> *La devise des chemins de Babiloine* (Michelant, 1882, p. 242).

## 8. The inland road south of Sabkhat Bardawil

of Qatia and 5 'liues' (ca. 20 km) east of el-Qusair. The road to el-Ghurabi is very sandy; there is plenty of water, but it is rather salty<sup>3025</sup>:

(3) Le chemin de bas, lequel est usé, si est de Catie au Horabi, et y a IIII liues, grant sablon, aigue assés, mais elle est poi salée.

'The lower road, which is the common one, goes from Catie to Horabi; 4 liues, a lot of sand, plenty of water, but somewhat salty.'

(4) caminus de basso est magis assuetus; est de Cathie Augorabi et sunt .IIII. leuce, littora habundantia, satis aque, sed salse parum.

'The lower road is the common one; it goes from Cathie to Gorabi; 4 liues, an abundance of sand, plenty of water, but somewhat salty.'

(5) via inferior magis est communis. ... via inferior: de Chatie usque Aguorabi leuce IV; satis de littore, parum de aqua et salsa.

'The lower road is the common one. ... The lower road: from Chatie to Aguorabi 4 liues; a lot of sand, little and salty water.'

el-Omari (6), who wrote ca. 1345 AD, lists the road stations between Cairo and Gaza, including Habwa, el-Ghurabi and Qatia. The same post stations on the same road are still mentioned in Qalqashandi junior (1464 AD) (10) and Abu'l-Mahasin (before 1470 AD) (12). The itinerary of Khalil el-Zahiri (before 1468 AD) (11) for the part west of el-Ghurabi is apparently not trustworthy<sup>3026</sup>.

Maqrizi quotes the 9th century itinerary of Ibn Khurdadbeh, but incorrectly mentions el-Gharib (el-Ghurabi) instead of el-Udhaib, which is also in the northwestern Sinai, but situated more to the north (7)<sup>3027</sup>. This switch might be due to a misleading 'actualisation' of the older itinerary, but the possibility cannot be excluded that the spelling [el-grib] in Maqrizi is a mere scribal mistake for the name el-Udhaib [el-ʿdib], which in one manuscript is also rendered as [el-ʿrib], while the 'g' and the 'c' are palaeographically easily confused. In another context Maqrizi also refers to the sandy region Raml el-Ghurabi, but further information is lacking (8)<sup>3028</sup>.

In 1477/1478 AD sultan Qaitbay went in one day from Qatia to Bir el-Duwaidar via el-Ghurabi (14)<sup>3029</sup>.

<sup>3025</sup> *Via ad terram sanctam* (Kohler, 1904, p. 433); *Memoria terre sancte* (Kohler, 1904, p. 455); Marino Sanudo, 3, 14, 12 (Röhrich, 1898, p. 121.122).

<sup>3026</sup> el-Omari (translated in Hartmann, 1916a, p. 487); cf. Dalman, 1924, p. 46. Qalqashandi junior (mentioned in Hartmann, 1910, p. 688.691). Khalil el-Zahiri (translated in Gaulmier, 1950, p. 201); cf. Daressy, 1929, p. 321. Abu'l-Mahasin, *Chronicle* (mentioned in Popper, 1955, I, p. 47); cf. Clédat, 1923b, p. 152-154.

<sup>3027</sup> Maqrizi (translated in Bouriant, 1900, p. 528); cf. de Goeje, 1889, p. 80 (Arabic), n. f; Clédat, 1920, p. 118, n. 1 and 1923b, p. 188-189. There is no reason to follow Clédat, 1923b, p. 161, n. 2 in his suggestion that this el-Ghurabi would be different from the one mentioned in the itinerary of Abu'l-Mahasin (12).

<sup>3028</sup> Maqrizi (mentioned in Hartmann, 1910, p. 691); Hartman refers to a passage in Maqrizi that has been translated in Bouriant, 1900, p. 523-525, and that describes the desert 'Sand (Raml) of the west', which also includes the northern Sinai, but the name Raml el-Ghurabi as such does not occur in Bouriant.

<sup>3029</sup> Ibn el-Dji'an (translated in Devonshire, 1922, p. 32); cf. Gildemeister, 1880, p. 249; Hartmann, 1910, p. 696.

## 8. *The inland road south of Sabkhat Bardawil*

el-Nabulusi (15) in the 17th century AD apparently no longer knows the village itself, but only mentions Raml el-Ghurabi, the sandy region between Qatia and Bir el-Duwaidar that was named after the village<sup>3030</sup>.

### **BIR KASIBA (II)**

#### **Topographical situation**

Bir Kasiba lies some 5 km west of Bir el-Nuss, some 20 km west of Qatia and some 3 km east of Bir el-Goga<sup>3031</sup>.

#### **Archaeological finds**

Clédat mentions ruins in Bir Kasiba, but he does not give any further details<sup>3032</sup>. During a survey in 1991 Caneva noticed some late Islamic pottery and snail's shells<sup>3033</sup>.

#### **Etymology**

According to Clédat, who apparently looks for a link with the verb 'kasaba', 'to profit', the name Kasiba indicates that the place was a former 'emporion'<sup>3034</sup>.

#### **Homonyms**

In the northern Sinai another Bir Kasiba is known between Bir el-Mazar and Bir el-Abd<sup>3035</sup>.

### **BIR EL-GOGA**

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<sup>3030</sup> el-Nabulusi (mentioned in Hartmann, 1910, p. 701); cf. von Kremer, 1850b, p. 824; Hartmann, 1916a, p. 487, n. 3.

<sup>3031</sup> Cf. Bietak, 1975, pl. 4.

<sup>3032</sup> Clédat, 1923a, p. 63.

<sup>3033</sup> BIA, 1991, IV, p. 56.

<sup>3034</sup> Clédat, 1923a, p. 63.

<sup>3035</sup> See s.v. Bir Kasiba (I).

## 8. *The inland road south of Sabkhat Bardawil*

The well Bir el-Goga lies some 3 km west of Bir Kasiba (II) and some 23 km west of Qatia, about 1 km east of Bir el-Duwaidar<sup>3036</sup> and some 14 km east of Tell Habwa<sup>3037</sup>.

### **BIR EL-DUWAIDAR**

#### **Topographical situation**

The well Bir el-Duwaidar, attested in the sources from the 15th century AD on, lies about 1 km west of Bir el-Goga, some 24 km west of Qatia, some 3 km east of Bir el-Djilbana<sup>3038</sup> and 21 km northeast of el-Qantara<sup>3039</sup>. The road station had a mosque and a serai (2). In the early 20th century there was a large palm grove<sup>3040</sup>.

#### **Archaeological finds**

Clédat mentions an ancient military post in Bir el-Duwaidar<sup>3041</sup>, probably referring to an Arab construction.

On the sites T200, T205 and T210 near present-day Bir el-Duwaidar the Israeli survey recorded 14th-16th century pottery. One of these sites is probably identical with the Islamic road station<sup>3042</sup>.

#### **Identifications**

Daressy supposes without any decisive arguments that the station T3 't p3 m3i ('The dwelling of the lion') on the Karnak relief and the corresponding T3 't n

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<sup>3036</sup> Cf. Bietak, 1975, pl. 4.

<sup>3037</sup> Paoletti, 1903, p. 104 gives a distance of 10 miles (ca. 16 km), but on the map Bietak, 1975, pl. 4 the distance is rather some 14 km.

<sup>3038</sup> Cf. Bietak, 1975, pl. 4. The distance of 'half a day' between Bir el-Duwaidar and Qatia, as stated by Sicard, 1982 [= 1722], III, p. 113, is apparently underestimated.

<sup>3039</sup> Daressy, 1929, p. 300; Fontaine, 1955, p. 26, n. 1 (21 km east (sic) of el-Qantara).

<sup>3040</sup> Clédat, 1923a, p. 74.

<sup>3041</sup> Clédat, 1923a, p. 63.

<sup>3042</sup> Cf. Cytryn-Silverman, 2001, p. 24.

## 8. *The inland road south of Sabkhat Bardawil*

(Ssw) ʿnh wḏ3 snb ('The dwelling of Sese - life, prosperity, health!') in P.Anastasi was situated in Bir el-Duwaidar<sup>3043</sup>.

Sicard locates both Pentaschoinon and the unknown city of Pempte in Bir el-Duwaidar<sup>3044</sup>, but neither identification can be confirmed.

### **Etymology**

It is clear from the account of Ibn el-Dji'an (2) that the well is named after the Great-Dawadar who owned the place about 1477/1478 AD<sup>3045</sup>.

### **Analysis of the sources**

Abu'l-Mahasin (1), who wrote before 1470 AD, apparently locates Bir el-Duwaidar in the neighbourhood of the road station Habwa<sup>3046</sup>.

In 1477/1478 AD sultan Qaitbay (2) went from Qatia via el-Ghurabi to a road station in the neighbourhood of a property of His Excellency the Great-Dawadar. There was a fountain and a well and the Great-Dawadar had recently made some improvements to the place, adding a mosque and a serai. Here the sultan met some Beduin representatives and the same day he continued to el-Aqula<sup>3047</sup>.

In 1481 AD rabbi Meshullam of Volterra (3) went from Egypt to Palestine, passing by Bireru Diveidar (Bir el-Duwaidar), where he had to pay customs, and Qatia<sup>3048</sup>.

In 1482 AD Joos van Ghistele (4) travelled from Gaza to Cairo via Cattia (Qatia), Bierdodare (Bir el-Duwaidar), Acole (el-Aqula), Haouwe (Habwa) and Salahija (el-Salhiya). There used to be some buildings in Bierdodare, but in his time only a mosque with a minaret was still standing. van Ghistele is amazed about the many date palms growing in the sandy dunes<sup>3049</sup>.

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<sup>3043</sup> Karnak, 1986, IV, pl. 6, 38 (D); P.Anastasi I, 27, 3 (2); cf. Daressy, 1929, p. 300.

<sup>3044</sup> Sicard, 1982 [= 1722], III, p. 113. See s.v. Pentaschoinon.

<sup>3045</sup> Cf. Hartmann, 1910, p. 696.

<sup>3046</sup> Abu'l-Mahasin, *Chronicle* (mentioned in Popper, 1955, I, p. 47).

<sup>3047</sup> Ibn el-Dji'an (translated in Devonshire, 1922, p. 32); cf. Hartmann, 1910, p. 696.

<sup>3048</sup> Meshullam of Volterra (mentioned in Cytryn-Silverman, 2001, p. 14.23); cf. Veronese, 1989, p. 60-63 (non vidi).

<sup>3049</sup> *Tvoyage van Mher Joos van Ghistele* (Gaspar, 1998, p. 170); cf. Demaeckere, 1936, p. 79.



## 8. The inland road south of Sabkhat Bardawil

In 1565 AD Johann Helffrich (5) mentions the road station Bierdodare (Bir el-Duwaidar) between Qatia and el-Salhiya<sup>3050</sup>.

Francesco Quaresmi (6) travelled ca. 1616-1626 AD from 'Cathia' (Qatia) to Salai (el-Salhiya), passing by a nameless well with salty and bitter water. The well lies at 30 miles (ca. 45 km) from Qatia and at 50 miles (ca. 75 km) from el-Salhiya, but these figures are definitely too high. It is not unlikely that this nameless place was actually Bir el-Duwaidar<sup>3051</sup>.

Cathia relicta, versus Cairum gressus dirigentes peregrini, septem sequentia inveniunt loca. Primus est, puteus aquae salitae et amarae, qui triginta milliariibus distat a Cathia; ab isto, absolutis quinquaginta aliis milliariibus, secundus invenitur, qui 'Salai' civitas appellatur ...

'Having left Cathia, the pilgrims that are heading for Cairo, find the seven following places. The first is a well with salty and bitter water at 30 miles from Cathia; next, after another fifty miles, the second place is found, which is called the city of Salai ...'

The same stations Qatia, Bir el-Duwaidar and el-Salhiya are listed again in 1655 AD by Hadji Khalifa (7)<sup>3052</sup>.

For Ferdinand von Troilo (8), referring to a trip in 1661 AD, 'Pozzo Devedar' (Bir el-Duwaidar) lies fifteen hours through the desert west of Qatia and ten hours east of el-Salhiya<sup>3053</sup>. Because the distance Qatia - Bir el-Duwaidar is only some 24 km, it is probably the sandy desert of Raml el-Ghurabi that slowed down the average speed to less than 2 km an hour instead of the usual 4 km. The track Bir el-Duwaidar - el-Salhiya is some 50 km<sup>3054</sup>, which gives the high average of some 5 km an hour. The use of the Italian word 'pozzo', 'well', instead of the Arab 'bir' is an indication that Troilo copied an Italian source.

Zehenden Tages Calhia 9 Stunden.

Eilfften Tages durch die Wüsten nach Pozzo Devedar 15 Stunden.

Zwölfften Tages nach Salathia 10 Stunden.

About 1670 AD el-Khiyari (9) incorrectly lists the station el-Qurain between Bir el-Duwaidar and el-Salhiya<sup>3055</sup>.

About 1697 AD el-Nabulusi (10) went from Qatia through the Raml el-Ghurabi to Bir el-Duwaidar and continued to el-Lawawin and el-Salhiya<sup>3056</sup>.

## BIR EL-DJILBANA

<sup>3050</sup> Johann Helffrich (mentioned in Hartmann, 1910, p. 697).

<sup>3051</sup> Francesco Quaresmi (De Sandoli, 1989, p. 432).

<sup>3052</sup> Hadji Khalifa (mentioned in Hartmann, 1910, p. 698).

<sup>3053</sup> Ferdinand von Troilo (mentioned in Hartmann, 1910, p. 699).

<sup>3054</sup> Cf. Daressy, 1930, pl.

<sup>3055</sup> el-Khiyari (mentioned in Hartmann, 1910, p. 701); cf. Hartmann, 1910, p. 702.

<sup>3056</sup> el-Nabulusi (mentioned in Hartmann, 1910, p. 701); cf. von Kremer, 1850b, p. 824.

## 8. *The inland road south of Sabkhat Bardawil*

The well Bir el-Djilbana lies some 3 km west of Bir el-Duwaidar, some 27 km west of Qatia, some 10 km northeast of Tell Habwa, some 20 km northeast of el-Qantara and some 5 km south of Tell el-Heir<sup>3057</sup>. It is a station on the former railway line between Egypt and Israel<sup>3058</sup>. In the early 20th century Bir el-Djilbana is the centre of the Beduin Masa'id tribe, which lives east of el-Qantara between (the otherwise unknown) Zeheg and Bir el-Nuss<sup>3059</sup>.

### **EL-AQULA**

#### **Topographical situation**

In the 14th century AD el-Omari (1) considered el-Aqula an old station that apparently existed already before the late 13th century AD, but the place is not mentioned in earlier sources. It is situated in the neighbourhood of el-Qusair - although 'neighbourhood' can be a broad notion for Arab authors -, not very far from an arched bridge under which the water of the Nile runs during the flooding. Because the settlement of el-Qusair had probably been destroyed shortly before 1345 AD, the main road during the next century did apparently go (again?) via el-Aqula. Thus in 15th century sources el-Aqula is known as a road station west of Bir el-Duwaidar (3, 4) and east of Habwa (4, cf. 2) and el-Salhiya, which can be reached from el-Aqula in less than six hours (3). The place apparently marked the end of the sandy desert (4).

#### **Identifications**

Because el-Aqula is located near an arched bridge ('Kantarat el-Gisir') (1, cf. 4), Hartmann suggests an identification with el-Qantara<sup>3060</sup>. This place was indeed called Gisir el-Qanatir ('Crossing of the bridges') about 1800 AD and the distance with regard to el-Salhiya might match. However, no Islamic settlement has archaeologically been recorded near el-Qantara and bridges were probably quite

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<sup>3057</sup> Cf. Bietak, 1975, pl. 4 and de Jong, 2000, p. 654-655.

<sup>3058</sup> Kümmerly, 1995.

<sup>3059</sup> Clédat, 1923a, p. 151. For the Masa'id tribe, cf. Bailey, 1985, p. 27.49; de Jong, 2000, p. 11-12 and the map p. 656.

<sup>3060</sup> Hartmann, 1916a, p. 511; followed by Dalman, 1924, p. 45. See s.v. el-Qantara.

## 8. *The inland road south of Sabkhat Bardawil*

common in that swampy area in the intervening 450 years, while the account of van Ghistele (4) definitely places el-Aqula northeast of Habwa and the bridges southwest of the latter place.

### **Analysis of the sources**

el-Omari (1) describing about 1345 AD the station of el-Qusair adds that it is situated in the neighbourhood of the old station known under the name of el-Aqula. That place lies near the arched bridge under which the superfluous water of the Nile runs during its flooding, when it spreads across the sandy area<sup>3061</sup>.

In the 15th century AD Maqrizi (2) locates the ruins of the city of Hatein between Habwa and el-Aqula, on the territory of the latter<sup>3062</sup>. Maqrizi's information about Hatein, however, is very obscure and contradictory.

In 1477/1478 AD sultan Qaitbay (3) went from Bir el-Duwaidar to el-Aqula, where he arrived after sunset. This place is apparently situated less than 6 hours from el-Salhiya, and the sultan continued by night to the latter town, where he arrived before dawn<sup>3063</sup>.

In 1482 AD Joos van Ghistele (4) travelled from Gaza to Cairo via Cattia (Qatia), Bierdodare (Bir el-Duwaidar), Acole (el-Aqula), Haouwe (Habwa) and Salahija (el-Salhiya). In Acole van Ghistele noticed 'a beautiful summer house standing alone in the large wilderness'; it has some 'beautiful, large, precious, white pillars' and 'in the middle' apparently stands a kind of chapel with iron bars. In the neighbourhood of Acole the ground became hard and flat, thistles started growing, and one apparently left the sandy desert. The road continued to Haouwe, 'shortly after', and passed by 'two beautiful precious bridges' along the embankment of a canal, which only contains water during the flooding of the Nile<sup>3064</sup>.

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<sup>3061</sup> el-Omari (translated in Hartmann, 1916a, p. 486-487); cf. Hartmann, 1910, p. 691.696; Hartmann, 1916b, p. 376; Dalman, 1924, p. 45; Popper, 1955, I, p. 47 (?).

<sup>3062</sup> Maqrizi (translated in Bouriant, 1900, p. 672). See s.v. Hittin / Hatein.

<sup>3063</sup> Ibn el-Dji'an (translated in Devonshire, 1922, p. 32); cf. Gildemeister, 1880, p. 249; Hartmann, 1910, p. 691.696.

<sup>3064</sup> *Tvoyage van Mher Joos van Ghistele* (Gaspar, 1998, p. 171); cf. Demaeckere, 1936, p. 79.

*Sites in the area west of Qatia without a specific location*

During an archaeological survey in 1991, in an area of some 20 x 20 km extending south of the line Qatia - Baluza, Caneva discovered sixteen sites<sup>3065</sup>, of which only four can tentatively be identified with sites known from other maps or reports. The twelve remaining sites will be listed here in the order as they appear in the BIA report.

**UMM EL-GHAZLAN**

Umm el-Ghazlan lies in the northwestern Sinai south of the line Qatia - Baluza, but further information is lacking. The sites Umm el-Ghazlan and Abu el-Ghazlan, 'Mother' and 'Father' el-Ghazlan, are probably situated in each other's neighbourhood.

During a survey in 1991 Caneva noticed in Umm el-Ghazlan some late Islamic pottery and some silex<sup>3066</sup>.

**ABU SHAMLA**

Abu Shamla lies in the northwestern Sinai south of the line Qatia - Baluza, but further information is lacking.

During a survey in 1991 Caneva noticed in Abu Shamla very thick pottery, garlic, pieces of ostrich's eggs and the remains of a vase in hard stone. The site is probably Islamic<sup>3067</sup>.

**KATHIB UASET**

Kathib Uaset lies in the northwestern Sinai south of the line Qatia - Baluza, but further information is lacking.

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<sup>3065</sup> Cf. BIA, 1991, IV, p. 56-57; Caneva, 1992a, p. 33-38 and the indication of the area on the map p. 35; Valbelle, 1992, p. 19.

<sup>3066</sup> BIA, 1991, IV, p. 56.

<sup>3067</sup> BIA, 1991, IV, p. 56.

## 8. *The inland road south of Sabkhat Bardawil*

During a survey in 1991 Caneva noticed in Kathib Uaset late Islamic pottery<sup>3068</sup>.

### **ABU EL-GHAZLAN**

Abu el-Ghazlan lies in the northwestern Sinai south of the line Qatia - Baluza, but further information is lacking. The sites Umm el-Ghazlan and Abu el-Ghazlan, 'Mother' and 'Father' el-Ghazlan, are probably situated in each other's neighbourhood.

During a survey in 1991 Caneva noticed in Abu el-Ghazlan some late Islamic pottery and pieces of ostrich's eggs, but apparently also material from the Roman and Byzantine period<sup>3069</sup>.

### **UMM EL-HERA**

Umm el-Hera lies in the northwestern Sinai south of the line Qatia - Baluza, but further information is lacking.

During a survey in 1991 Caneva noticed in Umm el-Hera some late Islamic pottery and garlic<sup>3070</sup>.

### **ABU RATI**

Abu Rati lies in the northwestern Sinai south of the line Qatia - Baluza, but further information is lacking.

During a survey in 1991 Caneva noticed in Abu Rati some late Islamic pottery<sup>3071</sup>.

### **KATHIB EL-AURA**

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<sup>3068</sup> BIA, 1991, IV, p. 56.

<sup>3069</sup> BIA, 1991, IV, p. 56.

<sup>3070</sup> BIA, 1991, IV, p. 56.

<sup>3071</sup> BIA, 1991, IV, p. 56.

## 8. *The inland road south of Sabkhat Bardawil*

Kathib el-Aura lies in the northwestern Sinai south of the line Qatia - Baluza, but further information is lacking.

During a survey in 1991 Caneva noticed in Kathib el-Aura several installations with silex and some late Islamic pottery<sup>3072</sup>.

### **GO EL-AHMAR**

#### **Topographical situation**

Go el-Ahmar lies in the northwestern Sinai south of the line Qatia - Baluza, but further information is lacking.

During a survey in 1991 Caneva noticed in Go el-Ahmar Islamic green glazed pottery<sup>3073</sup>.

#### **Identifications**

The toponym Tell el-Ahmar is used for three different sites near el-Qantara in the northwestern Sinai<sup>3074</sup>. One of them, surveyed in 1990 and excavated in 1992, also yielded Islamic glazed pottery, but there are no further arguments to identify the Go el-Ahmar of Caneva with that Tell el-Ahmar.

### **GANUB ZA'U**

Ganub Za'u lies in the northwestern Sinai south of the line Qatia - Baluza, but further information is lacking.

During a survey in 1991 Caneva noticed in Ganub Za'u late Islamic pottery and silex<sup>3075</sup>.

### **DJEBEL EL-EKHZ**

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<sup>3072</sup> BIA, 1991, IV, p. 56.

<sup>3073</sup> BIA, 1991, IV, p. 56.

<sup>3074</sup> See s.v. Tell el-Ahmar.

<sup>3075</sup> BIA, 1991, IV, p. 56.

## 8. *The inland road south of Sabkhat Bardawil*

Djebel el-Ekhz lies in the northwestern Sinai south of the line Qatia - Baluza, but further information is lacking.

During a survey in 1991 Caneva noticed in Djebel el-Ekhz Byzantine pottery<sup>3076</sup>.

### **MARDEIT**

Mardeit lies in the northwestern Sinai south of the line Qatia - Baluza, but further information is lacking.

During a survey in 1991 Caneva noticed in Mardeit late Islamic pottery<sup>3077</sup>.

### **EL-CANA**

el-Cana lies in the northwestern Sinai south of the line Qatia - Baluza, but further information is lacking.

During a survey in 1991 Caneva noticed in el-Cana Islamic material<sup>3078</sup>.

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<sup>3076</sup> BIA, 1991, IV, p. 56.

<sup>3077</sup> BIA, 1991, IV, p. 56.

<sup>3078</sup> BIA, 1991, IV, p. 56.

## 9. The northwestern Sinai

### *Summary*

*Late and Graeco-Roman periods*

**Migdol / Magdolos - Tcharou - Sele**

*Arab and modern periods*

*The area of the eastern laguna*

**T4 - Tell Kedwa (T21) - Tell el-Heir - Tell Ebeda (T116) - Tell el-Ghaba - Tell el-Mufariq**

*The area of the western laguna*

**Bir Hedeua - Djebel el-Adam - T78 - Habwa and Tell Habwa - Tell el-Semut - Tell el-Ahmar - Bir el-Burdj - Tell el-Burdj - Habwa I-V**

*The area of lake Ballah*

**el-Qusair - el-Lawawin - Tell Abu Seifa - el-Qantara**

*The area south of lake Ballah*

**Hittin / Hatein - Bir Abu Helefy - Bir Chenan - Bir Abu Reida - Ras el-Moyeh - Bir Abu el-Uruq - Bir el-Hoda**

### *Summary*

The evolution of the human occupation of the northwestern Sinai is to a great extent determined by changing geological conditions. From about 6000 BC on the coastline ran along a sandy ridge that started in the neighbourhood of Mahammediya, passed by Tell Kedwa (site T21), Tell el-Ghaba, Tell el-Mufariq and Habwa I, and crossed the present-day Suez Canal some 6 km north of el-Qantara. There is still a lot of discussion about the course of the Pelousiac Nile branch, but at some point in its history it probably crossed the sandy ridge immediately north of Habwa I. Southeast of the ridge two lagunas extend and more to the south lies lake Ballah. So a marshy area was created that could only be crossed along the ridge or through a strip of land going between the lagunas and lake Ballah and reaching the present-day Suez Canal at el-Qantara. To the east of this area starts the sandy desert that covers the northern Sinai and goes all the way to el-Arish. The plain to the west has probably only been created in the course of the 1st millennium BC and became the northeastern corner of the Egyptian Delta.

The oldest settlement in the area is Habwa I, where some Middle Kingdom material has been found, but which was certainly occupied in the early Second Intermediate period and became a fortified city in the New Kingdom (400 x 350 m). It was situated on the sandy ridge, possibly on the western shore of the Pelousiac branch, near its mouth into the Mediterranean, in a position quite similar to that of the



## 9. The northwestern Sinai

later Pelousion. The place is probably identical with the Tcharou from the older Egyptian sources. The fortress itself was apparently abandoned in the late New Kingdom, but its immediate neighbourhood was still occupied during the 1st millennium BC. Some 6,5 km more to the northeast on the same ridge lies Tell el-Ghaba, which yielded New Kingdom material, and some 12 km north of Habwa I site T4 was another important settlement from that period. Some 5 km to the east of Habwa I the large site of Tell el-Burdj yielded a New Kingdom fortress (ca. 75 x 75 m) and some blocks from at least two temples. The road from Egypt to Syria as it is known from the Karnak relief and P.Anastasi I, most likely passed by Habwa I and Tell el-Burdj and apparently continued into the direction of Rumani, another important New Kingdom site in the northern Sinai desert.

The name Tcharou disappears from the sources and - except for a vague allusion to some Migdol or 'Tower' at the Egyptian eastern border in 671 BC - it is only in the second half of the 7th century BC, under Psammetichos I, that a new military organisation at the Egyptian northeastern border is referred to. This king had a garrison in Daphnai, some 14 km west of el-Qantara, and located his Ionian and Carian mercenaries in an area (in the neighbourhood of Daphnai?) that was called Stratopeda, 'Camps'. Here the mercenaries were living, probably as a kind of klerouchoi, till king Amasis had them removed to Memphis. About 601/600 BC (another?) Migdol or Magdolos was attacked by the Babylonians and this is most likely the place where the Jews mentioned by the prophet Ieremias were living in the early 6th century BC. In Tell Kedwa (T21) a large fortress (200 x 200 m) was found, which was occupied by Greek and Jewish mercenaries from the last third of the 7th century BC on. This place, on the northwestern shore of the eastern laguna, apparently guarded the road to the Delta along the sandy ridge. It was destroyed in the second half of the 6th century BC (during the invasion of Kambyes in 525 BC?), rebuilt, but abandoned before the 5th century BC. Most likely this is the place of the Saite Magdolos. The nearby Tell el-Heir contained another fortress (124 x 124 m), which was certainly in use in the 5th century BC. In the early fourth century BC it was rebuilt and enlarged (140 x 140 m) and it stayed in use till the second half of the 4th century BC, while a town grew round it. The place, on the northeastern shore of the eastern laguna, apparently guarded the road going south, east of the lagunas, and is most likely identical with the Magdolos mentioned in sources from the Persian till the Byzantine period. Further along that road, in Tell Abu Seifa, another fortress (200

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x 125 m) was built probably in the Ptolemaic period, and also here a town came into being. Just as Tell el-Heir apparently took over the name Magdolos from Tell Kedwa (T21), Tell Abu Seifa seems to be named after the New Kingdom Tcharou, which was situated in Habwa I in the immediate neighbourhood. Some monuments from the latter site were probably transported to Tell Abu Seifa, which together with the name, rendered in Greek as Sele, also took over the religious traditions related with that place.

Probably in the 5th, but certainly in the 4th century BC Pelousion (Tell el-Farama), at the mouth of the then Pelousiac branch, became the major stronghold of the region, and Magdolos and Tcharou were certainly only secondary fortresses along the northeastern border. Little is known about the roles of Tell el-Ghaba (Saite material), Habwa I (5th century BC material) and Habwa II (4th century BC material). In the Ptolemaic period Magdolos and Tcharou were small towns, and Tell el-Mufariq, at the western side of the eastern lagoon, was a seasonal fishing settlement in use about 220-175 BC.

In the Graeco-Roman and Byzantine periods Pelousion had become a huge metropolis. In the second half of the 3rd century AD a Roman fortress (90 x 90 m) was built on top of the older fortresses in Tell el-Heir. Also in Tell Abu Seifa a new fortress (160 x 100 m) was built, possibly in 288 AD. According to the *Itinerarium provinciarum Antonini Augusti* a road left from Pelousion, heading south, towards Magdolos, Sele and further on to Klyisma, possibly along the eastern side of the lagoons and lake Ballah.

Little is known about the area in the early Arab period and most of the sites seem to have been abandoned. At the latest in the 13th century AD the former Pelousiac plain was covered by the 'lake of Tennis', which corresponds with the present-day lake Menzala, while the city of el-Farama, the former Pelousion, was sacked by the crusaders and gradually lost every importance. From the late 13th century AD on the caravan route across the northern Sinai came from el-Ghurabi, went along the southeastern shore of the lake and passed the station of el-Qusair, which was probably situated in the neighbourhood of the present-day el-Qantara. In the 14th-15th century AD the road station Habwa is known between el-Ghurabi and el-Qusair.

## *Late and Graeco-Roman periods*

### **MIGDOL - MAGDOLOS**

Modern name: Tell Kedwa (T21) (Saite period)

Modern name: Tell el-Heir (Persian and Graeco-Roman period)

#### **Topographical situation**

The name Migdol or Magdolos, 'Tower', is often linked with the eastern Delta in New Kingdom and Late and Graeco-Roman period sources. All these toponyms have been identified with each other because of the onomastic identity, but this is clearly unacceptable. With regard to the New Kingdom Migdols nothing is known about the Magdali mentioned in an Amarna tablet (1), or about the 'Migdol of Ramses (III)-prince-of-Iwnw' in the war against the people of the north (4). The position of Migdol of the exodus is controversial (5-6). The small fortress 'The migdol of Sethos I' along the road from Tcharou to Syria is probably situated in the northern Sinai (2), while 'The migdol of Sethos II' has to be looked for in or south of the Wadi Tumilat (3). Without new evidence, therefore, it seems more appropriate to consider these Migdols as five different places, although it cannot be ruled out that some of them are indeed identical.

With regard to the Migdols mentioned in sources from the Assyrian till the Byzantine period, the topographical information is so scarce or vague and the general description as a fortress at the Egyptian northeastern border is so similar that indeed only one place might be referred to. The name 'Migdol', however, is so widely used for military settlements that this homogeneity is perhaps only apparent. The only concrete information comes from the *Itinerarium Antonini* (56), where Magdolos is a road station some 18 km south of Pelousion and some 18 km north of Sele. A Migdol existed in 671 BC during the Assyrian invasion (23), was attacked by the Babylonians in 601/600 BC (28) and served as a military garrison that included Jewish soldiers - with their families - in the early 6th (24) and the early 5th century BC (50). For the

following centuries every certain information about any Migdol or Magdolos is lacking, till the mention of the road station about 300 AD (56)<sup>3079</sup>.

### Administrative situation

All the Migdols mentioned - except maybe the Migdol of Ramses III (4) - are situated at the Egyptian northeastern border, but further information about their administrative situation is lacking.

About 500 BC Magdolos was apparently considered an Egyptian city (πόλις Αιγύπτου) (49; cf. 55, 58). According to an Aramaic letter of the early 5th century BC (50) some officials in Migdol were involved in the payment of the soldiers, but nothing further is known about them<sup>3080</sup>.

No bishop of Magdolos is mentioned<sup>3081</sup>, and in the ecclesiastical organisation the place probably depended from Pelousion.

### Identifications

On the *Itinerarium Antonini* (56) Magdolos lies some 18 km south of Pelousion and some 18 km north of Sele, but at least one of the figures is not to be trusted since the actual distance between Tell el-Farama (Pelousion) and Tell Abu Seifa (Sele) is not 36, but some 28 km.

Since Ritt (1869) and Chester (1880) Magdolos has generally been located in Tell el-Heir. This place indeed lies some 18 km north of Tell Abu Seifa, which corresponds with the distance given in the *Itinerarium Antonini* (56)<sup>3082</sup>. The oldest archaeological remains at the site, however, belong to a Persian fortress founded in the late 6th or the early 5th century BC, which implies that the earlier Migdols have to be looked for elsewhere<sup>3083</sup>.

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<sup>3079</sup> Butler, 1978 [= 1902], p. 214 mentions Migdol as one of the places Amr Ibn el-As passed by in 640 AD, but this is not confirmed by any source. Cf. also the itinerary of Schlumberger, 1906, p. 78 for a Crusader's expedition in 1167 AD against Egypt (rejected by Clédat, 1924, p. 40).

<sup>3080</sup> For these officials, see the bibliography given § Analysis of the sources.

<sup>3081</sup> On the map TAVO B VI 15, 1983 Magdolos (near Klysmā) is indicated as a bishopric, perhaps referring to the story in the *Apophthegmata Patrum*, discussed § Analysis of the sources.

<sup>3082</sup> See s.v. Tell el-Heir.

<sup>3083</sup> Against Valbelle, 1993c, p. 22.

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In the immediate neighbourhood of Tell el-Heir lies the site of Tell Kedwa (T21), which contains a fortress that was occupied in the late 7th and the 6th century BC. Oren suggests a plausible identification with the Migdol of 601/600 BC (28) and of the early 6th century BC (24-27), although this hypothesis can only be confirmed by new epigraphic evidence<sup>3084</sup>. Since Tell Kedwa lost its importance near the late 6th century BC, it is not impossible that the Magdolos mentioned about 500 BC refers to this site, but more likely both Hekataios (49) and the Aramaic papyrus (50) refer to the fortress of Tell el-Heir.

Also the Assyrian Magdali (23) has been located by Oren in Tell Kedwa (T21), but because this site was apparently not occupied in 671 BC, an identification is impossible<sup>3085</sup>. There is, however, for the moment no known archaeological site in the region of the northeastern Delta that was occupied in the Assyrian period.

On the *Itinerarium Antonini* (56) Magdolos lies some 18 km south of Pelousion. The only site at about that distance south of Tell el-Farama is Tell Habwa and the ruins identified with Magdolos in the *Description* probably refer to this place<sup>3086</sup>. Excavations in Tell Habwa, however, only yielded an Islamic settlement.

Because of the parallel expressions 'from Elephantine to "Samout"' in an inscription of Amenhotep IV and 'from Migdol to Syene' in *Ezechiel* (26-27), Brugsch identifies "Samout" and Migdol / Magdolos and locates the place in Tell el-Semut, which has often been identified with Tell Habwa<sup>3087</sup>. Nothing of this can be accepted. Instead of "Samout" the toponym has to be read as "Sm3-bḥdt", i.e. Dios Polis Inferior of the Graeco-Roman period, and every link with Migdol or Tell el-Semut disappears.

Also Tell Abu Seifa has been identified with Migdol / Magdolos, but the site lies far too south to come into account<sup>3088</sup>.

Hazlitt identifies Magdolos with Ras el-Moyeh, the southern end of lake Ballah, but also this place is too far south<sup>3089</sup>.

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<sup>3084</sup> See s.v. Tell Kedwa (T21).

<sup>3085</sup> Oren, 1984a, p. 34; cf. von Bissing, 1912, p. 149. See s.v. Tell Kedwa (T21).

<sup>3086</sup> *Description*, 1809, État moderne, I, pl. 10; *Description*, 1830, XVIII, p. 174 and map 1.2. See s.v. Tell Habwa.

<sup>3087</sup> See s.v. Tell el-Semut.

<sup>3088</sup> Prisse, 1847, p. 4 in Brugsch, 1879, p. 301-302 and Griffith, 1888, p. 103, n. 3; Langlois, 1852, p. 40-41 in Carrez-Maratray, 1999b, p. 268; cf. Chester, 1880, p. 147. See s.v. Tell Abu Seifa.

<sup>3089</sup> Hazlitt, 1851, p. 212. See s.v. Ras el-Moyeh.

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Trumbull locates two of the New Kingdom Migdols at Bir Makdal, a place situated in the Sinai desert some 37 km northeast of Ismailia and somewhat east of lake Ballah, known from the late 18th century AD on<sup>3090</sup>. The possibility cannot be excluded that the name actually contains the word migdol, but there are no further arguments for Trumbull's identification.

Some scholars locate Magdolos west or northwest of Pelousion<sup>3091</sup>. This position in the northeastern Delta is perhaps meant to reflect the fact that Migdol is considered Egypt's northern border place, but it does not correspond with any existing site.

Garofalo identifies Magdolos with a present-day site named 'Meschtôl'<sup>3092</sup>, but it is not clear to which place he refers.

The so-called 'High tower' of Medinet Habu, built by Ramses III, has sometimes been considered a Syrian migdol, but Haeny stresses that all its features have an Egyptian origin and that there are no reasons to see the construction as a migdol<sup>3093</sup>.

Without any real arguments Clédat identifies some of the Migdols mentioned in New Kingdom sources with Tcharou<sup>3094</sup>.

For Kraeling the Migdol of the prophets is 'doubtless' the Semitic name of Pelousion, while Sin is supposed to be the Egyptian name of Migdol, but he does not give any argument for this very doubtful suggestion<sup>3095</sup>.

Kosack identifies the Migdol of the exodus with Tell Defenna 'because the location very well matches', which is an absurd argument given the huge controversy about the itinerary of the exodus<sup>3096</sup>.

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<sup>3090</sup> Trumbull, 1895, p. 363, n. 2. For Bir Makdal, cf. Description, 1809, *État moderne*, I, pl. 10; Ebers, 1881, p. 523; Wiedemann, 1890, p. 566; Maspero, 1912, p. 28.31.

<sup>3091</sup> Grelot, 1972, p. 39 places the Migdol of P.Aram. Padova 1 (without any arguments) at the Pelousiac branch, but on his map p. 34 he locates Migdol northwest of Pelousion, at the shore of lake Menzala; Malamat, 1973, p. 276 locates the Migdol of the prophets west of Pelousion.

<sup>3092</sup> Garofalo, 1902, p. 5.

<sup>3093</sup> Kees, Hermann, s.v. Magdolon, Magdolos, in RE, XIV 1, 1928, col. 299; Hölscher, 1951, p. 10, n. 30; Montet, 1957, p. 218; Giveon, Raphael, s.v. Migdol, in LÄ, IV, 1982, col. 124; Valbelle, 1990a, p. 102; rejected by Haeny, 1967, p. 74 and Stadelmann, Rainer, s. v. Medinet Habu, in LÄ, III, 1980, col. 1262. Cf. also Cazelles, 1987 [= 1955], p. 213-214 and Giveon for a discussion of other constructions in Egypt and Palestine that might be qualified as migdols.

<sup>3094</sup> Clédat, 1921, p. 189-190.194; cf. also Goedicke in Oren, 1981b, p. 50-51 and the map p. 47; Hoffmeier, 1997, p. 211. See s.v. Tcharou.

<sup>3095</sup> Kraeling, 1953, p. 21.118; cf. Bresciani, 1960, p. 15, n. 2. See s.v. Sin.

<sup>3096</sup> Kosack, 1971, p. 63. Tell Defenne has also been identified with Baal-Saphon or with Etham, two other toponyms from the exodus story (cf. Fontaine, 1956b, map 2 and the table p. 169).

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According to Quaegebeur the four Migdols mentioned in the demotic topographical onomasticon (51-54) remind the Stratopeda of Herodotos<sup>3097</sup>, but even if those Migdols were to be located at the eastern border - which they are not -, their position in the northern Sinai is not compatible with the location of the Stratopeda at the Pelousiac branch.

The *Notitia dignitatum* mentions the elsewhere unattested place Tacasiria in the provincia Augustamnica. Carrez-Maratray tentatively investigates a possible link with Magdolos, but he rightly concludes that there are no conclusive arguments for such an identification<sup>3098</sup>.

### Orthographic variants

The Greek grammarians Herodianos (55), Stephanos (57) and Theognostos (58) and the lexicon of Eusebios (9) consider the toponym Magdolos masculine singular, and this form is possibly referred to in the other Greek texts in which the gender is not clear<sup>3099</sup>. Hieronymus, however, and other Latin authors referring to the biblical Migdol also use the form Magdolum, neuter singular. The form Magdola, neuter plural, in Origenes (33) is possibly influenced by other places in Egypt with that same name. Greek and Latin authors referring to the biblical Migdol also use the form 'Magdal-', which seems to be derived from the unvocalized Hebrew 'mgdl'.

Instead of the name Magdolum Hieronymus (40-45) also uses the literal translation 'turre', 'tower'.

### Etymology

The Semitic noun 'mgdl' ('migdol'), which means 'tower', has been rendered in Egyptian as 'mkr', in Greek as μάγδωλος, in Coptic as μεϥτολ, μεβτολ or μιχτολ<sup>3100</sup>, and perhaps as 'mashtul' in Arabic<sup>3101</sup>.

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<sup>3097</sup> Quaegebeur, 1990, p. 264, n. 129. See s.v. Stratopeda.

<sup>3098</sup> Carrez-Maratray, 2000a, p. 49-51.

<sup>3099</sup> For the accentuation of Magdolos, see § Analysis of the sources.

<sup>3100</sup> Cf. Brugsch, 1879, p. 646; Delitzsch, 1881, p. 313; Ebers, 1881, p. 523 (unnecessarily in doubt about a Semitic or Egyptian origin); Griffith, 1888, p. 103; Burchardt, 1910, II, p. 28; Budge, 1920, p. 998; Gardiner, 1920, p. 107-108; Hommel, 1926, p. 961; Wb, 1927, II, p. 164; Crum, 1939, p. 214; Gardiner, 1947, II, p. 214\*, no. 450; Caminos, 1954, p. 258; Erichsen, 1954, p. 183; Lipiński, 1972, p. 237, n. 11; Chuvin, 1986, p. 49; Lipiński, Édouard, s.v. Migdol, in Bogaert, 1987, p. 829; Carrez-

## Homonyms

The name Migdol is widespread. For Palestine and Syria the name occurs in the Amarna tablets, in Egyptian texts, in the bible and in a lot of other sources<sup>3102</sup>.

The toponyms Magdola (with the ethnic Magdolios) and Magdolon<sup>3103</sup>, often followed by a specification, occur very frequently in the Arsinoites, Herakleopolites, Hermopolites, Mendesios and Oxyrynchites from the Ptolemaic till the Byzantine period<sup>3104</sup>.

The noun 'magdolos' (μάγδωλος or also μαγδῶλ) is commonly used to indicate a watchtower<sup>3105</sup>, and in this sense it appears in compounds as pyrgomagdol ('watch-tower'), magdolophylax ('guard of the watch-tower') and magdolophylakia ('manning of the watch-tower')<sup>3106</sup>.

## Analysis of the sources

*Migdols of the New Kingdom*

*Migdol - Magdolos of the exodus*

*Migdol of the Assyrian period*

*Migdol - Magdolos of the Saite period*

*Migdol - Magdolos of the Persian and Graeco-Roman periods*

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Maratray, 2000a, p. 12. The toponyms Magdolon / Magdola elsewhere in Egypt are rendered as ΜΙ(Κ)ΤΑΛΛ, ΜΙΚΤΩΛ, ΜΙΓΧΩΛ, ΜΙΓΧΟΛ, ΜΙΓΔΩΛ or ΜΙΧΟΛ (cf. Roquet, 1973, p. 9; Drew-Bear, 1979, p. 158; Timm, 1988, IV, p. 1644-1646.1671-1673).

<sup>3101</sup> Cf. Ebers, 1881, p. 523-524; Amélineau, 1893, p. 254-255, discussing three Arab toponyms containing the element 'mashtul' [mštul]; Crum, 1939, p. 214; Roquet, 1973, p. 9. The Arabic 'mashtul', however, might also be linked with the root 'šatala', 'to plant' (cf. already Ebers; see Wehr, 1979, p. 531), while the Arab name of a Magdola in the Hermopolites is not 'Mashtul', but [mqṭul] or [mqṭun] (cf. Timm, 1988, IV, p. 1671-1673) and a Palestine Migdol became [mğdl] (cf. Gauthier, 1926, III, p. 21).

<sup>3102</sup> Cf. Burchardt, 1910, II, p. 28; Knudtzon, 1915, p. 1283.1577-1578; Gardiner, 1920, p. 109; Gauthier, 1926, III, p. 21; RE, XIV 1, 1928, col. 297-298.300; Hölscher, Gustav, s.v. Migdal 1-15, in RE, XV 2, 1932, col. 1549-1550; Abel, 1938, II, p. 386-387; Schaller, Berndt, s.v. Magdala, in KP, III, 1969, col. 872-873; Odelain, 1978, p. 238, s.v. Magdala, and p. 257, s.v. Migdal; Ahituv, 1984, p. 141-142; Röllig, W, s.v. Magdala, in RdA, VII, 3-4, 1988, p. 200. The most famous inhabitant of Magdala in Palestine is no doubt Maria Magdalena.

<sup>3103</sup> For none of the three toponyms 'Magdolon' (neuter singular) mentioned in Calderini the nominative is attested, so the possibility cannot be ruled out that also here the correct form is Magdolos (male singular).

<sup>3104</sup> Cf. Kees, Hermann, s.v. Magdolon, Magdolos, in RE, XIV 1, 1928, col. 300; Drew-Bear, 1979, p. 157-163; Gomaà, Farouk and Helck, Wolfgang, s.v. Magdola 1 and 4, in LÄ, III, 1980, col. 1134-1135; Thissen, P.Köln ägypt., 1980, p. 62-63 (with demotic toponyms); Calderini, 1982, III 3, p. 218-221; 1988, Suppl. 1, p. 190; 1996, Suppl. 2, p. 114-115; Timm, 1988, IV, p. 1526-1527.1644-1646.1671-1673. See also the toponym Dimagdolia in the Arsinoites (Calderini, 1996, Suppl. II, p.43).

<sup>3105</sup> Cf. Grenfell, P.Fayum, 1900, p. 154. See also Hesychios, M 12, s.v. μάγδωλος (Latte, 1966, II, p. 619): μάγδωλος· οἰκοδόμημά τι ('magdolos: some building').

<sup>3106</sup> Cf. Kiessling, Emil, s.v. Magdolophylax, in RE, XIV 1, 1928, col. 300.



*Migdols of the New Kingdom*

In an Amarna tablet (1) from the time of Amenhotep IV / Echnaton (1353-1335 BC) the king of Akko Zatatna, at that moment under Egyptian suzerainty, writes to the Egyptian pharaoh about a matter of authority with regard to the extradition of a fugitive. He adds: 'Behold, Akko is as Magdali (<sup>alu</sup>Ma-ag-da-líki) in Egypt'<sup>3107</sup>. The point of comparison, however, is not clear. Helck apparently looks for this Magdali in Syria or Palestine, but the text explicitly locates Magdali in Egypt; further information about the place is missing, so every identification with the contemporary Migdols in Egypt is hazardous.

The battle scenes of Sethos I in Karnak describe the Shasu campaign the king undertook in his first year (ca. 1306 BC). Below the scenes ten fortresses and their accompanying wells are depicted, apparently listed in a geographical order between the fortress of Tcharou at the Egyptian border on the one hand and probably the city of Raphia in Canaan at the other. 'The migdol of Men-ma'at-Ra' (P3 mktr n (Mn-m3<sup>c</sup>.t-R<sup>c</sup>)) (2) is the second fortress east of Tcharou, situated immediately next to 'The well of Hpn' (T3 hnm.t Hpn)<sup>3108</sup>. The fortress, which is named after king Sethos I, is rather small in comparison with the other forts on the relief; the semicircular well seems to be partially walled. Because the other toponyms on the relief that contain Sethos' throne name Men-ma'at-Ra, all seem to be added in a later redaction, the same is possibly also true for this name, which might imply that the place was too insignificant to be named already the first time.

In the description of the same road in P.Anastasi I the name of the well Hpn is apparently rendered as H̄tyn<sup>3109</sup>; the difference is probably due to a scribal mistake, but it is not clear which of the two forms represents the correct spelling. Because the scribe of P.Anastasi mockingly asks an ignorant colleague, where the fortress of the

<sup>3107</sup> EA 234, 28-30; cf. Knudtzon, 1915, p. 776-779.1302-1303; Mercer, 1939, p. 628-629; Albright in Pritchard, 1969, p. 484-485; Moran, 1987, p. 460-461. For Magdali, cf. also Knudtzon, 1915, p. 1283.1301.1578; Cazelles, 1987 [= 1955], p. 210-211; Helck, Wolfgang, s.v. Magdola 5, in LÄ, III, 1980, col. 1135; Oren, 1984a, p. 31; Moran, 1987, p. 599.

<sup>3108</sup> Karnak, 1986, IV, p. 21-22 (E-F). See s.v. Itineraries.

<sup>3109</sup> P.Anastasi I, 27, 4 (4-5). See s.v. Itineraries.

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well Ḥtyn is situated, there was probably something remarkable about the disposition or the nature of the 'Migdol', but more details are lacking.

On the track between Tcharou and Raphia, which covers some 200 km, the relief shows ten stations; this gives an average distance of about 18 km, which could easily be done in a day's march. 'The migdol of Men-ma'at-Ra' is so possibly situated some 36 km east of Tcharou (Habwa I). This might match the position of Rumani, some 32 km from Habwa I, where indeed a New Kingdom site has been found<sup>3110</sup>. Also the New Kingdom sites at Tell Ebeda (T116), T78 and Tell el-Burdj have tentatively been identified with this 'migdol', but they seem to be situated too close to Habwa I to come into account<sup>3111</sup>. It has to be stressed, however, that nothing is known for certain about the absolute distance between any of the fortresses on the relief. Some scholars locate the Migdol in Qatia, which also lies at the acceptable distance of some 40 km from Habwa I<sup>3112</sup>. No major New Kingdom site has been found in that area<sup>3113</sup> but its traces could easily have vanished in the Qatia oasis, which from the 11th century AD on was a major Arab centre. Gardiner tentatively locates the New Kingdom Migdol in Tell el-Heir, but this place, which lies only some 13 km northeast of Habwa I, did not yield any archaeological remains that antedate the Persian period<sup>3114</sup>. Clédat at first looked for the Migdol between Ostrakine and Raphia and suggested a possible identification with el-Arish<sup>3115</sup>, but later on he changed his mind and proposed a location in Qatia.

In a fragmentary passage of the so-called Turin tax lists, compiled in the reign of Ramses II (1290-1224 BC), the name 'mig[dol]' (p3 mk(?)[tr]) has been restored and identified with the migdol on the Karnak relief (2), since the whole passage has been considered a reference to the fortresses and wells along the northern Sinai road<sup>3116</sup>. The reading of the name migdol, however, is not certain at all, while the toponym Khasana (in l. 6) is not known elsewhere, and I see no positive arguments that the passage actually refers to the northern Sinai.

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<sup>3110</sup> See s.v. Rumani.

<sup>3111</sup> See s.v. Tell Ebeda (T116), s.v. T78 and s.v. Tell el-Burdj.

<sup>3112</sup> Cf. Clédat, 1923b, p. 149.154-155; Gauthier, 1928, IV, p. 202; Daressy, 1931a, p. 216, n. 2; Abel, 1940, p. 61; Alt, 1943, p. 65; Scharff, 1943, p. 151-152. See s.v. Qatia.

<sup>3113</sup> Cf. the map in Oren, 1987a, p. 79.

<sup>3114</sup> Cf. Gardiner, 1920, p. 107-110.113. See s.v. Tell el-Heir.

<sup>3115</sup> Clédat, 1923a, p. 69-70. See s.v. el-Arish and s.v. Qatia.

<sup>3116</sup> Kitchen, 1976, II, p. 826, col. 8, l. x+1-6 and 1999, Notes II, p. 530; cf. Morris, 2005, p. 427-430 (with a translation).

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'The administrator [of] the well [ ]  
The administrator of the mig[dol(?) ] (p3 rdw n p3 mk(?)[tr ]  
The administrator of the well ([... ]  
The administrator of the [wel]l ([... ]  
The administrator of the well (Ramesses beloved-of-Amon) l. p. h., which is in the poo[l](?) [ ] (nty m t3 br[ ])  
The administrator of the stronghold (nḥtw) of (Ramesses beloved-of-Amon) l. p. h., which is in the Khasana (nty m t3 Ḥ3s3n3) [ ]'

In a schoolboy's model-letter in P.Anastasi V (3) it is described how in the reign of Sethos II (1214-1204 BC) K3-kmt-wr, the military commander of Tchekou (a region in the eastern Wadi Tumilat), went after two runaway slaves<sup>3117</sup>:

'The troop commander of Tchekou K3-kmt-wr to the troop commander Iny and the troop commander B3k-n-Pth ... (19, 6) ... Further, I set forth from the Broad Halls of the Palace (l. p. h.) [n3 wshwt pr-nsw] in the third month of Shemou, day 9, at the time of evening in the pursuit of these 2 servants. When I reached the keep of Tchekou [p3 sgr n Ṭkw] in the third month of Shemou, day 10, they told me: 'They say in the south [hr rsy] that they passed in the third month of Shemou, day 10.' (20, 1) When I reached the fortress [p3 ḥtm] they told me: 'The groom is come from the desert [hr ḥ3s.t] reporting they passed the north fortification of the Migdol of Sethos-Mer-n-Ptah (l. p. h.) beloved like Seth. [t3 inb.t mḥ.t n p3 mktr n (Sty-mry-n-Pth) 'nḥ wḏ3 snb {mi} mry mi Sty]'. When my letter reaches you, write to me concerning all that has come to pass with them. Who found their track? Which watch found their track? Who are the men in pursuit of them? Write to me concerning all that has come to pass with them. How many people have you sent in pursuit of them? [Fare you] well.'

The geographical information is scanty: K3-kmt-wr probably went from Piramesse in one day to the Wadi Tumilat, where he reached the 'sgr' of the Tchekou region, received a message that the slaves were spotted in the south, and from there continued to a nameless ḥtm-fortress. There he received another message that the slaves had passed the north fortification of the Migdol of Sethos II<sup>3118</sup>, which is apparently separated from the ḥtm-fortress by a desert. This Migdol must have been quite a large stronghold, having at least a north fortification, which is distinguished from the fortress itself. The Migdol of Sethos II has been identified by Gardiner with the Migdol of Sethos I on the Karnak relief (2), north of the Wadi Tumilat; the southern route has been discarded as a false rumour or one supposes a long detour; the nameless fortress has been identified by Caminos with the fortress of Tcharou<sup>3119</sup>. There are, however, no sufficient reasons to suppose that the story about the southern

<sup>3117</sup> P.Anastasi V, 19, 2-20, 6 (Gardiner, 1937, p. 66-67; Caminos, 1954, p. 254-258, with a translation); cf. Clédat, 1921, p. 189-190; Gardiner, 1920, p. 109-110; Hoffmeier, 1997, p. 179-181; Morris, 2005, p. 420-424 (with a translation).

<sup>3118</sup> Because of the date of the letter there is no reason to follow Gardiner, 1920, p. 109, Clédat, 1924, p. 49, Gauthier, 1926, III, p. 22-23, Hommel, 1926, p. 962 and Cazelles, 1987 [= 1955], p. 191 that here the (homonymous) throne name of Sethos I is meant.

<sup>3119</sup> Caminos, 1954, p. 257; followed by Helck, 1971, p. 310, n. 6 and Morris, 2005, p. 422-423. Morris supposes that the two troop commanders to whom the letter was sent, were stationed at the Migdol of Sethos-Mer-n-Ptah, but this is not stated explicitly in the text and one does not expect two troop commanders in a minor fortress.

route is false; also the fact that the slaves passed a north fortification favours the idea that they came from the north, which locates Migdol south of the Wadi Tumilat<sup>3120</sup>. In this case the nameless fortress cannot be identified with Tcharou, and most likely it is another fort in the Tchekou region<sup>3121</sup>.

In the great Medinet Habu inscription of the year eight of Ramses III (ca. 1186 BC) (4) the king fights the people of the north. Ramses III apparently had its basis in 'Migdol of Ramses-prince-of-Iwnw' (Mgdr n (R' mssw-ḥq3-Iwnw)); from there he left to congratulate the victors<sup>3122</sup>. Nothing is known with certainty about the position of this Migdol, which has been located in the northeastern Delta or in Syria<sup>3123</sup>, or without any arguments identified with the Egyptian New Kingdom Migdols<sup>3124</sup>.

*Migdol - Magdolos of the exodus*

In Etham Yahweh imposes upon Moses the itinerary of the exodus (5)<sup>3125</sup>:

'Tell the Israelites to turn back and pitch camp in front of Pi-Hahiroth, between Migdol and the sea, facing Baal-Saphon. You must pitch your camp opposite this place, beside the sea'.  
The same places are mentioned in *Numeri* (6)<sup>3126</sup>:

<sup>3120</sup> Cf. Mallon, 1921, p. 169-171 in Gauthier, 1926, III, p. 23 and Cazelles, 1987 [= 1955], p. 212, who links the place with the Migdol of the exodus and suggests a location in Gebel Abu Hassa between the Bitter Lakes and Suez. Also this identification is not based upon any evidence.

<sup>3121</sup> Morris, 2005, p. 422-423 stresses that the expression of ḥtm-fortress in the eastern border region usually refers to Tcharou, but also Tchekou is labelled as such, and perhaps the text refers to a distinction between the sgr and the ḥtm of Tchekou.

<sup>3122</sup> Medinet Habu relief of Ramses III (Nelson, 1930, pl. 42); cf. Kitchen, 1983, V, p. 33, 16 and the translation of Edgerton, 1936, p. 43 (pl. 42, 21). For the historical background of this battle, cf. Vandersleyen, 1995, p. 597-601.

<sup>3123</sup> Cf. the different suggestions discussed in Müller, 1893, p. 177-178; cf. Gauthier, 1926, III, p. 22; Grandet, 1994, II, p. 50.310.314; Morris, 2005, p. 715-719 and p. 720, fig. 42.

<sup>3124</sup> Cf. Gardiner, 1920, p. 110; Helck, 1971, p. 311 and s.v. Magdola 2, in LÄ, III, 1980, col. 1134. See the critical remarks of Edgerton, 1936, p. 43, n. 21a.

<sup>3125</sup> *Exodus*, 14, 2; cf. Septuaginta, *Exodus*, 14, 2 (Wevers, 1991, p. 187) (7): λάλησον τοῖς υἱοῖς Ἰσραὴλ, καὶ ἀποστρέψαντες στρατοπεδευσάτωσαν ἀπέναντι τῆς ἐπαύλεως ἀνά μέσον Μαγδώλου καὶ ἀνά μέσον τῆς θαλάσσης ἐξ ἐναντίας Βεελσεφῶν, ἐνώπιον αὐτῶν στρατοπεδεύσεις ἐπὶ τῆς θαλάσσης ('Tell the sons of Israel to turn back and pitch camp in front of the dwelling, between Magdolos and the sea, facing Beelsepphon; you must pitch your camp opposite these places, beside the sea' - with a remarkable translation for the name Pi-Hahiroth as 'epaulis'); Hieronymus, *Vulgata, Exodus*, 14, 2 (Weber, 1975, p. 95) (15): loquere filiis Israhel reversi castrametentur e regione Phiahiroth quae est inter Magdolum et mare contra Beelsephon in conspectu eius castra ponetis super mare ('Tell the sons of Israel to turn back and pitch camp from the region of Phiahiroth, between Magdolos and the sea, facing Beelsephon; you must pitch your camp near this place, beside the sea').

<sup>3126</sup> *Numeri*, 33, 7-8; cf. Septuaginta, *Numeri*, 33, 7-8 (Wevers, 1982, p. 385) (8): καὶ ἀπήραν ἐκ Βουθᾶν καὶ παρενέβαλον ἐπὶ στόμα Ἐιρώθ, ὃ ἐστὶν ἀπέναντι Βεελσεφῶν, καὶ παρενέβαλον ἀπέναντι Μαγδώλου. καὶ ἀπήραν ἀπέναντι Ἐιρώθ καὶ διέβησαν μέσον τῆς θαλάσσης εἰς τὴν ἔρημον ('They left Bouthan, turned back to the mouth of Heiroth, opposite Beelsepphon, and

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'They left Etham, turned back to Pi-Hahiroth, opposite Baal-Saphon, and encamped before Migdol. They left Pi-Hahiroth, crossed the sea into the desert, ...'

It is not likely that the original itinerary of the exodus went through the northern Sinai<sup>3127</sup>. The possibility cannot be ruled out, however, that the geographical data mentioned in the bible in fact reflect a 6th-5th centuries BC reconstruction of the geographical framework. In that case the name Magdolos might refer to the city of Magdolos that is known in other sources of the Saite and Persian periods<sup>3128</sup>, but this is a mere hypothesis.

Later authors commonly identify the sea crossed by the Israelites as the Red Sea, and the stations of the exodus were located in that neighbourhood<sup>3129</sup>. So Pseudo-Ambrosius (17) considers Pi-Hahiroth a suburb of Magdolos near the Red Sea<sup>3130</sup>:

IVa mansio, Os Eroth. quarta mansio dicitur Os Eroth. unde sequitur: 'et profecti ex Ethan, castrametati sunt ad Os Eroth, quae est contra Beelsephon, et contra Magdalon'. Os Eroth alia translatione dicitur Phiairoth; vicus est et suburbium Magdali, versus mare Rubrum, ut habetur in libro Exodi. ...

'4th station, Os Eroth. The fourth station is called Os Eroth. From there it continues: 'and they left from Ethan, camped at Os Eroth, which lies opposite Beelsephon, and opposite Magdalon.' In another translation Os Eroth is called Phiairoth; it is a village and a suburb of Magdalon, near the Red Sea, as it is told in the book of Exodus. ...'

In the 4th-6th centuries AD pilgrims travelling to and from mount Sinai could actually visit the different stations of the exodus. About 384 AD Egeria (11) went from Klysmā at the Red Sea - probably through the Wadi Tumilat - to the city of Arabia in the Delta and explicitly wanted to see the stations of the exodus. Along the

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encamped before Magdolos. They left opposite Heiroth and crossed the sea into the desert'); Hieronymus, *Vulgata, Numeri*, 33, 7-8 (Weber, 1975, p. 228) (16): inde egressi venerunt contra Phiahiroth quae respicit Beelsephon et castrametati sunt ante Magdolum. profectique de Phiahiroth transierunt per medium mare in solitudinem ('From there they came opposite Phiahiroth, opposite Baal-Saphon, and encamped before Magdolos. They left Phiahiroth and crossed the sea into the desert'); cf. the paraphrase of Athanasios, *Synopsis scripturae sacrae*, 4, 8 (Migne, PG 28, 1857, col. 305) (10): ἀπὸ Βουθάν εἰς Βεελσεφῶν, ἀπέναντι Μαγδῶλου· ἀπὸ Βεελσεφῶν διέβησαν μέσον τῆς θαλάσσης ('From Bouthan to Beelsepphon, opposite Magdolos; from Beelsepphon they crossed the sea').

<sup>3127</sup> Cf. the views of Bietak, Manfred, s.v. Schilfmeer, in LÄ, 1984, V, col. 629-634 and Hoffmeier, 1997. See s.v. Kasion.

<sup>3128</sup> Cf. Lipiński, Édouard, s.v. Migdol, in Bogaert, 1987, p. 829.

<sup>3129</sup> For Magdolos near the Red Sea, cf. Eusebios, *Onomasticon*, s.v. Μαγδῶλος (Klostermann, 1904, p. 124) (9); translated by Hieronymus, *Liber de situ et nominibus locorum Hebraicorum*, s.v. Magdolos (Klostermann, 1904, p. 125) (12) (both texts are fully quoted further on); Hieronymus map (Miller, 1895, III, p. 14.17) (20): Magdalus; Hereford map (Miller, 1896, IV, p. 32.39 and map) (21): Magdalus civitas ('the city Magdalus'); Ebstorf map (Miller, 1896, V, p. 53 and map) (22): Magdalum ci(vitas) ('the city Magdalus').

<sup>3130</sup> Pseudo-Ambrosius, *De XLII mansionibus filiorum Israel tractatus*, 4 (Migne, PL 17, 1845, col. 16).

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desert track she visited Magdolos, which was a small Roman fortress with an officer and some soldiers<sup>3131</sup>:

sane licet terra Gesse iam nosse, id est qua primitus ad Egyptum fueram, tamen ut perviderem omnia loca, quae filii Israhel exeuntes de Ramesse tetigerant euntes, donec pervenirent usque ad mare Rubrum, qui locus nunc de castro, qui ibi est, appellatur Clesma. ... sunt ergo a Clesma, id est a mare Rubro, usque ad Arabiam civitatem mansiones quattuor per heremo sic tamen per heremum, ut cata mansiones monasteria sint cum militibus et prepositis, qui nos deducebant semper de castro ad castrum. in eo ergo itinere sancti, qui nobiscum erant, hoc est clerici vel monachi, ostendebant nobis singula loca, quae semper ego iuxta Scripturas requirebam; nam alia in sinistro, alia in dextro de itinere nobis erant, alia etiam longius de via, alia in proximo. nam michi credat volo affectio vestra, quantum tamen pervidere potui, filios Israhel sic ambulasse, ut quantum irent dextra, tantum reverterentur sinistra, quantum denuo in ante ibant, tantum denuo retro revertentur: et sic fecerunt ipsum iter, donec pervenirent ad mare Rubrum. nam et Epauleum ostensum est nobis, de contra tamen, et Magdalum fuimus. nam castrum est ibi nunc habens prepositum cum milite, qui ibi nunc presidet pro disciplina Romana. nam et nos iuxta consuetudinem deduxerunt inde usque ad aliud castrum, et loco Belsefon ostensum est nobis, immo in eo loco fuimus.

'I already knew the land of Gesse from my first visit to Egypt. But I wanted to see all the places where the children of Israel had been on their way from Ramesse to the Red Sea. They arrived there at the place now known (from the fort there) as Clesma. ... From Clesma and the Red Sea it is four desert staging posts before you reach the city of Arabia, and the desert is of a kind where they have to have quarters at each staging post for soldiers and their officers, who escorted us from one fort to the next. All the way I kept asking to see the different places mentioned in the bible, and they were all pointed out to me by the holy men, the clergy and monks with us. Some of the places were to the right and others to the left of our route, some a long way off and others close by. So, as far as I can see, loving sisters, you must take it that the children of Israel zigzagged their way to the Red Sea, first right, then back left again, now forwards, and now back. Epauleum was pointed out facing us, and we went to Magdalum, today a fort with an officer and men representing the Roman authorities. As usual they escorted us to the next fort. Belsefon was pointed out to us - in fact we went there.'

About 570 AD Antoninus Placentinus (18) locates the stations Sukkoth and Magdolos in the western Sinai peninsula, between mount Sinai and Pharan on the one hand and Surandala and Klyisma on the other<sup>3132</sup>:

exinde venimus in Sochot et exinde descendimus in Magdalum ...

'From there we came to Sochot and thence to Magdalus ...'

This location is not compatible with Egeria's itinerary and the editor suggests transferring the phrase to a place further in the account, on the track between Klyisma and Memphis. Wilkinson, however, rightly points out that the biblical names had no fixed location and that different guides probably pointed them out in different places.

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<sup>3131</sup> *Itinerarium Egeriae*, 7, 1-4 (Franceschini, 1965, p. 46-47); cf. the translation of Wilkinson, 1971, p. 100-101. Maspero, 1912, p. 28.31 without any real arguments supposes that this Magdolos was situated near Bir Makdal (cf. Lesquier, 1918, p. 401, n. 2).

<sup>3132</sup> *Itinerarium Antonini Placentini*, recensio A, 41 (Geyer, 1965, p. 150-151); cf. recensio B, 41 (Geyer, 1965, p. 172-173) (19): *de quibus locis venimus Magdalo et Soccoth* ('from these places we came to Magdolus and Soccoth'); cf. the translation of Wilkinson, 1977, p. 88 and p. 87, map 27. Maspero, 1912, p. 137 without any real arguments locates Surandala and Magdolos in the province of Augustamnica. For Surandala and Pharan, cf. Gatier, 1989, p. 500-504.



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gewaltige Sandmassen. 4 Doppelstunden (ca. 43 km) Landes mit Alaunstein ... ging ich. 4 Doppelstunden (ca. 43 km) Landes, eine Strecke von 2 Tagen, zertrat ich immer wieder Schlangen mit zwei Köpfen, ... deren Anblick/Berührung/Atem Tod bedeutet, und zog weiter. 4 Doppelstunden (ca. 43 km) Landes, eine Strecke von [2 Tagen, mit] ... gelben [Schlangen] die mit Flügeln schwirrten(?). 4 Doppelstunden (ca. 43 km) Landes, eine Strecke von 2 Tagen, ... 15 Doppelstunden (ca. 160 km) Landes, eine Strecke von 8 Tagen, zog ich ... Da kam mir der grosse Herr Marduk zu Hilfe ... er belebte meine Truppen neu. 20 Tage, 7 ...<sup>3140</sup> an der Grenze von Mušur. ...<sup>3141</sup> *nubattu* ... von Migdol bis zu ... ein Mass von 40 Doppelstunden (ca. 427 km) zog ich ... Jenes Gebiet wie ...-Stein ... wie die Spitze eines Pfeiles ... Dunkles und helles Blut ... ein frecher(?) Feind ... nach Ishupri ...'

The events on the march are not clear, except for the fact that the army left from Raphia and finally arrived in Egypt. It apparently passed the border of Egypt, the city of Magdali / Migdol and the city of Ishhupri, but it is impossible to locate these places, except for a rough situation somewhere on the eastern border of Egypt between the Mediterranean and the Red Sea. To cross the desert Assarhaddon summoned camels carrying water bags from all the kings of Arabia<sup>3142</sup>. According to the figures in the text (l. 3-10) it was a march of 61 'double-hours' (or a distance of about 652 km) in possibly 31 days<sup>3143</sup> before even reaching the Egyptian border. While this daily average of about 2 'double-hours' or 21 km is an acceptable figure, the distance of 652 km is more than three times the 200 km from Raphia to el-Qantara at the northern edge of the eastern Delta. One should almost have to imagine a route from Raphia via Eilat to the most southern point of the Sinai peninsula and then via the coast of the Red Sea to Suez to cover the whole distance. Also the description of the route leaves us in a maze: fifteen days through huge sandy hills, two days through an alunite landscape, two days passing mortal two-headed snakes, another two days

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<sup>3140</sup> The translation of Luckenbill, 1927, II, p. 220, § 558 'for 27 days', followed by von Zeissl, 1944, p. 37 and Fecht, 1958, p. 118-119, is not to be accepted. Oppenheim in Pritchard, 1969 [= 1950], p. 292 restored 'for 20 days and 7 [double miles]', which would give a not very likely daily average of less than 4 km.

<sup>3141</sup> The name Magan is sometimes read in this passage. Borger, 1956, p. 113, l. 11 gives 'ša mî-šir mât Mu-[šur x] xx KAN nu-ba-ti [...]', but in note he wonders if it might be possible to read 'Má-kan', so that 'nubattu' would mean 'Abendrast' (cf. already Luckenbill, 1927, II, p. 220, § 558: '... which is on the border of Egypt [toward] Magan (Arabia?), I spent the night ...'; Oppenheim in Pritchard, 1969 [= 1950], p. 292: '(a town/region) which is on the frontier of ... Magan. [In ...] I spent the night.'). Mekan / Magan is commonly equated with Egypt (cf. Kümmel, Hans-Martin, s.v. Magan und Meluḥḥa, in LÄ, III, 1980, col. 1133-1134; Heimpel, W., s.v. Magan, in RdA, VII, 3-4, 1988, p. 196) and in this sense the word is already used in Ro 7 of this same text; I am therefore not inclined to see in this damaged passage the only testimony of an unidentified place or region with the name Magan, which has sometimes been created in modern literature (cf. Olmstead, 1923, p. 382 and map: a region (?) in the northern Sinai; Luckenbill, 1927, II, p. 220, § 558: Arabia?; von Zeissl, 1944, p. 37: near the Bitter lakes; Fecht, 1958, p. 118: near Lake Timsah).

<sup>3142</sup> Kambyses did about the same for his invasion of Egypt in 525 BC; cf. Herodotos, 3, 7-9.

<sup>3143</sup> The number of days in l. 4 is not given and the number of days is l. 6 is restored, but because in l. 5 and l. 7 four 'double-hours' equal two days, the overall average, it is not unlikely that it also took two days to cover the four 'double-hours' in l. 4 and l. 6.



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passing yellow snakes that make noise with their wings<sup>3144</sup>, two days about which the information is missing, and finally eight days after which the army was really in despair. It is not clear in the text whether it took another twenty days to get to the Egyptian border, or if the passage has to be interpreted otherwise<sup>3145</sup>. Also the remainder of the text remains very obscure because of the fragmentary state of the tablet: Magdali, an extremely large distance of 40 'double-hours', the description of a region (?) and finally the indication 'to Ishhupri'. Obviously the distances - or even the whole account?<sup>3146</sup> - are not historical. If Oren states that Assarhaddon proceeded along the northern Sinai highway to the Egyptian Delta and reached the border garrison Magdali in the eastern Delta<sup>3147</sup>, this must be considered a mere hypothesis, especially because no mention is made of even a skirmish.

### *Migdol - Magdolos of the Saite period*

According to Herodotos (28) king Necho II (610-595 BC) defeated the Syrians near Magdolos and afterwards took the city of Kadytis (Gaza) in Syria<sup>3148</sup>:

Συρίοισι πεζῆ ὁ Νεκῶς συμβαλὼν ἐν Μαγδάλῳ ἐνίκησε, μετὰ δὲ τὴν μάχην Κάδυτιν πόλιν τῆς Συρίας ἐούσαν μεγάλην εἶλε.

'With his land army Nekos met and defeated the Syrians at Magdolos, taking the great Syrian city of Kadytis after the battle.'

The name Magdolos has often been considered a corrupt form for Megiddo and Herodotos was supposed to refer to the battle of Megiddo in 609 BC<sup>3149</sup>. There is no reason, however, to suppose that Herodotos made a mistake, and the account probably refers to the battle with the Babylonians of Nebuchadnezzar attacking Egypt about

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<sup>3144</sup> Cf. *Isaias*, 30, 6 (about an embassy to Egypt apparently via the Negeb): 'Proclamation about the beasts of the Negeb: Into the land of distress and of anguish, of lioness and roaring lion, of viper and flying dragon, ...' (cf. Winckler, 1898a, p. 6). Herodotos, 2, 75, 1-76, 1 also mentions πτερῶτοι ὄφεις, winged snakes, in a region of Arabia near Egypt, and in the 10th century AD according to Istakhri (translated in Gildemeister, 1883, p. 11) serpents are found in the Djifar a span long, who spring up from the sand and bite the camel-riders.

<sup>3145</sup> Is there perhaps a link with the march of 40 'double-hours' in l. 13, which according to the average should have lasted about 20 days?

<sup>3146</sup> Cf. Winckler, 1898a, p. 6: 'ein Marsch mit fabelhaften Angaben'. Against Spalinger, 1974a, p. 298.302 who thinks that it is a detailed day-by-day narrative.

<sup>3147</sup> See § Identifications.

<sup>3148</sup> Herodotos, 2, 159, 2; cf. *Lexicon Vindobonense*, Σ 15 (Nauck, 1867, p. 165) (48): συμβαλεῖν ... Ἡρόδοτος· συμβαλὼν ἐν Μαγδάλῳ ('to meet ... Herodotos: meeting in Magdolos').

<sup>3149</sup> The identification with Megiddo was already suggested by d'Anville, 1766, p. 96; cf. also - among a lot of others (see the bibliography in Lipiński, 1972, p. 235-236, n. 3) - Donne, William Bodham, s.v. Magdolum, in Smith, 1857, II, p. 246; Wiedemann, 1890, p. 565-566; Plessis, 1912, p. 3, n. 6; Gardiner, 1920, p. 109, n. 2; Kees, Hermann, s.v. Magdolon, Magdolos, in RE, XIV 1, 1928, col. 300; De Meulenaere, 1951, p. 54-57; Kienitz, 1953, p. 22, n. 1; Jacoby, FGrHist nr. 1, 1.a, 1957, p. 370; Helck, Wolfgang, s.v. Magdolon, in KP, III, 1969, col. 873.

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601/600 BC, as it is described in a Babylonian chronicle<sup>3150</sup>. The Babylonians were defeated at Magdolos, which was probably situated at the Egyptian eastern border, and Necho secured the control over the northern Sinai till the city of Gaza<sup>3151</sup>.

After the capture of Jerusalem in 587 BC Ieremias was against his will taken to Tahpanhes in Egypt. There he prophesied 'for all the Judaeans living in Egypt, those, that is, living in Migdol, Tahpanhes (i.e. Daphnai), Noph (i.e. Memphis) and the territory of Patros (i.e. 'The land of the south')' (24)<sup>3152</sup>. When Nebuchadnezzar in 582 BC launched an attack against Egypt, Ieremias warned Egypt: 'Publish (the word of Yahweh) in Egypt, proclaim it in Migdol, proclaim it in Noph and Tahpanhes' (25)<sup>3153</sup>. Migdol or Magdolos is apparently one of the Egyptian cities or military camps where Israelites were living in the early 6th century BC, possibly as mercenaries in Egyptian service.

Ezechiel prophesied against Egypt, while he was probably staying in Babylon between 593 and 571 BC. 'I shall make Egypt a waste and a desolation, from Migdol to Syene and beyond to the frontiers of Kush' (26)<sup>3154</sup> - 'The supports of Egypt will

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<sup>3150</sup> Chronicle 5, Vo 6-7 (Grayson, 1975, p. 101; cf. Wiseman, 1956, p. 70-71): 'In the month Kislev he took his army's lead and marched to Egypt. (When) the king of Egypt heard (the news) he m[ustered] his army. They fought one another in the battlefield and both sides suffered severe losses. The king of Akkad and his army turned and [went back] to Babylon'.

<sup>3151</sup> Cf. Beer, Georg - Moritz, Ludwig, s.v. Kadytis, in RE, X 2, 1919, col. 1478; Lipiński, 1972, p. 235-241; Malamat, 1973, p. 275-277; Oren, 1982a, p. 16 and 1984a, p. 33; Redford, Donald B., s.v. Necho II, in LÄ, IV, 1982, col. 369; Lloyd, 1988, III, p. 158-159.161-163; Quaegebeur, 1995, p. 247.249.

<sup>3152</sup> *Ieremias*, 44, 1; cf. Septuaginta, *Ieremias*, 44 (51), 1 (Ziegler, 1957, p. 433) (29): ἄπασι τοῖς Ἰουδαίοις τοῖς κατοικοῦσιν ἐν γῆ Αἰγύπτου καὶ τοῖς καθημένοις ἐν Μαγδάλῳ καὶ ἐν Ταφνας καὶ ἐν γῆ Παθούρης λέγων ('for all the Judaeans living in Egypt, those, that is, living in Magdolos, Taphnas, and the territory of Pathoure'); Hieronymus, *Vulgata*, *Ieremias*, 44, 1 (Weber, 1975, p. 1230) (38): ad omnes Iudaeos qui habitant in terra Aegypti habitantes in Magdolo et in Tafnis et in Memphis et in terra Fatures dicens ('for all the Judaeans living in Egypt, those, that is, living in Magdolos, Tafnis, Memphis and the territory of Fature'); cf. the paraphrase in Eusebios, *De vitis prophetarum*, *Ieremias* (Migne, PG 22, 1857, col. 1269) (34): τοῖς τε Ἰουδαίοις, τοῖς κατοικοῦσιν ἐν γῆ Αἰγύπτου· καὶ τοῖς καθημένοις ἐν Μαγδάλῳ καὶ ἐπὶ Ταφνας, καὶ ἐν γῆ Παθουρήσ ('for the Judaeans living in Egypt, those, that is, living in Magdolos, Taphnas, and the territory of Pathoure'), which is repeated with only small differences in Athanasios, *Synopsis scripturae sacrae*, 20, 39 (Migne, PG 28, 1857, col. 364) (35).

<sup>3153</sup> *Ieremias*, 46, 14; cf. Septuaginta, *Ieremias*, 46 (26), 14 (Ziegler, 1957, p. 278) (30): ἀναγγείλατε εἰς Μάγδωλον καὶ παραγγείλατε εἰς Μέμφιν ('proclaim it in Magdolos and proclaim it in Memphis'); Hieronymus, *Vulgata*, *Ieremias*, 46, 14 (Weber, 1975, p. 1233) (39): adnuntiate Aegypto et auditum facite Magdolo et resonet in Memphis et in Tafnis ('proclaim it in Egypt and let it be known in Magdolos and announce it in Memphis and Tafnis'); cf. the paraphrase in Theodoretos, *Interpretatio in Ieremiam*, 9, 46, 12 (Migne, PG 81, 1859, col. 712) (46): παρεγγυᾶ μηνυθῆναι τὴν πρόρρησιν τῆ Μαγδάλῳ, καὶ τῆ Μέμφει, καὶ τῆ Ταφνας ('he orders that the word is proclaimed in Magdolos, Memphis and Taphnas').

<sup>3154</sup> *Ezechiel*, 29, 10; cf. Septuaginta, *Ezechiel*, 29, 10 (Ziegler, 1952, p. 227) (31): δώσω γῆν Αἰγύπτου εἰς ἔρημον καὶ ῥομφαίαν καὶ ἀπωλείαν ἀπὸ Μαγδάλου καὶ Συήνης καὶ ἕως ὀρίων Αἰθιοπίων ('I shall make Egypt a waste and bring it the sword and the desolation, from Migdol

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fall; the pride of her strength will crumble; they will fall by the sword from Migdol to Syene' (27)<sup>3155</sup>. Migdol or Magdolos stands for the northern border of Egypt in opposition to its southern border place Syene. Both passages, however, have been interpreted differently by later authors. The Septuaginta translates the second passage quite literally (ἀπὸ Μαγδώλου ἕως Σήνης - 'from Magdolos to Syene') (32), but the first text has been rendered 'from Magdolos and Syene and till the frontiers of Ethiopia' (ἀπὸ Μαγδώλου καὶ Σήνης καὶ ἕως ὀρίων Αἰθιόπων) (31), without any opposition between Magdolos and Syene. One so gets the impression that the translator was no longer familiar with the geographical meaning of the text. In this case one can still wonder whether it is Magdolos or Syene that has been misinterpreted, but in Hieronymus' translation - 'from the tower of Syene' (a turre Syenes) (40-41) - Magdolos is clearly no longer considered a toponym.

Hieronymus dwells on this translation problem in his commentary at *Ezechiel*. He compares his own translation of the first passage with the text of the Septuaginta (31) and adds that he deliberately considers the Hebrew 'migdol' a noun and not a toponym, because the tower of Syene was a well-known Roman fortress even in his time (40, 42)<sup>3156</sup>:

(40) 'daboque terram Aegypti in solitudines, gladio dissipatam' (sive 'disperditam') 'a turre Soenes' (sive 'a Magdalo et Soene') 'usque ad terminos Aethiopiae'

'and I shall make the land of Egypt a waste, destroyed (or 'devastated') by the sword, from the tower of Syene (or 'from Magdalus and Soene') till the frontiers of Ethiopia'

(42) pro 'turre' quae hebraice '\*magdal' dicitur, Septuaginta loci nomen posuerunt, ut 'Magdolum' scriberent; turris autem Soene usque hodie permanet, castrum Romanae ditioni subditum, ubi sunt Nili cataractae et usque ad quem locum de nostro mari Nilus navigabilis est. totam igitur Aegyptum dicit esse populandam usque ad terminos Aethiopiae, quibus extrema Aegypti regio iungitur, ...

'Instead of 'tower', which in Hebrew is 'magdal', the Seventy used a place-name and wrote 'Magdolos'; the tower of Soene still exists today, a camp under Roman supervision, at the cataracts of the Nile, the place till where the Nile is navigable for people coming from the Mediterranean. He therefore says that Egypt will be destroyed all the way till the borders of Ethiopia, which is identified as the farthest region of Egypt.'

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and Syene and till the frontiers of Ethiopia'); Hieronymus, *Vulgata, Ezechiel*, 29, 10 (Weber, 1975, p. 1307) (40): daboque terram Aegypti in solitudines gladio dissipatam a turre Syenes usque ad terminos Aethiopiae ('and I shall make the land of Egypt a waste, destroyed by the sword, from the tower of Syene till the frontiers of Ethiopia'); also quoted in Theodoretos, *Interpretatio in Ezechielem*, 12, 29, 10-12 (Migne, PG 81, 1859, col. 1108) (47). For the geographical opposition, cf. Boadt, 1980, p. 41-43.66.177.

<sup>3155</sup> *Ezechiel*, 30, 6; cf. Septuaginta, *Ezechiel*, 30, 6 (Ziegler, 1952, p. 231) (32): καταβήσεται ἡ ὕβρις τῆς ἰσχύος αὐτῆς ἀπὸ Μαγδώλου ἕως Σήνης· μαχαίρα πεσοῦνται ἐν αὐτῇ ('the pride of its strength will go down from Magdolos till Syene; they will fall there by the sword'); Hieronymus, *Vulgata, Ezechiel*, 30, 6 (Weber, 1975, p. 1308) (41): destruetur superbia imperii eius; a turre Syenes gladio cadent in ea ('the pride of its might will be destroyed; from the tower of Syene they will fall there by the sword').

<sup>3156</sup> Hieronymus, *Commentarii in Hiezechielem*, 9, 29, 8-16 (Glorie, 1964a, p. 409-411, with some printing mistakes in the text on p. 409).

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For Hieronymus this passage implies that the whole of Egypt till the Ethiopian border will be destroyed, although he does not explain how the whole of Egypt can be referred to with the expression 'from the tower of Syene till the frontiers of Ethiopia'. Theodoretos (47) did see the problem, but incorrectly thought that not the whole of Egypt, but only the part between Magdolos and Syene on the one hand and the Ethiopian border on the other hand, would be destroyed<sup>3157</sup>:

... ἐρημίαν ἀπειλεῖ τῇ Αἰγύπτῳ, οὐ πάσῃ, ἀλλ' ἢ ἀπὸ Μαγδωλοῦ καὶ Συήνης, ἕως τῶν ὀρίων Αἰθιοπῶν ... καὶ οὐ πᾶσα ἡ Αἴγυπτος, ἀλλ' ἀπὸ Μαγδωλοῦ καὶ Συήνης, ἕως τῶν ὀρίων Αἰθιοπῶν.

'... he threatens to turn Egypt into a desert, not the whole country, but from Magdolos and Syene till the frontiers of Ethiopia ... and not the whole of Egypt, but from Magdolos and Syene till the frontiers of Ethiopia.'

Also for the second passage Hieronymus compares the two translations (32, 41) and he repeats a similar comment (44)<sup>3158</sup>:

... destruetur superbia imperii eius; a turre Soenes gladio cadent in ea ...

LXX: ... descendet contumelia fortitudinis eius; a Magdolo usque ad Soenen gladio cadent in ea ...

omnis superbia imperii - sive contumelia fortitudinis - illius destruetur ac deponetur a turre Soene - quam in extremis finibus Aegypti sitam diximus; sive 'a Magdolo usque ad Soenen' sicut Septuaginta transtulerunt -. ...

'... the pride of its might will be destroyed; from the tower of Soene they will fall there by the sword ...

the 70: ... the insult of its strength will go down; from Magdolos till Soene they will fall there by the sword ...

the whole pride of its might - or the insult of its strength - will be destroyed and struck down from the tower of Soene - we told already that it is situated in the farthest regions of Egypt - or 'from Magdolos till Soene' as the Seventy translated. ...'

In another work Hieronymus (13, 36-37) translates the word Magdolos as 'turris', 'tower', but also adds the more allegorical interpretations of 'somebody great', 'splendour' or 'greatness'<sup>3159</sup>:

Magdolon quis grandis vel turris (*Exodus*)

Magdalon magnificentiae vel turri eorum (*Ieremias*)

Magdol magnitudo vel turris (*Ezechiel*)

'Magdolon, someone great or a tower.

Magdolon, for splendour or for their tower.

Magdol, greatness or a tower'

These and other allegories are used by Hieronymus in other works, where he juggles with words in order to establish the so-called true meaning of the biblical text. In his reconstruction of the itinerary of the exodus he quotes the text of *Numeri*, interprets the name Baal-Saphon, 'the lord of the north', as 'the keeper of secrets' and Magdolos

<sup>3157</sup> Theodoretos, *Interpretatio in Ezechielem*, 12, 29, 8-12 (Migne, PG 81, 1859, col. 1105.1108).

<sup>3158</sup> Hieronymus, *Commentarii in Hiezechielem*, 9, 30, 1-19 (Glorie, 1964a, p. 418-421).

<sup>3159</sup> Hieronymus, *Liber interpretationis Hebraicorum nominum*, s.v. Magdolon; s.v. Magdalon; s.v. Magdol (De Lagarde, 1959, p. 76.127.132).

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as 'greatness' or 'tower', and concludes that the passage means that we reject the secrets of the idol Baal-Saphon and his greatness and towering pride (14)<sup>3160</sup>:

"profectique de Aetham, reversi sunt Phiahiroth, quod est contra Beelsephon, et castra metati sunt e regione Magdol" ... 'Beelsephon' in linguam nostram vertitur 'Dominus aquilonis', aut 'ascensus speculae', aut 'habens arcana'. porro 'Magdol', 'magnitudo' vel 'turris'. adsumpta igitur fortitudine nobilitamur in Domino, et Beelsephon idoli arcana contemnimus, illiusque magnificentiam et turritam superbiam declinamus. ...

"they left from Aetham and returned to Phiahiroth, which lies opposite Beelsephon, and they brought their camp from the region of Magdol." ... 'Beelsephon' in our language is translated as 'the lord of the north, 'the raising of the mirror' or 'the keeper of secrets. 'Magdol' further means 'greatness' or 'tower'. When we, therefore, take up the strength, we become noble in the Lord, and we despise the secrets of the idol Beelsephon, and we refuse its splendour and its towering insult. ...'

In his commentary on *Ezechiel*, at a first passage about the tower of Syene he equals the name Syene with the word 'circle', because there is nothing right in the place (43)<sup>3161</sup>:

sententia Domini dissipetur a turre 'Soene', quae interpretatur 'gyrus' ut nihil in se recti habeat, usque ad terram Aethiopum, qui humiles appellantur, ut videlicet omnis superbia quae se contra Dei scientiam erexerat destruat, et humilietur in salutem suam.

'the word of the Lord will be spread from the tower of 'Soene', which means 'circle' and has nothing right in it, till the country of the Ethiopians, which are called humble people; every insult, therefore, that has been directed against the knowledge of god, will be destroyed, and will be humiliated for his sake.'

In the second passage of *Ezechiel* the tower of Syene lies at the Egyptian border in an inaccessible area; because Magdolos is interpreted as 'splendour', it is again clear for Hieronymus that the splendour of the whole of Egypt will be destroyed (45)<sup>3162</sup>:

'a turre enim Soenes cadent in ea' - quae in extremis terminis Aegypti, Aethiopiae Blemmyarumque confinis est, ubi Nilus innavigabilis, et cataractarum fragor, et omnia in via plenaque serpentum et venenatorum animantium -; sin autem, ut supra diximus, 'Magdolos' 'magnificentiam' et 'Soene' 'gyrum' sonat, perspicuum est quod Aegyptiae opes et contumeliosa fortitudo ac magnificentia, id est iactantia et exaltationes, vi pereant usque ad gyrum Aegypti, ubi nihil stabile est sed incerto volvitur lapsu, et pervenit ad ruinam. ...

"from the tower of Soene they will fall there by the sword" - This is the area at the farthest frontiers of Egypt, Ethiopia and the Blemmyae, where the Nile is unnavigable, with the roaring of the cataracts, an inaccessible region full of serpents and poisonous animals - If, as we told already, 'Magdolos' means 'splendour' and 'Soene' 'circle', it is clear that the wealth of Egypt, its offensive strength and splendour, its boasting and exaggerations, will go down by force till the circle of Egypt, where nothing is stable, but everything turns around without any certainty, and it will come to ruins. ...'

In these allegories there are a lot of inconsistencies, while in some cases the points of comparison are even hardly understandable. Unfortunately also most topographical information about Magdolos has been lost.

For Origenes (33), commenting on *Ezechiel*, Magdolos and Syene are the borders of Egypt<sup>3163</sup>:

<sup>3160</sup> Hieronymus, *Epistulae*, 78, 6 (Labourt, 1954, p. 59).

<sup>3161</sup> Hieronymus, *Commentarii in Hiezechielem*, 9, 29, 8-16 (Glorie, 1964a, p. 412).

<sup>3162</sup> Hieronymus, *Commentarii in Hiezechielem*, 9, 30, 1-19 (Glorie, 1964a, p. 425-426).

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ἀπὸ Μαγδωλοῦ ἕως Συήνης μαχαίρα πεσοῦνται. Μαγδωλά ἐστιν ἀρχὴ τῆς Αἰγύπτου ἐπὶ τὰ ὄδε· Συήνη δὲ ἡ ἐσχάτη τῆς Αἰγύπτου, πλησίον εὐθὺ τῶν Αἰθίοπων. ... Συήνη δὲ καὶ Μαγδωλά ὄρια ἐστί τῆς Αἰγύπτου. ...

'From Magdolos till Syene they will fall by the sword. Magdola is the beginning of Egypt in this direction (sc. in the direction of Palestine); Syene is the farthest place in Egypt, well near the Ethiopians. ... Syene and Magdola are the frontiers of Egypt. ...'

Eusebios (9) apparently identifies the Magdolos of the exodus, which he locates near the Red Sea, with the Magdolos of Ezechiel and Ieremias, a place in Egypt where Jews were living<sup>3164</sup>:

Ἐκ Μαγδωλῶς. τῆς ἑξῆς Αἰγύπτου πορείας τοῦ Ἰσραὴλ σταθμὸς, ἔνθα κατήντησαν πρὸ τῆς ἐρυθρᾶς θαλάσσης. κείμεναι καὶ ἐν Ἰεζεκιήλ· "ἀπὸ Μαγδῶλου ἕως Σοηνῆς". ὡς δὲ Ἰερεμίας, ἐνταῦθα τῆς Αἰγύπτου κατόκησαν οἱ μετὰ Ἰερεμίου Ἰουδαῖοι.

'Magdolos. A halt on the journey of Israel from Egypt where they arrived before reaching the Red Sea. It occurs also in Ezechiel: 'From Magdolos as far as Soene'. As in Ieremias: there in Egypt the Jews with Ieremias dwelt.'

### *Migdol - Magdolos of the Persian and Graeco-Roman periods*

Stephanos of Byzantion (57), quoting Hekataios' *Periegesis* (49), which is written about 500 BC, mentions the Egyptian city of Magdolos<sup>3165</sup>:

Μαγδωλὸς, πόλις Αἰγύπτου. Ἐκαταῖος Περιηγήσει. τὸ ἐθνικὸν Μαγδωλίτης διὰ τὸν Αἰγύπτιον τύπον, Κανωβίτης Διοκίτης Πεντασχοινίτης.

'Magdolos, a city in Egypt. Hekataios in his *Periegesis*. The ethnic is Magdolites, following the Egyptian type, Kanobites, Diolkites, Pentaschoinities.'

The ancient grammarians have a different accentuation of the name Magdolos.

For Herodianos words on '-olos' with one form for all genders and with more than two syllables are proparoxytonon (55)<sup>3166</sup>:

τὰ διὰ τοῦ ὠλος' μονογενῆ ὑπὲρ δύο συλλαβὰς προπαροξύνεται, ... οἶον ... Μάγδωλος πόλις Αἰγύπτου. Ἐκαταῖος Περιηγήσει ...

'The words on '-olos' with one form for all genders and with more than two syllables are proparoxytonon... such as ... Magdolos, a city in Egypt. Hekataios in his *Periegesis* ...'

For Theognostos, however, Magdolos is oxytonon (58)<sup>3167</sup>:

τὰ διὰ τοῦ ὠλος' ὑπὲρ δύο συλλαβὰς, εἴτε βαρύτονα, εἴτε ὀξύτονα, ἀπλᾶ ὄντα διὰ τοῦ ω μεγάλου γράφονται· οἶον, ... Μαγδωλὸς ὄνομα πόλεως· ...

<sup>3163</sup> Origenes, *Selecta in Ezechielem*, 30 (Migne, PG 13, 1857, col. 825).

<sup>3164</sup> Eusebios, *Onomasticon*, s.v. Μάγδωλος (Klostermann, 1904, p. 124-126) (cf. the (inaccurate) translation of Freeman-Grenville, 2003, p. 70); translated by Hieronymus, *Liber de situ et nominibus locorum Hebraicorum*, s.v. Magdolos (Klostermann, 1904, p. 125-127) (cf. the translation of Freeman-Grenville, 2003, p. 70) (12): Magdolos, ad quam filii Israel, cum exissent de Aegypto, pervenerunt antequam transirent mare rubrum. legimus et in Iezechiel: "de Magdolo usque Soenen". porro Ieremias Iudaeos, qui secum fugerant Babyloniorum impetum declinantes, in hac urbe Aegypti habitasse refert ('Magdolos, where the children of Israel, when they came out of Egypt, arrived before they crossed the Red Sea. We also read in Ezechiel: 'From Magdolos as far as Soene'. Further, Ieremias mentions that the Jews who had fled with him to avoid the incursion of the Babylonians, dwelt in this city of Egypt').

<sup>3165</sup> Stephanos of Byzantion, *Ethnica*, s.v. Μαγδωλὸς (Meineke, 1849, p. 424); Hekataios, FGrHist no. 1, F 317.

<sup>3166</sup> Herodianos, *De prosodia catholica*, 6 (Lentz, 1867, I, p. 164-165); the example of Magdolos, however, does not come from Herodianos' manuscript tradition, but is inserted by Lentz from the text of Stephanos.

<sup>3167</sup> Theognostos, *Canones*, 338 (Cramer, 1835, II, p. 62).

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'The words on 'olos' with more than two syllables, either barytonon or oxytonon, and no compounds, are written with an o-mega; such as, ... Magdolos the name of a city; ...'

According to an Aramaic letter (50), possibly written about 500-475 BC, Osea son of Pete[ ] stayed with his wife and children in Migdol; their son Shelomam had left for Elephantine, possibly accompanying a caravan or setting out on a campaign, but he is expected to return to Lower Egypt. Both father and son seem to be Jewish soldiers in Persian service; the name of the grandfather, however, is Egyptian. There were apparently some problems with the son's salary, about which the parents had complained to the officials of Migdol<sup>3168</sup>:

'Now, from the day that you went out from (Lower) Egypt, allotment has not been g[iven to us / you here. And when] we complained to the officials about your allotment here in Migdol [bmgdl], thus was said to us, saying: "About this, [you complain before] the scribes and it will be given to you". Now, when you will come to (Lower) Egypt ...[...] your [al]lotment which has been withheld, all of it.'

In a demotic topographical list, which can be dated to the 4th-2nd centuries BC, four Migdols (51-54) are mentioned between some unidentifiable toponyms (l. 16-19) and a group of countries neighbouring Egypt (l. 24-26)<sup>3169</sup>:

- |       |  |
|-------|--|
| 3, 20 | Mktr - Migdol  |
| 3, 21 | Mktr-iry-t3 (Chuvin: Mktl t3...t3, 'Migdol de... (?)')   |
| 3, 22 | Mktr- <sup>r</sup> p3-R <sup>c</sup> -ib <sup>1</sup> (Chuvin: Mktr n3 bl <sup>c</sup> d, 'Migdol des tessons')              |
| 3, 23 | Mktr- <sup>r</sup> bnr- <sup>h</sup> m <sup>1</sup> (Chuvin: Mktr b3k <sup>h</sup> mw, 'Migdol du travail des charpentiers') |

The presence of these four Migdols has been interpreted in two different ways. Most often they are localised in the northern Sinai along the road from Egypt to Syria. The first Migdol (51), which is not followed by a specification, is then identified with the known Migdol at the northeastern border<sup>3170</sup>, or - less likely - considered a kind of

<sup>3168</sup> P.Aram. Padova 1, Vo 3-6; cf. Bresciani, 1960, p. 11-22, no. 1; Fitzmyer, 1962, p. 15-22, no. 1; Porten, 1968, p. 42; Grelot, 1972, p. 125-128, no. 14; Gibson, 1975, p. 143-147, no. 28; Porten, 1986, p. 25.30-34, no. A3.3; Porten, 1996, p. 107-109, no. B8, whose translation is given. Valbelle, 1990b, p. 240 incorrectly supposes that three Aramaic papyri are involved. The so-called Aramaic customs account (Porten, 1993, p. 82-193; cf. p. xx-xxi and p. 23; Yardeni, 1994, p. 67-78), written in 475 BC, mentions Ionian and Phoenician ships arriving in Egypt, but the name of the harbour involved is unfortunately not mentioned; several suggestions have been made: for Porten, 1993, p. xx it is Migdol, Daphnai or Memphis; Bresciani, 1995, p. 107 prefers a link with Naukratis; according to Briant, 1998, p. 91-92 the tax was paid in Thonis - which seems a very plausible suggestion - and the ships afterwards continued to Naukratis and Memphis; for Oren, 1998, p. 81 (cf. Yardeni, 1994, p. 69 and n. 13) a city along the Pelousiac branch, however, is certainly not impossible.

<sup>3169</sup> P.Cairo dem. 31169, 3, 20-23; cf. Spiegelberg, 1908, p. 273, who incorrectly omits line 23 in his transcription, although he speaks of four Migdols on p. 278; Daressy, 1911a, p. 169 and 1911b, p. 6-7; Gardiner, 1920, p. 108; Gauthier, 1926, III, p. 21-23; Chuvin, 1986, p. 48-52; Zauzich, 1987a, p. 88 and handout, whose transcription is here followed; Quaegebeur, 1990, p. 264, n. 129; DBL, 2005, p. 135. See s.v. Itineraries.

<sup>3170</sup> Spiegelberg, 1908, p. 278; Mallon, 1921, p. 168; Chuvin, 1986, p. 49.

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title introducing the three following Migdols<sup>3171</sup>. Chuvin's 'Migdol of the sherds' (53) is identified with Ostrakine<sup>3172</sup>, and his 'Migdol of the work of the carpenters' (54) is linked with the 'Kasiotikos' technique, which involves a special way that ropes and knots are used to keep together some woodwork and which is named after the Kasiotis region<sup>3173</sup>. It is clear, however, that lines 14-24 of the list do not represent the strictly geographical order Chuvin was looking for and therefore his identifications are questionable. Zauzich is probably right considering the group of four Migdols not a continuation of the previous list, but a new item that indicates the fortifications at the four borders of Egypt. In this case it is not impossible that the Migdol of the northeastern border is referred to in one of the lines. The order within a group of four toponyms elsewhere in the list is often south - north - east - west, which suggests an identification with the northern Mktr-iry-t3 (52) or with the eastern Mktr-ʿp3-Rʿ-ibʿ (53), but because the order is never strict, nothing is certain.

About 300 AD the *Itinerarium provinciarum Antonini Augusti* (56) describes the road from Klyisma and Serapeion to Pelousion. Magdolos lies 12 miles (ca. 18 km) south of Pelousion and the same distance north of Sele<sup>3174</sup>:

|                        |               |
|------------------------|---------------|
| Serapiu                |               |
| Clysmo                 | m.p. L        |
| item a Serapiu Pelusio | m.p. LX, sic: |
| Thaubasio              | m.p. VIII     |
| Sile                   | m.p. XXVIII   |
| Magdolo                | m.p. XII      |
| Pelusio                | m.p. XII      |

'From Serapium to Clysmum: 50 miles. Further from Serapium to Pelusium: 60 miles, divided as follows: (from Serapium) to Thaubasium: 8 miles; (from Thaubasium) till Sile: 28 miles; (from Sile) till Magdolos: 12 miles; (from Magdolos) till Pelusium: 12 miles.'

The total distance from Klyisma to Pelousion amounts to 110 miles (ca. 165 km), which far exceeds the actual 115 km, and one gets the impression that all the distances given are too high.

## TCHAROU

Greek name: Sele

Modern name: Habwa I (for the Middle and New Kingdom Tcharou)

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<sup>3171</sup> Chuvin, 1986, p. 49.

<sup>3172</sup> See s.v. Ostrakine.

<sup>3173</sup> See s.v. Kasion.

<sup>3174</sup> *Itinerarium provinciarum Antonini Augusti*, 170, 3-171, 4 (Cuntz, 1929, p. 23).



## 9. *The northwestern Sinai*

Modern name: Tell Abu Seifa (for the Late Period and Graeco-Roman Tcharou)

### **Topographical situation**

It seems necessary to make the distinction between the Middle and New Kingdom city of Tcharou, which will not be discussed here in detail, and the homonymous city of the Late and the Graeco-Roman period<sup>3175</sup>. The name Tcharou does apparently not occur in any written source between the New Kingdom and the late 4th century BC. The first certain reference concerns a general Nektanebis who was a 'hereditary noble and prince in Tcharou' (**1**). The same title continued in the Ptolemaic period, when Henyt was a 'great prince in Tcharou' (**11**). It is not clear, however, whether this title is a mere honorary remainder of a fixed tradition or still had a real value. In the latter case it more likely referred to an administrative than to a military function in Tcharou. For Nektanebis (**1**), who was also closely connected with the 19th and 12th nome of Lower Egypt, it is not even certain whether he actually resided in Tcharou. In the case of Henyt (**11**) Tcharou is the only toponym mentioned among the titles on his sarcophagus and he probably lived in the city. Because he bears some priestly titles, it is likely that there was at least one temple in Tcharou. Further topographical information is lacking in the documents, which mostly have a funerary or a religious nature.

### **Administrative situation**

The city of Tcharou is often considered a major city in Khenty-Iabtet, the traditional 14th nome of Lower Egypt (**1, 14, 40, 56, 73**), which possibly more or less corresponds with (part of) the Graeco-Roman Tanites and Sethroites<sup>3176</sup>. Some

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<sup>3175</sup> For the sources about the earlier Tcharou, cf. Björkman, 1974, p. 48-49 (New Kingdom); Gomaà, 1987, p. 222-224 (Middle Kingdom); Abd el-Maksoud, 1998a, p. 61-65 (Second Intermediate period - New Kingdom); Morris, 2005, passim (New Kingdom). The inscriptions mentioning Tcharou that are found in Habwa I and Tell el-Burdj, will be discussed in the respective chapters. No attempt has been made to create an exhaustive list of the passages mentioning Tcharou in a strictly religious context.

<sup>3176</sup> For the nome Khenty-Iabtet, 'Beginning of the east', cf. Gauthier, 1927, IV, p. 178-179; Hommel, 1926, p. 957-965; Gauthier, 1935, p. 35, n. 1; Gardiner, 1947, II, p. 203-204\*; Montet, 1957, p. 187-203; Roeder, 1959, p. 156-163; Helck, 1974, p. 187-190.199-203; Gomaà, 1987, p. 218-219. In most of the nome lists from Ptolemaios VIII on Khenty-Iabtet is the 14th nome of Lower Egypt, which for most

scholars suppose that Tcharou was the capital of (one of the districts of) this nome, but because the religious nome division in most cases reflects an older or even imaginary division of the country<sup>3177</sup>, it is impossible to say anything about Tcharou's real administrative situation. The ambiguity in the terminology is quite well reflected by the use of the terms 'Ways-of-Horos' (61) or even 'the nome of Tcharou' (72) to indicate the same nome.

There seems to be a close relationship between Tcharou and the city of Tanis: the Tanis officials Pichaas (10) and possibly also Pelaias (5) are closely linked with Tcharou, while the god Horos lord of Tcharou is also worshipped in Tanis (2). The less important Tcharou probably depended in some way from Tanis, but the religious nature of most documents does not allow any further conclusions.

### Identifications

Because there is gap in the sources about Tcharou between the 20th dynasty and the late 4th century BC and because there is no suitable archaeological site at the Egyptian eastern border that was inhabited from the Middle Kingdom to the Roman period, it is a plausible hypothesis that the name Tcharou of the New Kingdom settlement was reused for a new place that was founded in the Late period. This later Tcharou is most likely identical with the city of Sele of the Byzantine sources. The position of Habwa I nicely fits the description of the New Kingdom Tcharou, while the later Tcharou can be located at the site of Tell Abu Seifa<sup>3178</sup>.

On the Karnak relief of Sethos I the area of the New Kingdom Tcharou is described in some detail: the king enters from the east, follows at his right hand a water that contains fishes, arrives at P3 ḥtm n T3rw, 'The fortress of Tcharou', and continues to a bridge, which was apparently guarded by a kind of gate. The bridge crosses a water filled with crocodiles and that is named 'T3 dni.t', 'The dividing canal'. At the western side of the bridge lies an anonymous city, of which two gates and six other buildings are shown<sup>3179</sup>. Most likely the fortress, the bridge and the city all

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scholars has become its 'canonical number', but in earlier lists it is usually mentioned as the 16th nome (cf. Gardiner, 1947, II, p. 204\*, n. 1).

<sup>3177</sup> Cf. Yoyotte, 1983a, p. 217-220.

<sup>3178</sup> See s.v. Sele, s.v. Habwa I-V and s.v. Tell Abu Seifa.

<sup>3179</sup> Cf. Gardiner, 1920, pl. 11 (which has often been copied in other works); Karnak, 1986, IV, pl. 6 (which gives the present-day situation, unfortunately without additions from former editions for the lost scenes), with a photo pl. 7c; Valbelle, 1996, p. 61-62 with two photos. See s.v. Itineraries.

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belong to the city of Tcharou, although some scholars made an explicit distinction. For Brugsch Tcharou, Piramesse and Tanis were identical, but he located 'The fortress of Tcharou' in Tell Abu Seifa near el-Qantara<sup>3180</sup>. A similar distinction is made by Griffith, who identified the city of Tcharou not with Tanis, but with Herakleous Polis Parva (Tell Belim)<sup>3181</sup>. For Daressy the city and the fortress were situated northeast of el-Qantara, at some 2 to 3 km from each other, along the road to Syria, and not at Tell Abu Seifa, which for him is too distant<sup>3182</sup>. Also according to Bietak the position of Tell Abu Seifa does not correspond with that of Tcharou on the Karnak relief, so he rather identifies Tell Abu Seifa with the city of Mesen and looks for Tcharou immediately south of el-Qantara<sup>3183</sup>.

Other scholars located Tcharou in the Wadi Tumilat near Ismailia<sup>3184</sup>, or identified the place with Pelousion<sup>3185</sup>. Nibbi, whose general ideas about the geographical setting of the eastern border region are not convincing, locates Tcharou at Tarut, a place mentioned in the *Description* and situated immediately south of the entrance of the Wadi Tumilat<sup>3186</sup>. Vandersleyen also looks for a location of Tcharou between Heliou Polis and Auaris, following the questionable interpretation by Hodjash of a passage on a scarab of Ramses II; according to Hodjash the phrase 'N3y.w-(R' mssw-mry-Imn) grg T3rw' ('Nay-Ramses-beloved-of-Amon, maintaining Tcharou') 'undoubtedly' implies that Tcharou is identical with the toponym 'Nay-

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<sup>3180</sup> Brugsch, 1875, p. 21-22; 1879, p. 299-304.591.634-649.992-997 and 1880, p. 1084; cf. Guthe, 1885, p. 218; De Rougé, 1891, p. 93-95; Budge, 1920, p. 1052.1058; Gauthier, 1929, VI, p. 67; rejected by Dümichen, 1879, p. 257 in Müller, 1888, p. 81, n. 1 and by Kütthmann, 1911, p. 42. Jouguet, 1931, p. 519-520 incorrectly translates Tcharou as Tanis, although on p. 520 n. 1 he distinguishes both toponyms.

<sup>3181</sup> Griffith, 1888, p. 106 (cf. Chabân, 1912, p. 76; Gauthier, 1926, III, p. 94); followed by Alliot, 1954, II, p. 752, n. 1; rejected by Gardiner, 1918a, p. 243 and Gauthier, 1929, VI, p. 68.

<sup>3182</sup> Daressy, 1929, p. 296-299.304.329 (with a map; cf. also Daressy, 1930, map and the map 1931, p. 222).

<sup>3183</sup> Bietak, 1975, p. 133-134; Bietak, Manfred, s.v. Isthmus von Qantara, in LÄ, III, 1980, col. 205; followed by Gomaà, Farouk, s.v. Sile, in LÄ, V, 1984, col. 946-947 and 1987, p. 217; cf. Ahituv, 1996a, p. 220, n. 6; Graf, 1998, p. 110.

<sup>3184</sup> Dümichen, 1879, p. 258-260 in Schäfer, 1904, p. 159, n. 2; Erman, 1906, p. 73; Steindorff, 1909, p. 866; rejected by Müller, 1888, p. 81, n. 1 and Kütthmann, 1911, p. 38.49; Scharff, 1936, p. 30.43 is corrected by Scharff, 1943, p. 151, n. 2. Cf. also Brugsch's earlier identification of Tcharou and Heroon Polis, mentioned in Gardiner, 1918a, p. 199 and p. 244, n. 6 and Gauthier, 1929, VI, p. 67. According to Nibbi, 1989, p. 77, n. 7 Maspero, 1877, p. 319-325 locates Tcharou in or near Tell el-Maschuta, but in fact this scholar was not discussing Tcharou, but the biblical Ramses, and she probably misinterpreted Brugsch, 1879, p. 995-997.

<sup>3185</sup> Cf. Gauthier, 1929, VI, p. 67. It is not clear whether Pelousion is referred to in Müller, 1888, p. 81, n. 1 ['north of the Wadi Tumilat'] and 1893, map.

<sup>3186</sup> Nibbi, 1985, p. 52-59 and fig. 5; Nibbi, 1989, p. 69-78 and fig. 1; Nibbi, 1999, p. 79-89 and fig. 1; rejected by Hoffmeier, 1997, p. 196-1977, n. 112 and Cavillier, 2001, p. 39-41.

Ramses-beloved-of-Amon', but this has rightly been rejected by Hoffmeier and Grimal<sup>3187</sup>.

In religious texts Tcharou is often closely linked with Mesen (Msn) and in a text from Edfu (44) the two places are actually identified, but the exact relationship between the toponyms is not clear<sup>3188</sup>.

The 'bnw' or phoenix is especially linked with the 14th nome of Lower Egypt (14), and most likely the toponyms Bnw and Ḥw.t Bnw, 'Temple of (the) Phoenix' are to be looked for in this region, but again their relation with Tcharou is not clear<sup>3189</sup>.

In a mythological text (40) Tcharou is also named Khenty-Iabtet (Ḥnty-I3bt.t), after the nome it belongs to.

In New Kingdom texts Tcharou is sometimes called 'Ways-of-Horos' (W3.wt-Ḥr), after the eastern border region the city probably belonged to<sup>3190</sup>. The expression only occurs twice in later texts, but apparently not as a direct synonym for Tcharou: on a possibly Ptolemaic sarcophagus from Tell Abu Seifa '(the region?) Ways-of-Horos' is linked with the city of Mesen<sup>3191</sup>; and in a text from Dendera (61) Tcharou is situated in the region 'Ways-of-Horos'.

There is hardly any toponym with regard to the Egyptian eastern border mentioned in biblical or Egyptian sources, that has not been identified with Tcharou by one scholar or another, but never with sufficient arguments. The following survey

<sup>3187</sup> Vandersleyen, 1993, p. 85-87 and 1995, p. 223; followed by Nibbi, 1999, p. 86-87; cf. Hoffmeier, 1997, p. 197, n. 112; Grimal, 2001, p. 1169-1174. For this scarab in the Pushkin Museum in Moscow, cf. Gardiner, 1920, p. 116, n. 2; Björkman, 1974, p. 48; Hodjash, 1977, p. 24, fig. 1 and p. 36-37; Kitchen, 1979, II, p. 784 and 1996, II, p. 517, no. 282, 1.

<sup>3188</sup> Cf. Brugsch, 1879, p. 298-306; Clédat, 1914, p. 107; Kees, 1924, II, p. 79-82; Gauthier, 1925, II, p. 45.115; 1926, III, p. 60-61; 1927, IV, p. 220; 1929, VI, p. 10; Montet, 1957, pl. 2; Roeder, 1959, p. 157; Vergote, 1959, p. 26 (map); Gutbub, 1962, p. 42-75 and 1964, p. 35-60; Zibelius, 1978, p. 102-105; Altenmüller, Brigitte, s.v. Horus, Herr der Harpunierstätte (Mesen), in LÄ, III, 1980, col. 36-37; Vernus, Pascal, s.v. Mesen, in LÄ, IV, 1982, col. 108-109; Gomaà, 1987, p. 225-227; Hannig, 1995, map 5 (Msn immediately northeast of T3rw).

<sup>3189</sup> Cf. Griffith, 1888, p. 108; Gauthier, 1925, I, p. 155; 1925, II, p. 115; Daressy, 1931a, p. 219-220; Montet, 1957, p. 188-190 and pl. 2; Vandier, 1965, p. 173; Gomaà, 1987, p. 217-222.

<sup>3190</sup> For Ways-of-Horos, cf. Erman, 1906, p. 72-73; Maspero, 1908, p. xlv; von Bissing, 1917, p. 145; Gauthier, 1925, I, p. 174-175; Scharff, 1936, p. 19.29-30.43 and 1943, p. 150-152; Bietak, Manfred, s.v. Horuswege, in LÄ, III, 1980, col. 62-64; Valbelle, 1994, p. 379-386; Dreyer, 2000, p. 10 (non vidi); van den Brink, 2004, p. 500-501. In the temple of Edfu (Chassinat, 1933, VIII, p. 71, 5) Montet, 1957, p. 59 incorrectly renders the expression *ir.t-Ḥr w3dt* ('the green eye of Horus' referring to offered wine) [cf. Wb, 1926, I, p. 107] as '(the wine region) Ways-of-Horos'.

<sup>3191</sup> Sarcophagus of Peteamenophis from Tell Abu Seifa (Cairo 29318 - Maspero, 1939, p. 119). See s.v. Tell Abu Seifa.

lists a good deal of unfounded guesswork, mostly based upon a vague phonetic similarity.

'Ta rou' [T3 rw] is a place mentioned in the Pyramid texts where the god Seth is chained and perhaps killed. A link with Tcharou has been suggested, but more likely the toponym 'Ta wer' [T3 wr], the name of the Thinites nome, is referred to<sup>3192</sup>.

Naville's identification of Tcharou with the biblical Soar has rightly been rejected by Alt<sup>3193</sup>.

Tcharou, a place of deportation under king Haremheb, has been identified with the jail where the biblical Joseph was locked up, and which is described as 'the goal where the king's prisoners were kept'<sup>3194</sup>. Vergote rejects the suggested etymological link, but does not exclude the identification in itself. This, however, would be a mere guess.

Tcharou has - mainly on phonetic grounds - been identified with the biblical toponym Shur. This place, however, probably lies in southern Palestine<sup>3195</sup>.

Some scholars suppose that the toponym Etham of the exodus renders the Egyptian expression ḥtm, 'fortress', and identify the place with the New Kingdom P3 ḥtm n T3rw, 'The fortress of Tcharou'<sup>3196</sup>. The link between Etham and ḥtm, however, is impossible to prove.

This is even less the case for Clédat's link between Tcharou and the biblical and Egyptian toponym Shihor, which refers to a river or a water at the Egyptian eastern border. Clédat distinguishes the city and the lake of Shihor, while identifying the first place with Tcharou, the second with lake Ballah<sup>3197</sup>.

'The dividing canal' (T3 dni.t), mentioned on the Karnak relief of Sethos I next to the city of Tcharou, is called 'The canal of Tcharou' by Clédat, but this name does not occur in the Egyptian sources. He also supposes that it has been extended in the

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<sup>3192</sup> Cf. Zibelius, 1978, p. 255.

<sup>3193</sup> Naville, 1912, p. 312-315 and 1924, p. 22-23.26; cf. Alt, 1914, p. 62, n. 1; Gauthier, 1929, VI, p. 67. For Soar, which is situated in Palestine, cf. Odelain, 1978, p. 95, s.v. Çoar.

<sup>3194</sup> *Genesis*, 39-40; cf. Vergote, 1959, p. 25-28.

<sup>3195</sup> Müller, 1893, p. 134; Dalman, 1916, p. 30; Clédat, 1919b, p. 214; 1920, p. 108; 1921, p. 169; 1923a, p. 90, n. 1; Gauthier, 1925, I, p. 83; 1925, II, p. 122; rejected by Gardiner, 1918a, p. 244, n. 6. For Shur, 'Wall', cf. Odelain, 1978, p. 355, s.v. Shur and Na'aman, 1980, p. 95-109.

<sup>3196</sup> Brugsch, 1875, p. 25-27 (cf. Maspero, 1877, p. 324; Gauthier, 1927, IV, p. 192); Clédat, 1919b, p. 214-215; 1920, p. 108; 1921, p. 169; 1923a, p. 90, n. 1; followed by Abel, 1933, I, p. 434, Cazelles, 1987 [= 1955], p. 224-225 and Goedicke in Oren, 1981b, p. 50-51 with the map p. 47; rejected by Peet, 1922, p. 139-140.

<sup>3197</sup> See s.v. Brook of Egypt. Cf. Clédat, 1921, p. 169-173; 1922, p. 195-197 and fig. 2; 1923a, p. 91 and the accompanying map; 1924, p. 41.50.56; Gauthier, 1928, V, p. 125; Daressy, 1929, p. 302 and the map p. 329.

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Graeco-Roman period through the northern Sinai all the way till the city of Ostrakine, but this is the mere figment of his imagination<sup>3198</sup>. Because Clédat also identifies Tcharou with the cities of Auaris and Piramesse<sup>3199</sup>, he links with this canal the hydronyms 'P3 ḏdkw' and 'Ptrti' (formerly read as 'c'n'), both mentioned in a New Kingdom text with regard to those cities<sup>3200</sup>.

Clédat's identification of Tcharou with the Egyptian toponyms Inbw ('walls'), mentioned in several sources from the New Kingdom till the 26th dynasty<sup>3201</sup>, is not based upon any evidence. He also identifies Tcharou without any real arguments with some of the Migdols mentioned in New Kingdom sources<sup>3202</sup>.

According to two Assyrian sources king Sargon II 'opened the sealed harbour of Egypt', 'mingled together the Assyrians and the Egyptians' and 'made them trade with each other', probably in 716 BC. No geographical information is given about the place, so - among many other identifications - also a link with Tcharou has been suggested<sup>3203</sup>. Because there are no reasons to assume that Sargon had actual control over Egypt, this identification has rightly been rejected by Eph'al.

Tcharou has been identified with the city of Sha-amile, against which the Assyrian king Assarhaddon in 674/673 BC organized an expedition. This place, however, lies in southern Babylonia and has nothing to do with the contemporary Assyrian attack on Egypt<sup>3204</sup>. Also the city of Si'nu, mentioned in Assyrian sources from the time of Assurbanipal, has been linked with Tcharou, but in our opinion it is a variant spelling for Sa'nu, the Assyrian name of the city of Tanis<sup>3205</sup>.

There are no decisive arguments for the identification of Tcharou and the biblical toponym 'Sin, the bastion of Egypt', which is mentioned in the early 6th

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<sup>3198</sup> See s.v. Itineraries and s.v. Ostrakine. Cf. Clédat, 1916a, p. 8; 1920, p. 107-111 and pl. 1; 1924, p. 54-61; Gauthier, 1925, I, p. 217; 1929, VI, p. 96; Daressy, 1930, p. 112-113.

<sup>3199</sup> Clédat, 1920, p. 108; 1922, p. 185-201 and fig. 2; 1923a, p. 89.162.164; 1924, p. 51.56.59; followed by Dalman, 1924, p. 44, n. 4; Naville, 1924, p. 22-26; cf. Gauthier, 1925, I, p. 161.214; 1927, IV, p. 57; 1929, VI, p. 67; Bietak, Manfred, s.v. Ramsesstadt, in LÄ, V, 1984, col. 128-129. Cf. also the indication 'Messes' (sc. Ramesses) on the map of Paoletti, 1903 near the spot of Tell Abu Seifa.

<sup>3200</sup> Clédat, 1922, p. 195-197 and fig. 2; 1923a, p. 92; 1924, p. 59; cf. Gauthier, 1925, I, p. 145; II, p. 44.156; 1929, VI, p. 96.137.

<sup>3201</sup> Clédat, 1919b, p. 214-215; 1921, p. 176-197; 1923b, p. 146; cf. Gauthier, 1925, I, p. 81-83; 1925, II, p. 56. Figueras, 2000, p. 27.246 states that Clédat identified Tcharou with 'the insignificant Arab village of Abu-Ḥeq / Tell Abu Ḥeq', but he apparently misinterpreted Clédat, 1923b, p. 146 who actually talked about 'Anbou-ḥeq' in the story of Sinuhe.

<sup>3202</sup> Clédat, 1921, p. 189-190.194; cf. also Goedicke in Oren, 1981b, p. 50-51 and the map p. 47; Hoffmeier, 1997, p. 211. See s.v. Migdol / Magdolos.

<sup>3203</sup> Cf. Tadmor, 1966, p. 92; rejected by Eph'al, 1982, p. 101-104. See s.v. The sealed harbour of Egypt.

<sup>3204</sup> See s.v. Sha-amile.

<sup>3205</sup> See s.v. Si'nu / Sa'nu.

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century BC, or the Egyptian wine region Senou, known from the Old Kingdom to the Roman period<sup>3206</sup>.

On a very doubtful etymological basis Daressy links the city of Sethroe, the capital of the Sethroites nome, with the legend of the winged disk (40) and therefore identifies the place with Tcharou<sup>3207</sup>.

De Rougé incorrectly identified Tcharou with the city of Leonton Polis ('City of the lions'), referring to the legend of the winged disk where the god Horos takes the form of a lion (40)<sup>3208</sup>.

On the stele of the year 265/264 BC found in Tell el-Maskhuta, it is described how statues of Egyptian gods were transported back to Egypt. Ptolemaios II had them recovered during a campaign in P3rsst, possibly in 274/273 BC, and on their way back they passed the city of Ḥmty, which Winnicki considers a deformation of the name (P3) ḥtm (n) Ṭ3rw, 'The fortress of Tcharou'<sup>3209</sup>. There is a lot of discussion about the geographical context of this passage<sup>3210</sup>, and because the name P3 ḥtm n Ṭ3rw is only found in New Kingdom texts, I see no reason to identify Ḥmty and Tcharou.

Clédat identifies the place R3-I3bt.t ('Gate of (the) east'), mentioned in several sources of the Graeco-Roman period, with Tcharou<sup>3211</sup>, but most likely it has to be looked for in the Wadi Tumilat.

It is not clear why Budge identifies 'Sile' and Ḥw.t Ḥnmty, the capital of the late Ptolemaic supplementary nome Ḥns(?), which probably lies in the eastern Delta<sup>3212</sup>, but because Tcharou is situated in the nome Khenty-Iabtet, the identification is not acceptable.

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<sup>3206</sup> Against Helck, 1974, p. 188, who is followed by Gomaà, 1974, p. 109; Meyer, Christine, s.v. Wein, in LÄ, VI, 1986, p. 1172 and n. 68; cf. also Zibelius, 1978, p. 212; Thissen, Heinz-Jozef, s.v. Pelusium, in LÄ, IV, 1982, col. 926, n. 2; Cheshire, 1985, p. 19-24. See s.v. Sin and s.v. Senou.

<sup>3207</sup> Daressy, 1929, p. 308 and 1933, p. 188-189; cf. Gauthier, 1935, p. 35, n. 1.

<sup>3208</sup> De Rougé, 1870, p. 47-48.

<sup>3209</sup> Winnicki, 1994, p. 174.

<sup>3210</sup> Cf. Naville, 1902, p. 71; Gauthier, 1927, IV, p. 176-177; Roeder, 1959, p. 108.110.119-120; Lorton, 1971, p. 163-164; Winnicki, 1990, p. 159.

<sup>3211</sup> Clédat, 1914, p. 107-108; 1924, p. 58; cf. Gauthier, 1926, III, p. 113.128.

<sup>3212</sup> Budge, 1920, p. 1017; for Ḥns(?) and Ḥw.t Ḥnmty [mentioned in the temple of Edfu, Chassinat, 1931, VI, p. 46, 4-7], cf. Gauthier, 1927, IV, p. 120.178.

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In an inscription dedicated by the city of Alexandria to emperor Marcus Aurelius on 28 October 170 AD<sup>3213</sup>, Alexandros, the former strategos of the Apollonopolites and the Sethroites nomes, is mentioned (l. 12-13):

Ἀλεξάνδρου γενομένου | γυμνασιάρχου καὶ ἀγορανόμου καὶ στρατηγοῦ Ἀπολλωνοπολείτου  
καὶ Σεθρώτο[υ] (sic)

'Alexandros the former gymnasiarchos, agoranomos and strategos of the Apollonopoleites and the Sethrotes (sic)'

Other members of his family have been strategoi or basilikoi grammateis in the nomes Mareotes (l. 15), Herakleopolites (l. 17), Bousirites (l. 22), Sethroites and Boubastites (l. 28-29), the Upper Sebennytes (l. 31) and the Apollonopolites (l. 32). Henne and Helck, linking the god Apollon with Horos of Tcharou and Mesen, suggest that the Apollonopolites nome corresponds with the territory of the city of Tcharou and is a district of or adjacent to the Sethroites. For Cagnat, Gauthier, Calderini and Kayser, however, the Apollonopolites in Upper Egypt is referred to, while Mussies and Bastianini are undecided whether the homonymous nome in Upper or in Middle Egypt is meant. Since there is no reason to suppose that Alexandros must have been strategos in two adjacent nomes, it is not necessary to postulate the existence of a further unknown Apollonopolites nome in the eastern Delta.

In the 7th century AD the Ravennas geographus places 'Tele' between 'Xoy' (Xois) and 'Chenopolis' (Kaine? Chenoboscium?<sup>3214</sup>) in a list of Egyptian toponyms with no clear order<sup>3215</sup>. Brugsch, who apparently identifies 'Teli' (Tcharou) and Pelousion, tentatively links this Tele with Pelousion<sup>3216</sup>, but there are no real arguments to identify Tele with either Tcharou or Pelousion.

The Arab author Ibn Khurdadbeh (ca. 844-848) locates the road station Djurdjir 30 miles (ca. 60 km) south of el-Farama, and el-Ghadira 24 miles (ca. 48 km) south of Djurdjir<sup>3217</sup>. The 15th century author Maqrizi, however, who quotes Ibn Khurdadbeh, mentions Garir instead of Djurdjir and el-Qasera instead of el-Ghadira<sup>3218</sup>. The distance on the track el-Farama - (Faqus) el-Ghadira is indeed some 28 km too high, but Daressy, who only knows the account of Maqrizi, without

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<sup>3213</sup> SB V, 8780; cf. Cagnat, IGR I, 1911, p. 366-367, no. 1060; Gauthier, 1935, p. xvii, n. 1; Henne, 1935, p. 2\* and p. 3.89; Mussies, 1965, p. 15; Calderini, 1966, I 2, p. 158; Helck, 1974, p. 189; Bastianini, 1987, p. 17; Kayser, 1994, p. 117-127, no. 29 and pl. 19; Carrez-Maratray, 1999b, p. 252, no. 421 and p. 422; see also Bernard in Talbert, 2000, map 70.74 (with the indication 'N(omos) Apollonopolites' near Sele) and p. 1075.1118.

<sup>3214</sup> Cf. Grenfell, P.Oxy. XI, 1915, p. 207.

<sup>3215</sup> Ravennas geographus, 3, 2 (Pinder, 1860, p. 126, 7; Schnetz, 1940, p. 34).

<sup>3216</sup> Brugsch, 1855b, p. 166 (non repperi); cf. Pinder, 1860, p. 126; Miller, 1916, col. 814.

<sup>3217</sup> Ibn Khurdadbeh (translated in de Goeje, 1889, p. 59).

<sup>3218</sup> Maqrizi (translated in Bouriant, 1900, p. 528.669).



sufficient reasons suppresses the station of Garir, identifies el-Qasera and el-Qantara, and supposes that the name Djurdjir reflects the name Tcharou<sup>3219</sup>. None of this can be accepted.

The Arab author Idrisi, who wrote in 1154 AD, mentions in the neighbourhood of el-Farama the lake of el-Zar, which is part of the lake of Tennis and is only 3 miles (ca. 6 km) separated from the Mediterranean<sup>3220</sup>. Clédat looks for a link with the name Tcharou, but this is hard to prove. Anyway the name 'lake of Tcharou' does not occur in Egyptian sources. Clédat identifies the lake of el-Zar with lake Ballah, south of Tell Abu Seifa, but this obviously lies more than 6 km south of the Mediterranean, which renders the identification impossible. Daressy, however, who also accepts the link with Tcharou, identifies the lake of el-Zar with lake Kasa, which lies immediately west and northwest of el-Qantara and corresponds with the western lagoon; also this lake is situated too far south to come into account and Daressy's explanation that the name has known an expansion in the Arab period is not really convincing. It seems more plausible to look for the lake of el-Zar in the northeastern corner of the present-day lake Menzala, as suggested by Guest, and to remain sceptical about any etymological link with the name Tcharou.

### **Orthographic variants**

The name Tcharou is quite uniformly spelled with the duckling (G 47 - 'tʃ') followed by the recumbent lion (E 23 - 'rw') or the mouth (D 21 - 'r'), which are sometimes accompanied by an 'w' (Z 7). There is more variation in the use of the determinatives of the foreign land (N 25), the throw-stick (T 14) and the city (O 49) (with or without an accompanying 't' or even a double 't'). Occasionally the name is followed by the nome determinative (N 24) (**72**).

In some cases there is discussion whether the toponym T̄3r(.t) written with the determinative of the cattle hobble (V 19) is a variant spelling of the name Tcharou.

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<sup>3219</sup> Daressy, 1914, p. 38 and n. 1.

<sup>3220</sup> Idrisi (translated in Dozy, 1866, p. 184); the name is rendered as 'Alzar', 'az-Zâr, 'Buḥairat Ez Zâr', 'Zâr' or 'Zar'; cf. d'Anville, 1766, p. 44 and the map p. 218; Guest, 1912, p. 972 and map; Clédat, 1916b, p. 22; 1920, p. 109 and the map pl. 2; 1921, p. 172; 1922, p. 186 (cf. the map fig. 1); 1924, p. 56; Daressy, 1929, p. 304-305 and 1930, p. 112; the map Bourdon, 1932, p. 373; Figueras, 2000, p. 246. For lake Kasa [also spelled "Kaseh"] and Gebel Kasa, cf. the maps Daressy, 1929, p. 329, 1930, map and 1931, p. 222; Carrez-Maratray, 1999b, p. 328 and map.

This possibility cannot be ruled out, but the identification is not confirmed by any certain example.

### Etymology and religion

Scholars often suppose that the name Tcharou has a Semitic root<sup>3221</sup>. Thus Alt looks for a link with Assyrian and Hebrew parallels and suggests the translation 'Stadt, Festung der Hauptstrasse'<sup>3222</sup>. Albright looks for a parallel with the Hebrew expression for 'wall, rampart'<sup>3223</sup>. The name has also been considered Egyptian<sup>3224</sup>. For Brugsch the name can be translated as 'strong'<sup>3225</sup>. De Rougé translates the name as 'Le lion a pris'<sup>3226</sup>. Daressy looks for a parallel with the Coptic  $\Theta\lambda\lambda$ ,  $\Theta\epsilon\lambda$ , and translates the name as 'le pays des tertres'<sup>3227</sup>. Clédat supposes that the name is derived from a verb  $\text{t}3\text{r}$  (with the determinative of the embracing arms (D 32)), 'to wall', itself derived from the expression  $\text{d}^{\text{r}}$  - written with the same determinative -, which he translates as 'wall, fortress'<sup>3228</sup>; none of the two words occurs with that meaning and determinative in the *Wörterbuch*, and I wonder whether he misread the determinative of the cattle hobble (V 19), which often occurs after the root  $\text{t}3\text{r}$ , for that of the embracing arms<sup>3229</sup>. For Hommel, who refers to the legend of the winged disk (40), the name Tcharou is a popular etymology for the expression 'T3 rw', 'Land (of the) lion'<sup>3230</sup>. Chartier-Raymond, finally, supposes that the word  $\text{t}3\text{r(w)}$  indicates a region where people lived in cabins made from plant materials<sup>3231</sup>.

The major god of the city of Tcharou seems to be Horos lord of Mesen (1 and passim), but also the god Min is said to preside in Tcharou (16), while the goddesses Isis (3), Mout-weret (4) and Khenty-Iabtet (18 and passim) and the gods Osiris (6, 61,

<sup>3221</sup> Cf. Brugsch, 1879, p. 992-993; Burchardt, 1910, II, p. 58, no. 1158; Yoyotte, 1983a, p. 218; Winnicki, 1994, p. 174, n. 103; Aufrère, 1997, p. 290.

<sup>3222</sup> Alt, 1914, p. 63, n. 2.

<sup>3223</sup> Albright, 1924, p. 6-8.

<sup>3224</sup> Cf. Naville, 1924, p. 23.

<sup>3225</sup> Brugsch, 1875, p. 21-22.

<sup>3226</sup> De Rougé, 1891, p. 92, n. 2.

<sup>3227</sup> Daressy, 1914, p. 37; rightly rejected by Clédat, 1921, p. 172.

<sup>3228</sup> Clédat, 1919b, p. 214; 1920, p. 108; 1921, p. 172.174.

<sup>3229</sup> The word ' $\text{t}3\text{r.t}$ ' (with the determinative of the cattle hobble (V 19)) has been translated as 'Festung' (Wb, 1931, V, p. 356), 'cabin' - 'entrenched camp' (Faulkner, 1962, p. 303) or 'befestigte Lager' (cf. Helck, 1970, p. 17).

<sup>3230</sup> Hommel, 1926, p. 958.

<sup>3231</sup> Chartier-Raymond, 1993, p. 69 and n. 90.

73) and Sobek (12, 76) are likewise linked with that town. There seems to be a special relationship between Tcharou and the goddess Nebet-Hetepet and the god Ra of Heliou Polis (42, 47).

### Homonyms

In Egypt also the toponym T3r(.t) is known in the 12th, 16th and 17th nome of Lower Egypt. Daressy translates the name as 'aire' or 'grenier'<sup>3232</sup>.

### Analysis of the sources

*Tchar or Tcharou*  
*Tcharou in the 4th-1st centuries BC*  
*Tcharou in the temple texts of Edfu, Philai and Dendera*

#### *Tchar or Tcharou*

The fragmentary stele Copenhagen AEIN 917<sup>3233</sup> originating from Memphis and written partly in hieroglyphs, partly in a hieratic characters, is dated to the reign of king Petoubastis, probably the first king of the 23rd dynasty, ca. 755-730 BC<sup>3234</sup> (l. 1: [ (Wsr)-m3<sup>ϕ</sup>.t-[R<sup>ϕ</sup>] stp-n-Imn) s3 R<sup>ϕ</sup> nb h<sup>ϕ</sup>.w (P3-di-B3st.t mry-Imn s3 B3st.t) di <sup>ϕ</sup>nh mi R<sup>ϕ</sup> dt [ ]). It is a dedication of the '[count and chief of] Neny-[nesout](?) (Herakleous Polis Magna), first prophet of Harsaphes lord of Neny-nesout and mek-official of Khatan (named) Pa-may' (l. 2: [h3ty-<sup>ϕ</sup> mr hmw-ntr] Nny-[nsw](?) hm-ntr tpy n Hr(y)-šf nb Nny-nsw mk n Khṭn P3-m3y [ ]). It mentions a donation of land in connection with 'the house of eternity of the king of Upper and Lower Egypt Sheshonq in the district of the dwelling of Tcharou'<sup>3235</sup> (l. 3: [ ] ... t3 hwt nhḥ n nsw-bity Šš<n>q m sw3w n t3 <sup>ϕ</sup>.t n T3rw ... [ ]). von Beckerath identifies 'The dwelling of Tcharou' with the city of Tcharou at the eastern border, but the place is no doubt identical with 'The dwelling of Tcharet' mentioned in the following stele.

<sup>3232</sup> Cf. Budge, 1920, p. 1058; Daressy, 1928, p. 246-247; Gauthier, 1929, VI, p. 66-67. For this meaning of T3r, cf. Wb, 1931, V, p. 356. See also § Orthographic variants and § Analysis of the sources.

<sup>3233</sup> Schmidt, 1908, p. 231-235; Gauthier, 1916, III, p. 380; Koefoed-Petersen, 1936, pl. 5; Koefoed-Petersen, 1948, p. 40-41, no. 54; Yoyotte, 1959c, p. 97-100; Schulman, 1966, p. 37.38.41; Kitchen, 1986 [= 1973], p. 339-340, § 300; von Beckerath, 1995, p. 10.

<sup>3234</sup> For this king, cf. von Beckerath, 1995, p. 9-13.

<sup>3235</sup> For a similar hieratic reading of the name Tcharou (but with the determinative of the throw-stick (T 14)), cf. Černy, 1965, pl. 2, 8.

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On the Nitokris adoption stele of 656 BC 'The dwelling of Tcharet' is mentioned among fifteen temples that will provide Nitokris with bread<sup>3236</sup>:

'List of all the property given to her as a gift in towns and nomes of Upper and Lower Egypt. ... What has to be given to her from the temples of ... (7) The dwelling of Tcharet [T3 ʿ.t n T̄3r.t], 50 deben of bread; (8) Tanis [Dʿn.t], 100 deben of bread; ...'

The dwelling of Tcharet is listed between six temples, probably belonging to the western Delta (1-6), and eight temples, apparently situated in the eastern and central Delta (8-15). Although this order might imply a position in the central rather than in the eastern Delta, nothing can be said for certain. The temple has often been identified with Tcharou, but because the expression 'The dwelling of Tcharet' is unparalleled for the eastern border town, this view has been rejected by Caminos. The name T̄3r.t is written with the determinative of the cattle hobble (V 19), and Gauthier and Daressy identify the place with T̄3r in the 12th nome of Lower Egypt, which is often written with the same determinative. This identification, which matches a position in the central Delta, indeed seems preferable.

On a statue of unknown provenance, probably to be dated in the 30th dynasty, possibly under Nektanebos II (360-343 BC), the general [mr-mšʿ] Psammetichos is described as 'very great (?) in the agricultural territory of Tcha<r>' [wr wr m ww n T̄3<r>]. The toponym is written with the duckling (G 47 - 't̄3'), followed by the determinative of the cattle hobble (V 19); the 'r' has apparently been omitted<sup>3237</sup>. The interpretation of the title is not evident. For Helck Psammetichos has 'den Titel eines Grossen in den beiden Stadtkreisen von Sile', which he identifies with Tcharou in the 14th nome of Lower Egypt. Also for De Meulenaere Psammetichos had been commander in the border fortress of Tcharou. Clère considers him 'grand dignitaire [sr wr] dans le district de Tchar [T̄3r]'; he identifies Tchar with a district in the Mendesios nome mentioned in a geographical list in Edfu<sup>3238</sup>. Chevereau translates

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<sup>3236</sup> Nitokris adoption stele, 25; cf. Legrain, 1897, p. 18; Erman, 1897, p. 27; Breasted, 1906, IV, p. 487, § 956; Alt, 1914, p. 61, n. 5; Budge, 1920, p. 1052; Gauthier, 1925, I, p. 163 and 1929, VI, p. 66; Daressy, 1928, p. 246; Wb, 1931, V, Belegstelle, p. 54; Helck, 1958, p. 233; Caminos, 1964, p. 75-76.92.101 and pl. 10 (with a translation); Schulman, 1966, p. 38, n. 17; Helck, 1974, p. 26 and p. 210, fig. 10; Chartier-Raymond, 1993, p. 69, n. 90.

<sup>3237</sup> Statue of Psammetichos (Private collection - Clère, 1983, p. 89); cf. Helck, 1958, p. 232-233; Clère, 1983, p. 85-100; Chevereau, 1985, p. 177-178, no. 273; De Meulenaere, 1986, p. 203-210, whose date for the statue is followed.

<sup>3238</sup> Temple of Edfu (Chassinat, 1987, I 3, p. 334, 8) [ww n T̄3r.(t), only followed by the city determinative].

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'très grand [wr wr] dans les territoires de Tchar [T3]', while referring to Tchar in the 12th nome of Lower Egypt, whose 'ww' is usually called 'hnt n T3r'. None of the interpretations of the name Tchar can a priori be excluded, but because of the unusual determinative and because the expression 'ww of Tcharou' is unparalleled for the eastern border fortress, I am inclined to follow Chevereau's location in the 12th nome of Lower Egypt.

On a sarcophagus from Saqqara a certain Harchebis is mentioned under king Nektanebos (II)<sup>3239</sup> in 344 BC. He is an official of the fortress (?) of Tchar and apparently bears three local priestly titles. Harchebis ordered an official of the necropolis to take care of the funeral of the high official T3y-Hr-p3-t3, the owner of the sarcophagus. The relation between Harchebis and T3y-Hr-p3-t3, however, is not clear and one can only guess why he is involved with this funeral in Saqqara<sup>3240</sup>:

'Im Jahre 15 im dritten Monat der Überschwemmung unter der Majestät des Königs Nektanebos (II), des ewig Lebenden, wurde der Schreiber des Hauses des Westens durch den Kommandanten in der Festung von Tchar [sh̄m m pr-hnr.t(?) n T3r], den Cheper-Priester (?) des östlichen Horus-Gaues, den Wer-Tehenne-Priester des westlichen Horus-Gaues<sup>3241</sup>, den Schreiber des Gottes-Buches Harchebis, den Ehrwürdigen, schriftlich angewiesen, den Fürsten, den Vorsteher Unterägyptens, den Landinspektor (?), den Acker-Vorsteher, den Osiris T3y-Hr-p3-t3, den Ehrwürdigen in Obhut zu nehmen (?), um seinen Leib in der Unterwelt göttlich zu machen, dass er jede Gestalt (Verwandlung) mache, die er will in alle Ewigkeit.'

For Brugsch, Spiegelberg and Kees the border fortress of Tcharou is meant, but they do not offer any parallels for the use of the term 'sh̄m' for a military commander<sup>3242</sup>. Gauthier wonders whether 'pr-hnr.t(?) n T3r' is not an orthographic variant of the toponym 'p3 hnt n T3r', the name of the agricultural territory (the 'ww') of the 12th nome of Lower Egypt<sup>3243</sup>. The name T3r(t) is here indeed written with the mouth (D 21 - 'r') and not with the more common sign of the recumbent lion (E 23 - 'rw'), and Harchebis' other titles do not occur in other sources about Tcharou. The expression 'sh̄m m p3 hnt n T3r' might also be a parallel to the title 'wr wr m ww n

<sup>3239</sup> For the confusion about the names of the two kings Nektanebis (I) and Nektanebos (II) in especially earlier publications, cf. Kienitz, 1953, p. 199.

<sup>3240</sup> Sarcophagus of T3y-Hr-p3-t3 from Saqqara (Cairo 29306 - Spiegelberg, 1929a, p. 76-79 (with a translation)); cf. Maspero, 1914, p. 218.256; Gauthier, 1916, IV, p. 172, no. 3; Gauthier, 1925, II, p. 121 (quoting Brugsch) and 1929, VI, p. 142; Kienitz, 1953, p. 215, no. 7; Kees, 1977, p. 115.

<sup>3241</sup> The names Eastern and the Western Horos are well known as late Ptolemaic districts (and the names of their capitals) in the 3rd nome of Upper Egypt, but Brugsch in Gauthier 1925, I, p. 17 and 1927, IV, p. 34 thinks that there is a homonymous city in the eastern Delta, which he identifies with Pharbaitos. According to Spiegelberg, 1929a, p. 77 in this text two districts in the 14th nome of Lower Egypt are meant, but this is a mere hypothesis.

<sup>3242</sup> The expression sh̄m m pr-hnr.t does not occur in the list of military titles in Chevereau, 1985, p. xvi-xix.

<sup>3243</sup> For this toponym, cf. Gauthier, 1925, II, p. 182 and 1929, VI, p. 142; Daressy, 1928, p. 246.

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Ṭ3<r>' on the contemporary statue of Psammetichos already mentioned. Official titles, for that matter, linked with the Sebennytes are not surprising under a dynasty which had its capital in Sebennytos. I am therefore inclined to follow Gauthier's location in the 12th nome of Lower Egypt.

### *Tcharou in the 4th-1st centuries BC*

Nektanebis (Nḥt-nb.f) son of Peteamounis was the grandson on the maternal side of the sister of the homonymous king Nektanebis (I) (380-362 BC), and he possibly lived till the early Ptolemaic period. On his sarcophagus in Berlin (1)<sup>3244</sup>, whose place of origin is not known, the god 'Horus lord of Mesen, great god, lord of Tcharou' [Ḥr nb Msn nṯr '3 nb Ṭ3rw] is invoked (p. 26, 15). Nektanebis is described as 'hereditary noble, prince in Tchar(ou), ruler of the foreign countries in (the nome) Khenty-Iabtet' [rp' ḥ3ty-ḥ m Ṭ3r ḥq3 ḥ3s.wt m Ḥnty-i3bt.t] (p. 24, 6-7) and 'first great general of the army of His Majesty, chief of chiefs' [mr-mš' wr tp n ḥm.f ḥ3ty ḥ3ty.w] (p. 25, 3-4). In the inscription at the other side of the sarcophagus he is described as 'hereditary noble, prince in (the nome) Imet (and) in (the) Sebennytes (nome) [rp' ḥ3ty-ḥ m Im.t m Ṭb nṯr.t] (p. 25, 6); he fought for Egypt [ḥ3 ḥr Km.t] (p. 25, 14), subdued foreign countries for the king [w'f ḥ3s.wt n nb t3.wy] (p. 25, 17) and is again called 'first great general of the army of His Majesty' [mr-mš' wr tp n ḥm.f] (p. 26, 1). Nektanebis seems to have had important administrative and military functions in the 14th, 19th and 12th nomes of Lower Egypt. He apparently also had a special link with the city of Tcharou, although his family most likely originated from Sebennytos in the 12th nome. For Schur and Jouguet Nektanebis was strategos and nomarchos under Ptolemaios I in the three nomes mentioned, but this view has been rejected by Bengtson; he did not trust the archaic titles and did not consider it likely that Ptolemaios I would have appointed an Egyptian and not a Greek or a Macedonian in

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<sup>3244</sup> Sarcophagus of Nektanebis (Berlin 7 - Sethe, 1904, p. 24-26, no. 11); cf. Brugsch, 1879, p. 304 and 1880, p. 1084; Jéquier, 1894, p. 26; De Rougé, 1891, p. 91; Küthmann, 1911, p. 43-44; Gauthier, 1916, IV, p. 192, no. 33-38; Clédat, 1923a, p. 184 and n. 1; Schur, 1926, p. 297.301; Gauthier, 1927, IV, p. 178-179; Jouguet, 1931, p. 519-521; Kees, 1944, p. 172-175; Montet, 1946, p. 86-87; PP, 1950, I, no. 285; Bengtson, 1952, III, p. 22-23 and p. 89, n. 2; PP, 1952, II, no. 2122; Kienitz, 1953, p. 212, no. 107; Montet, 1957, p. 190; Roeder, 1959, p. 156-157; Gutbub, 1962, p. 45.74; Mussies, 1965, p. 28; Helck, 1974, p. 189; PP, 1975, VIII, p. 40.137; Helck, s.v. Gaue, in LÄ, II, 1977, col. 399; Kees, 1977, p. 115; Chevereau, 1985, p. 156-157, no. 230 and p. 351.353-354; De Meulenaere, 1986, p. 204; Carrez-Maratray, 1999b, p. 373.376.419.

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those important functions; Nektanebis might have had some possessions in the three nomes, but for the rest nothing is certain. The historical value of the titles, however, does not need to be rejected completely, if one supposes - as Kees does - that Nektanebis was a military commander fighting the Persians under Nektanebos II and that he was one of the great nobles of the 30th dynasty with special functions in the eastern and central Delta. Even if he died in the Ptolemaic period, it is indeed quite possible that his older titles are mentioned on his sarcophagus. Chevereau, on the other hand, suggests that he might have been chief of the indigenous soldier units quartered in the eastern Delta under Ptolemaios I, but this is a mere hypothesis<sup>3245</sup>.

On a statue of Teos son of Apries (2), found in Tanis and possibly to be dated to the 4th century BC, this official of Tanis is linked with the sanctuary of the lord of Tcharou [ḥw.t n nb Ṛ3rw]<sup>3246</sup>. Montet rightly suggests that not a temple in Tcharou is referred to, but the temple of the god Horos of Tcharou in Tanis itself. Also the 'mesenet', constructed by Panemerit of Tanis under Ptolemaios XII (80-51 BC), probably refers to the temple of Horos in that same city, and not to a temple in Tcharou, as Cauville suggests<sup>3247</sup>.

In the quarries of Tura, near Memphis, two fragmentary stelae were found, the first one possibly depicting Ptolemaios II, the second one with a cartouche that might belong to Ptolemaios III, V, VI, VIII or IX. On the first stele an offering is made to 'Isis mistress of Tcharou' [Is.t nb(t) Ṛ3rw] (3), and on the second stele 'Mout-weret mistress of Tcharou' [Mw.t-wr.t nb(t) Ṛ3rw] is mentioned (4)<sup>3248</sup>.

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<sup>3245</sup> Carrez-Maratray, 1999b, p. 373 definitely goes too far suggesting that Nektanebis fought for Ptolemaios I in the battle of Gaza in 312 BC.

<sup>3246</sup> Statue of Teos from Tanis (Cairo 689 - Montet, 1938, p. 132-133); cf. Brugsch, 1879, p. 303-304.994; Gardiner, 1916, p. 101 and 1918a, p. 199-200, no. 39; Clédat, 1923a, p. 184; Montet, 1938, p. 123-140.156-159 and 1946, p. 114-124; Kees, 1944, p. 172-175; Otto, 1954, p. 185, no. 48; PP, 1956, III, no. 5455.5835; Gutbub, 1962, p. 45.72 and 1964, p. 39; Vernus, 1979, p. 464; Chevereau, 1985, p. 164-166, no. 238 and p. 352.354-355 (who dates the statue to the 30th dynasty or the early Ptolemaic period).

<sup>3247</sup> Statue of Panemerit from Tanis (D88 - Montet, 1946, pl. 16); cf. Chevereau, 1985, p. 197-198, no. 310 and p. 352; Cauville, 1987, I, p. 225-226; Zivie-Coche, 1987, p. 177-186; Zivie-Coche, 1996, p. 113-131, with a translation p. 124.

<sup>3248</sup> Stelae from Tura (Daressy, 1911d, p. 265-266 and p. 266); cf. LGG, 2002, IV, p. 164.

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In a passage on a statue of Pelaias son of Amphiomis (5), found in Tanis and probably to be dated to the early Ptolemaic period, some of the irrigation activities of this Tanis official are mentioned<sup>3249</sup>:

'Il a guidé sa ville (?) pour atteindre le plus secret des dieux de Tcharou [imn [...] ntr.w n T3rw]. Il a approvisionné la contrée ... en leur présence, dans Chaséf afin que leurs eaux, depuis le territoire agricole de Mendes jusqu'à l'arrière pays des Champs de Tanis débordent à chaque ...'

The gods of Tcharou referred to probably include the god Horos of Tcharou, but the exact meaning of the passage is not clear.

In the *Book of hours*, possibly written in the 3rd century BC, 'Osiris in Tcharou' [wsir m T3rw] is mentioned as the last item in a geographical litany for Osiris (6)<sup>3250</sup>, while 'All the gods and goddesses who are in Tcharou' [ntr.w ntr.wt nb.w imy.w T3rw] is the last item in the following litany (7)<sup>3251</sup>.

On an unfinished stele found in Mit Rahina (8) king Ptolemaios VI Philometor (181-145 BC) offers to the god Horos, lord of Mesen, who presides in Tcharou [Hr nb Msn ... hnt T3rw], and to Henout-Ouatet of Khenty-Iabtet and Nebet-Hetepet of the Ouou of Ra-nefer, two other goddesses of the eastern Delta<sup>3252</sup>.

The *Book of breathings* of the papyrus P.Louvre N 3121 (9), probably written in the 2nd century BC, contains a geographical litany with 22 gods from Upper Egypt and 20 gods from Lower Egypt. In the latter list Horos lord of Tcharou is called upon to give protection against foreigners<sup>3253</sup>:

'Ô Horos de Mes[en], dieu grand maître de Tcharou [Hr nb Ms[n] ntr '3 nb T3rw], assure la protection de l'hathor N contre ceux qui viennent de l'extérieur et des pays étrangers!'

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<sup>3249</sup> Statue of Pelaias from Tanis (Cairo 687 - Montet, 1938, p. 153-154, with a translation); cf. Gardiner, 1916, p. 101 and 1918a, p. 247-248; Montet, 1938, p. 152-159 and 1946, p. 114-124; Kees, 1944, p. 172-174; Ranke, 1953, p. 197-198; PP, 1956, III, no. 5437; Fecht, 1958, p. 113; Bothmer, 1960, p. 124; PP, 1975, VIII, no. 210a, no. 2109a-b and no. 2131b; Kees, 1977, p. 115; PP, 1981, IX, no. 5437-5437a; Chevereau, 1985, p. 190-191, no. 289 and p. 351.357-358. On a statue in Cleveland (Ranke, 1953, p. 193-198; Bothmer, 1960, p. 122-125, no. 97) an Amphiomis son of Pelaias is mentioned, which is certainly related to the persons on the Cairo statue; Ranke (followed by PP VIII and Chevereau) thinks the Cairo statue to be older and Pelaias to be identical; Bothmer (followed by PP IX) probably more rightly thinks the Cleveland statue to be older and Amphiomis to be identical.

<sup>3250</sup> Book of hours (P.Brit.Mus. 10569 - Faulkner, 1958, p. 5; p. 12\*); cf. Faulkner, 1958, p. 29; LGG, 2002, II, p. 568.

<sup>3251</sup> Book of hours (P.Brit.Mus. 10569 - Faulkner, 1958, p. 7; p. 15\*); cf. LGG, 2002, IV, p. 525.

<sup>3252</sup> Stele from Mit Rahina (Cairo 22189 - Daressy, 1914, p. 35-36); cf. Spiegelberg, 1904a, p. 69, no. 22189; Kamal, 1905, p. 187-188, no. 22189; Gardiner, 1916, p. 101 and 1918a, p. 247; Gutbub, 1962, p. 45; Vandier, 1964, p. 105.123-124 and 1965, p. 168-170; Vleeming, 2001, p. 106-107, no. 139.

<sup>3253</sup> Book of breathings (P.Louvre N 3121, VI, 18-19 - Herbin, 1999, p. 166.181.208); for the date, cf. Coenen, 2001, p. 76-77.



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On a statue from Tanis (**10**) the biography is given of the 'prince of Tanis' [ḥ3ty-ꜥ n Dꜥnt] Pichaas son of P3-km, who lived in the time of Ptolemaios XII (80-51 BC)<sup>3254</sup>. He is beloved among the nobles who erected for him a bronze statue in Tcharou, because of the useful things he has done for them (l. 6), and he acted himself excellently in Tcharou (l. 7). Tcharou is still mentioned in two passages whose meaning is not clear (l. 8.14). Zivie-Coche suggests that Pichaas was originating from Tcharou, but although not impossible, this cannot be confirmed by the text.

'(1) Adorer le dieu par le vénérable dans sa ville, qui fait ce qu'aiment les dieux, imakh, loué par ses maîtres, (2) Amon, Horos, Mout, Khonsou, gouverneur de Khenty-Iabtet, chapelain de Mout (3) et de Khonsou l'enfant, prophète et général, Pichaas, fils du chapelain, (4) P3-km, né de Na-iounout (?), juste de voix. (5) ... (6) Le comte et prince ... riche d'amour parmi les nobles qui ont élevé pour lui une statue de bronze à Tcharou à cause de ce qu'il avait fait d'utile pour leurs affaires, choisi par Amon et Horus pour gouverner sa région, avisé [ ] (7) le gouverneur de Djanet, qui agit excellemment dans Tcharou, chapelain, prophète et général, Pichaas, loué. ... Puisse ton coeur être satisfait de cela, tandis que je me réjouirai avec le gouverneur de Khenty-Iabtet, Pan[emerit ] (8) ... (?) pour le renouvellement (?) dans Tcharou tandis qu'il prend son virement d'offrandes de l'autel du souverain. ...'  
'(14) ... Horos lord of Mesen ... [ ] in Tcharou [ ] ...'

On the sarcophagus of Henyt(?) son of Phimenis (**11**), found near Tell Abu Seifa and possibly to be dated to the Ptolemaic period, the god Horos, lord of Mesen, lord of Tcharou, great god, lord of the sky [Ḥr nb Msn nb T3rw ntr ꜥ3 nb pt] is invoked<sup>3255</sup>. Henyt is hereditary noble (?) ['tp' for 'rpꜥ(?)], great prince in Tcharou [ḥ3ty-ꜥ wr m T3rw] and first prophet of Horos, lord of Mesen, lord of Tcharou, and of his ennead [ḥm-ntr tp n Ḥr nb Msn nb T3rw ntr ꜥ3 nb p.t ḥnꜥ(?) psd.t.f]. Because the sarcophagus is found in Tell Abu Seifa, this place apparently corresponds with the city of Tcharou, where Henyt was a 'great prince', although one can only guess what this title implied. It is not explicitly stated where the temple of Horos of Mesen and Tcharou is situated; the possibility cannot be excluded that the temple in Tanis is referred to, but because this place is not mentioned in the inscription, it seems more likely that a similar temple in Tcharou itself is meant.

<sup>3254</sup> Statue of Pichaas from Tanis (D3 - Montet, 1946, pl. 24-25); cf. Kees, 1944, p. 172-174; Montet, 1946, p. 69-70.105-112; PP, 1950, I, no. 306; Bengtson, 1952, III, p. 89, n. 2; PP, 1952, II, no. 2134; PP, 1956, III, no. 5775; Yoyotte, 1959b, p. 65-69 (a parallel statue of Pichaas, now lost, also rendering l. 6-7); PP, 1975, VIII, p. 46.139; Kees, 1977, p. 115; PP, 1981, IX, p. 107.109, no. 5778a; Chevereau, 1985, p. 199, no. 318 and p. 352; Zivie-Coche, 1987, p. 177-186; Zivie-Coche, 1996, 113-131, with a translation p. 117-118.

<sup>3255</sup> Sarcophagus of Henyt from Tell Abu Seifa (Cairo 29320 - Maspero, 1939, p. 129-131, with fig. 12 and pl. 39). For more details and further bibliography, see s.v. Tell Abu Seifa.

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In the Graeco-Roman *Book of the Fayum* the god 'Sobek lord of Tcharou' [Sbk nb T̄3rw] is mentioned, between forms of Sobek that are situated in the 7th and the 13th nomes of Lower Egypt (**12, 76**)<sup>3256</sup>.

### *Tcharou in the temple texts of Edfu, Philai and Dendera*

In the temple texts of Edfu, composed between 234 and 57 BC, the city of Tcharou is often mentioned in a mythological or religious context (**13-52**), which does not provide much contemporary historical or geographical information. Horos of Behdet 'lord of Mesen, great god, lord of the sky, (the) lion' is called 'lord of Tcharou' [nb T̄3rw] (**13, 15, 17, 19, 21, 23-25, 27, 34, 36, 45-46, 48-51**)<sup>3257</sup>, 'who is at the head of / who presides in / pre-eminent in Tcharou' [hnty T̄3rw] (**26, 28, 30, 33, 35, 37-39, 41**)<sup>3258</sup>, or 'who is in Tcharou' [nty m T̄3rw] (**52**)<sup>3259</sup>.

In the great geographical list (**14**) Tcharou is listed as the major city in Khenty-Iabtet, the 14th nome of Lower Egypt, with the 'bnw' or phoenix as its feature<sup>3260</sup>.

In several passages Horos of Mesen is said to protect Egypt against its enemies, especially against those coming from the east<sup>3261</sup>. In some of these texts Horos is explicitly linked with Tcharou (e.g. **15, 38-39, 41**):

'Utterance by Horos, lord of Mesen, great god, lord of the sky, goodly spearsman in Djeba ('Retribution-Town'), goodly watcher in the Two Lands and River-banks, who protects the cities

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<sup>3256</sup> P.Amherst 8, pl. 16, 3, 4 (Newberry, 1899, p. 46); P.Tebtynis 2a, pl. 5, 11 (Botti, 1959, p. 50.54); cf. Beinlich, 1991, p. 216-217, no. 793-794. Both Newberry and Botti incorrectly identify Tcharou and Tanis. Cf. Brovarski, Edward, s.v. Sobek, in LÄ, V, 1984, col. 1017.

<sup>3257</sup> Temple of Edfu (Chassinat, 1984, I 2, p. 306, 18; 1987, I 3, p. 375, 2; 1987, I 4, p. 476, 9; 1987, II 1, p. 42, 16; 1990, II 2, p. 186, 4; 1928, III, p. 229, 21; III, p. 230, 7-8; III, p. 231, 1-2; III, p. 265, 4; 1930, V, p. 213, 3; V, p. 298, 3-4; 1932, VII, p. 168, 4 (cf. Kurth, 2004, II, p. 303); VII, p. 168, 7-8 (cf. Kurth, 2004, II, p. 303); VII, p. 259, 9 ([nb?] T̄3rw; cf. Gutbub, 1962, p. 55; Kurth, 2004, II, p. 486); 1933, VIII, p. 7, 14-15 (cf. Kurth, 1998, I, p. 17); VIII, p. 80, 3 (cf. Kurth, 1998, I, p. 143); VIII, p. 87, 14 (cf. Kurth, 1998, I, p. 156)); cf. LGG, 2002, III, p. 784.

<sup>3258</sup> Temple of Edfu (Chassinat, 1928, III, p. 232, 15; III, p. 288, 17; 1929, IV, p. 392, 7; 1930, V, p. 212, 13; V, p. 255, 11; V, p. 299, 1; 1931, VI, p. 71, 10-11; VI, p. 75, 5; VI, p. 317, 5); cf. LGG, 2002, V, 875.

<sup>3259</sup> Temple of Edfu (Chassinat, 1933, VIII, p. 133, 3-4); cf. Kurth, 1998, I, p. 240 (with a translation); LGG, 2002, IV, p. 377-378.

<sup>3260</sup> Temple of Edfu (Chassinat, 1987, I 3, p. 334, 9-10); cf. Küthmann, 1911, p. 41.44; Clédat, 1923b, p. 183-184 and 1924, p. 41-42; Gardiner, 1947, II, p. 203-204\*; Montet, 1957, p. 189 ('Il t'apporte le Dressoir oriental, Tcharou, avec le héron (bnw) qui sort comme le coeur divin à la droite d'Osiris'); Vandier, 1965, p. 171 ('Il t'apporte Khenty-Iabtet avec le phénix qui sort du coeur du dieu qui commande à l'Occident d'Osiris (?)); Cauville, 1987, I, p. 228 ('le phénix surgit du coeur du dieu à la droite d'Osiris'); Gomaà, 1987, p. 223.

<sup>3261</sup> Cf. Cauville, 1987, I, p. 224 and n. 1.

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and safe-guards the provinces, falcon of great strength pre-eminent in Pe and Mesen, lion pre-eminent in Tcharou.' (38)<sup>3262</sup>

'Utterance by Horos, lord of Mesen, great god, lord of the sky, lion pre-eminent in Tcharou, falcon of great strength, lord of Upper and Lower Egypt, guardian who guards Egypt [Kmt] from the northerners, wall of copper round about his Upper Egyptian Mesen [sc. Edfu], watcher over his Lower Egyptian Mesen.' (39)<sup>3263</sup>

The god Min, 'who is at the head of Tcharou' [ḥnty T3rw], defends the Egyptian border against enemies coming from the east (16), a task that is more usually ascribed to the god Horos<sup>3264</sup>:

'Min, maître de Djaâ [nb D3ʿ], qui préside à Tcharou, qui repousse la marche de l'ennemi (qui se dirige) vers l'Égypte, qui repousse les rebelles des Rives d'Horos.'

The goddess Khenty-Iabtet, 'who is at the head of Khenty-Iabtet' or 'mistress of Khenty-Iabtet', is called Isis 'who protects her son in Tcharou' [ḥwt s3.s m T3rw] (18, 22, 32, 43)<sup>3265</sup> or 'the protection of her son in Tcharou [s3 s3.s m T3rw] (20, 31)<sup>3266</sup>.

In the legend of the winged disk, Ra orders Horos of Behdet to fight the followers of Seth, who have fled to the marshes and hills of Tcharou in the east. Horos wins the battle in the form of a lion. Afterwards the place of Horos' victory is named Khenty-Iabtet, Tcharou and Mesen (40)<sup>3267</sup>:

'Ra said to Horos of Behdet: "These enemies, they have sailed to the east in order to reach Heliou Polis [Iwnw mh̄w], they have sailed to the east to Tcharou, their marshland." Then said Horos of Behdet: "All that thou commandest shall come to pass, O Ra, lord of the gods, for thou art the lord of commands." Then they boarded the barque of Ra, and they sailed to the east. Then he saw those enemies, some of them were fallen in the sea, and some of them were fallen on the mountains. And Horos of Behdet assumed the form of a lion with the face of a man, crowned with the triple crown, his arm being like flint, and he hastened after them, and he brought away 142 enemies. He slew them with his claws, he dragged forth their kidneys, their blood lay on the heights, and he made a meal out of them for his followers, while he was on the mountains. Ra said to Thoth: 'Lo! Horos of Behdet is like a lion on his *msn* [sc. a floater for a harpooner], (standing) on the backs of the enemies who yield him their kidneys." Thoth said: "This town shall be called Khenty-Iabtet, it shall

<sup>3262</sup> Temple of Edfu (Chassinat, 1931, VI, p. 71, 10-11); cf. Brugsch, 1879, p. 997; Blackman, 1943, p. 11 (with a translation); Griffiths, 1958, p. 80 (with a translation); Gutbub, 1964, p. 51 and n. 1.

<sup>3263</sup> Temple of Edfu (Chassinat, 1931, VI, p. 75, 5-6); cf. Brugsch, 1879, p. 301; Blackman, 1943, p. 14 (with a translation); Griffiths, 1958, p. 80-81 (with a translation).

<sup>3264</sup> Temple of Edfu (Chassinat, 1987, I 3, p. 396, 7-8); cf. Cauville, 1987, I, p. 37.224 (with a translation) and II, p. 32; LGG, 2002, V, 875. Cauville, 1987, I, p. 37 and n. 3 states that Min is attested for Tcharou also in another source, but she actually refers to a text from Tanis. For Cauville, 1987, I, p. 225 Djaa is situated in the region of Tcharou, but this is a mere hypothesis, since this passage is the only attestation for the place (cf. LGG, 2002, III, p. 793).

<sup>3265</sup> Temple of Edfu (Chassinat, 1987, I 4, p. 561, 3-4; 1928, III, p. 193, 9; 1930, V, p. 174, 17; 1931, VI, p. 317, 9); cf. LGG, 2002, V, p. 671.

<sup>3266</sup> Temple of Edfu (Chassinat, 1987, II 1, p. 135, 12; V, p. 101, 15-16); cf. LGG, 2002, VI, p. 121.

<sup>3267</sup> Temple of Edfu (Chassinat, 1931, VI, p. 127, 7 - p. 128, 2); cf. Griffiths, 1888, p. 105; Schäfer, 1904, p. 159; Roeder, 1915, p. 134-135; Naville, 1924, p. 23-24; Gauthier, 1925, I, p. 55; 1926, III, p. 60; Hommel, 1926, p. 958; Fairman, 1935, p. 34-35 (with a translation); Alliot, 1954, II, p. 751-754 (with a translation); Griffiths, 1958, p. 75-85; Gutbub, 1964, p. 42-43; Griffiths, John G., s.v. Horusmythe, in *LÄ*, III, 1980, col. 56; Redford, 1986, p. 279-281; Kurth, 1994, p. 211-212 (with a translation). See also s.v. Lake Serbonis.

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be called Tcharou from this day, and kidneys shall be brought from the marshes of Tcharou from this day, and this god shall be called Horos of Behdet, lord of Mesen, from this day."

The king offers a winged scarab to Horos of Mesen 'the lion who is at the head of Tcharou' (41), to the goddess Nebet-Hetepet (42) and to the goddess Khenty-Iabtet (43), all three of them explicitly linked with Tcharou<sup>3268</sup>:

'Paroles dites par Nebet-Hetepet dans le district de Ra-nefer [Nbt-ḥtpt m w n R<sup>c</sup>-nfr] celle pour laquelle Ra est sorti d'Heliou Polis pour aller à Tcharou [pr n.s R<sup>c</sup> m Iwnw r T̄3rw], soleil féminin excellent dans Edfu. Son lieu de repos, c'est Heliou Polis.' (42)<sup>3269</sup>

'Paroles dites par Khenty-Iabtet, celle qui commande à Khenty-Iabtet, Isis qui protège son <fils> à Tcharou, la grande Horus femelle, qui n'a pas sa pareille d'Éléphantine à la côte du Delta.' (43)<sup>3270</sup>  
The goddess Nebet-Hetepet originally came from Heliou Polis, and apparently received a cult in Tcharou. The journey of Ra from Heliou Polis to Tcharou is also described in another passage (47)<sup>3271</sup>:

'Paroles dites par Hathor-Nebet-Hetepet dans le district de Ra-nefer, celle pour laquelle Ra est sorti d'Heliou Polis pour aller à Tcharou, maîtresse d'Or, maîtresse de Dendera, qui commande à Edfu, l'oeil de Ra, qui se repose dans Thebai.'

The winged scarab is also linked with Tcharou in another passage (29)<sup>3272</sup>:

'(Horos et Khenty-Iabtet) protègent le scarabée issu de la tête divine et défont son corps dans Tcharou [ntry ḏt.f m T̄3rw].'

In a list of names for the temple of Edfu (44) 'Mesen in the south', Edfu, is compared with 'Mesen in the north', which is identified with Tcharou<sup>3273</sup>.

'Mesen des Herrn-von-Mesen, welches in Oberägypten ist, wie sein Mesen Tcharou in Unterägypten'  
[Msn n nb Msn nty m t3 Šm<sup>c</sup>w mi Msn.f T̄3rw m t3 Mḥw]

In the mammisi of Edfu, decorated between 124 BC and 37 AD, Horos of Behdet is called 'the great god, lord of the sky, lord of Mesen', 'who is at the head of Tcharou' [ḥnty T̄3rw] (53-54) or simply 'lord of Tcharou' [nb T̄3rw] (55)<sup>3274</sup>.

In the geographical list of Philai<sup>3275</sup> from the time of Augustus (30 BC - 14 AD) (56) 'the products of the land in Tcharou' [ih.wt n t3 m T̄3rw] are mentioned for

<sup>3268</sup> Temple of Edfu (Chassinat, 1931, VI, p. 316, 10 - 317, 12); cf. Vandier, 1964, p. 135-136 and 1965, p. 166-176; Cauville, 1987, I, p. 227-229.

<sup>3269</sup> Temple of Edfu (Chassinat, 1931, VI, p. 317, 7-8); cf. Vandier, 1964, p. 135-136 and 1965, p. 172 (with a translation); LGG, 2002, III, p. 72.

<sup>3270</sup> Temple of Edfu (Chassinat, 1931, VI, p. 317, 9-10); cf. Vandier, 1965, p. 168 (with a translation).

<sup>3271</sup> Temple of Edfu (Chassinat, 1932, VII, p. 258, 11-12); cf. Vandier, 1964, p. 136-137 (with a translation) and 1965, p. 172-174; LGG, 2002, III, p. 72; Kurth, 2004, II, p. 483 (with a translation).

<sup>3272</sup> Temple of Edfu (Chassinat, 1929, IV, p. 121, 3-4); cf. Cauville, 1987, I, p. 227 (with a translation); LGG, 2002, IV, p. 559.

<sup>3273</sup> Temple of Edfu (Chassinat, 1932, VII, p. 10, 8-9); cf. Dümichen, 1871, p. 111; Brugsch, 1879, p. 299; Gauthier, 1929, VI, p. 67; Kurth, 2004, II, p. 13 (with a translation).

<sup>3274</sup> Mammisi of Edfu (Chassinat, 1939, p. 1, 16; p. 9, 14; p. 169, 10); cf. LGG, 2002, III, p. 784 and V, p. 875.

the Khenty-Iabtet nome<sup>3276</sup>. There is some discussion about the reading of the text. Bénédite has 't3 mr T3rw', which has been interpreted as 'the swampy land (of) Tcharou'. Instead of the 'mr' sign (N 36), however, Brugsch, apparently followed by Montet, reads the 'flat m' (Aa 13) and it is the same expression 'ih.wt n t3 m T3rw' that is found in a parallel geographical list in Dendera (73). It is difficult to decide without checking the original inscription, whether the reading of Brugsch or of Bénédite is correct, but even if the 'mr' sign is written, this does not exclude the reading 'm' and most likely no reference is made here to any swamp, canal or lake in the region of Tcharou.

In the temple texts of Dendera, composed between 54 BC and 180 AD, Horos of Behdet 'lord of Mesen, great god, lord of the sky' is called 'lord of Tcharou' [nb T3rw] (58-60, 62, 64-65, 67, 69-72, 75)<sup>3277</sup> or 'the lion who is at the head of Tcharou' [t3m hnty T3rw] (63, 66)<sup>3278</sup>. In one instance the name of Tcharou in this title is written with a nome determinative and apparently 'lord of the nome of Tcharou' is meant (72)<sup>3279</sup>.

The goddess Khenty-Iabtet mistress of Khenty-Iabtet is called 'the one who keeps her child safe in Tcharou' [swd3t t3.s m T3rw] (68)<sup>3280</sup>. Also other texts link Tcharou with the nome of Khenty-Iabtet. In a geographical list of places where Osiris is worshipped (73), Tcharou is situated in the nome of Khenty-Iabtet [m T3rw m Hnt-I3bt.t]<sup>3281</sup> and in another geographical list (74) 'Khenty-Iabtet and the Region of Horos who resides in Benou bringing the products of the land in Tcharou' [ih.wt n t3

<sup>3275</sup> Cf. also Wb, 1931, V, Belegstelle, p. 54 ('Philae <1489> Phot 220'), referring to an unpublished Philai text mentioning Tcharou (57).

<sup>3276</sup> Temple of Philai (Bénédite, 1893, p. 117-118); cf. Brugsch, 1879, p. 993; Daressy, 1914, p. 37; Clédat, 1916b, p. 22; Clédat, 1921, p. 171-172.196; Daressy, 1929, p. 299304; Gauthier, 1929, VI, p. 16.18.67; Cazelles, 1987 [= 1955], p. 224, n. 259; Montet, 1957, p. 189-190.

<sup>3277</sup> Temple of Dendera (Chassinat, 1934, I, p. 71, 5-6, I, p. 142, 7-8; 1934, II, p. 92, 7; 1935, IV, p. 211, 16; VI, p. 54, 3-4; VI, p. 173, 1; Daumas, 1987, IX, p. 84, 9; IX, p. 247, 1; Cauville, 1997, X, p. 89, 12; X, p. 160, 6; X, p. 190, 3; Cauville, 2000, XI, p. 84, 2); cf. Montet, 1957, p. 191, n. 5; Cauville, 1998, I, p. 110-111.208-209.465; 1999, II, p.144-145.718; 2001, IV, p. 346-347.898; 2004, V-VI 1, p. 326-327.480-481 and V-VI 2, p. 525; 1997, X 1, p. 49.83.99 and X 3, p. 623; LGG, 2002, III, p. 784.

<sup>3278</sup> Temple of Dendera (Chassinat, VI, p. 20, 8; 1972, VII, p. 77, 11); cf. Cauville, 2004, V-VI, 1, p. 286-287 and V-VI 2, p. 525; LGG, 2002, V, 875.

<sup>3279</sup> Temple of Dendera (Cauville, 1997, X, p. 190, 3); cf. Cauville, 1997, X 1, p. 99 and X 3, p. 623.

<sup>3280</sup> Temple of Dendera (Daumas, 1987, IX, p. 84, 13); cf. LGG, 2002, VI, p. 233.

<sup>3281</sup> Temple of Dendera (Cauville, 1997, X, p. 288, 14); cf. Mariette, 1873, II 4, pl. 75, 21; Erman, 1906, p. 73; Clédat, 1914, p. 108, n. 1; Cauville, 1997, X 1, p. 155.

m T3rw] are referred to<sup>3282</sup>. In another list (61), however, Tcharou is located in 'Ways-of-Horos' [m T3rw m W3.wt-Hr]<sup>3283</sup>. In texts dating from the Old to the New Kingdom the toponym 'Ways-of-Horos' indicates the Egyptian eastern border region, although the name is also used for the city of Tcharou itself<sup>3284</sup>. The name rarely occurs in later sources, and most likely the priests of Dendera linked the nome of Khenty-Iabtet with the older indication for that region.

## SELE

Egyptian name: Tcharou (Late and Graeco-Roman periods)

Modern name: Tell Abu Seifa

### Topographical situation

The city of Sele, which only occurs in sources of the 4th-5th centuries AD, lies 24 miles (ca. 36 km) south of Pelousion according to the *Itinerarium Antonini* (1), but this distance is probably somewhat high. In the early 5th century AD it was the seat of a cavalry unit, the Ala prima Aegyptiorum (2). In 431 AD the city had its own bishop (3-7).

### Administrative situation

In the first half of the 5th century BC the *Notitia dignitatum* (2) and the Acts of the Council of Ephesos (4) place Sele, which is explicitly called a city (πόλις - 'civitas' (5, 7)), in the Egyptian province Augustamnica, while the late *Notitia Alexandrina* (8-10) situates the place in the province Augustamnica I.

### Identifications<sup>3285</sup>

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<sup>3282</sup> Temple of Dendera (Cauville, 1997, X, p. 337, 3); cf. Gauthier, 1929, VI, p. 67; Montet, 1957, p. 189-190; Cauville, 1997, X 1, p. 181.

<sup>3283</sup> Temple of Dendera (Chassinat, 1934, II, p. 132, 1); cf. Mariette, 1870, II 2, pl. 39d, 2; Erman, 1906, p. 73; Kütthmann, 1911, p. 47; Clédat, 1920, p. 112; Gardiner, 1920, p. 115; Gauthier, 1925, I, p. 174; Cauville, 1999, II, p. 204-205.

<sup>3284</sup> See § Identifications.

<sup>3285</sup> The identification 'Tkw = Sele' in Timm, 1991, V, p. 2333, n. 8 is a mere mistake.

The Greek form Sele most likely renders the Egyptian name T̄3rw (Tcharou)<sup>3286</sup>. Nibbi wanted to reject this etymology, but her arguments are not convincing<sup>3287</sup>.

Sele has to be looked for at a maximum distance of 36 km south of Tell el-Farama (Pelousion) (1). It most likely corresponds with the site of Tell Abu Seifa, where certainly in 288 AD an army garrison was quartered<sup>3288</sup>.

In the *Description* Sele has been located at some nameless ruins east of lake Ballah and south of el-Qantara, but further information about this place is lacking<sup>3289</sup>. It is also not clear why Paoletti locates Sele southwest of el-Qantara and west of the Suez Canal<sup>3290</sup>.

Because of the similarity of the name, Sele has also been identified with el-Salhiya<sup>3291</sup>, but because the latter place has been founded by el-Maliq el-Salih in 1246/1247 AD, the two places cannot be linked.

### Homonyms

In the Arsinoites a village Sele (Σέλῆ) is known in the 3rd-8th centuries AD<sup>3292</sup>. Also outside of Egypt the name occurs<sup>3293</sup>.

### Analysis of the sources

About 300 AD the *Itinerarium provinciarum Antonini Augusti* (1) describes the road from Klysma and 'Serapiu' to Pelousion. Sele lies 12 miles (ca. 18 km) south of Magdolos, 24 miles (ca. 36 km) south of Pelousion and 28 miles (ca. 42 km) north

<sup>3286</sup> Kùthmann, 1911, p. 40; Alt, 1914, p. 62; Gardiner, 1918a, p. 243; Gardiner, 1947, II, p. 203\*; Vergote, 1957, p. 27-28; Westendorf, 1976, p. 480. See s.v. Tcharou.

<sup>3287</sup> Nibbi, 1985, p. 54-58 and fig. 56; 1989, p. 71 and 1999, p. 81; cf. Vandersleyen, 1993, p. 85.

<sup>3288</sup> See s.v. Tell Abu Seifa.

<sup>3289</sup> *Description*, 1830, XVIII, p. 172; cf. *Description*, 1830, XVIII, map 1.2. Griffith, 1888, p. 101 suggests that in fact the incorrectly located site of Tell Abu Seifa is meant, but this is difficult to prove.

<sup>3290</sup> Paoletti, 1903, pl.

<sup>3291</sup> Sicard, 1982 [= 1722], III, p. 177 (cf. the map p. 168); the map of 1722 accompanying the *Notitia Alexandrina*: (cf. Munier, 1943, p. 60, followed by Fedalto, 1988, p. 608); d'Anville, 1766, p. 126-128; Champollion, 1814, II, p. 77-78 in Amélineau, 1893, p. 459 and Timm, 1991, V, p. 2332, n. 7; *Description*, 1809, État moderne, I, pl. 10, followed by Toussoun, 1922, I, pl. 1; *Description*, Le Père, 1822, p. 155 (non vidi); Hazlitt, 1851, p. 312; Spratt, 1859, p. 1-7 (non vidi); rejected by Linant, 1873, p. 176 (non vidi); cf. Carrez-Maratray, 1999b, p. 23.26.27.296.300.306.

<sup>3292</sup> Cf. Kees, Hermann, s.v. Sile 2, in RE, III A 1, 1927, col. 35; Calderini, 1986, IV 3, p. 256 and 1988, Suppl. 1, p. 234.

<sup>3293</sup> Cf. Pape, 1911, p. 1363, s.v. Σέλῆ.

## 9. The northwestern Sinai

of Thaubasio (Thaubasthis), which is probably situated near the eastern end of the Wadi Tumilat<sup>3294</sup>:

|                        |               |
|------------------------|---------------|
| item a Serapiu Pelusio | m.p. LX, sic: |
| Thaubasio              | m.p. VIII     |
| Sile                   | m.p. XXVIII   |
| Magdolo                | m.p. XII      |
| Pelusio                | m.p. XII      |

'Further from Serapium to Pelusium: 60 miles, divided as follows: (from Serapium) to Thaubasium: 8 miles; (from Thaubasium) till Sile: 28 miles; (from Sile) till Magdolus: 12 miles; (from Magdolus) till Pelusium: 12 miles.'

The total distance Klyasma - Pelousion amounts to 110 miles (ca. 165 km), which far exceeds the actual 115 km, and one gets the impression that all the distances given are somewhat high<sup>3295</sup>.

In Athanasios' *Tomus ad Antiochenos* of 362 AD bishop Markos of Philai (Μάρκος Φιλῶν) is mentioned. Some scholars who consider it unlikely that Philai had a Christian community before the 6th century AD, correct the name into Σιλῶν, referring to Sele. Martin rightly refutes this emendation<sup>3296</sup>.

The *Notitia dignitatum* (2) - composed ca. 395-430 AD - mentions seven cavalry units in the province Augustamnica<sup>3297</sup>, including the Ala prima Aegyptiorum stationed at Sele<sup>3298</sup>:

Ala prima Aegyptiorum, Selle  
'The first cavalry unit of the Egyptians, at Selle'

On the Council of Ephesos held in 431 AD Alypius<sup>3299</sup> was bishop of Sele in the province of Augustamnica<sup>3300</sup>:

<sup>3294</sup> *Itinerarium provinciarum Antonini Augusti*, 170, 5-171, 4 (Cuntz, 1929, p. 23); Le Quien, 1740, II, col. 551-552 renders the name as Sila, but this form does not occur in the apparatus criticus of Cuntz.

<sup>3295</sup> On Description, 1830, XVIII, map 1.2 the distance of XXVIII miles between 'Thaubasio' and Sele is reduced to XVIII miles, but this emendation is gratuitous.

<sup>3296</sup> Athanasios, *Tomus ad Antiochenos*, 10, 2 (Migne, PG 26, 1887, col. 808); cf. Worp, 1994, p. 305; Martin, 1996, p. 84-85.

<sup>3297</sup> If one accepts the insertion of l. 37-39 before l. 26, as suggested by Price, 1976, p. 145.152 and adjusted by Worp, 1991, p. 291.

<sup>3298</sup> *Notitia dignitatum*, 28, 27 (Seeck, 1876, p. 59); cf. Price, 1976, p. 147 and the map p. 155. For Évieux, 1995, p. 40.45, using an older edition, the name is spelled as Selae, but this form does not occur in the apparatus criticus of Seeck. Alston, 1995, p. 190 incorrectly locates this ala in Gerra. Carrez-Maratray, 1999b, p. 409-411 suggests that this ala was stationed at Sele after the usurpation of Lucius Domitius Domitianus in 297-298 AD.

<sup>3299</sup> Some scholars prefer the spelling Elypius (Ἐλύπιος); cf. Munier, 1943, p. 17, followed by Timm, 1991, V, p. 2329.

<sup>3300</sup> *Concilium universale Ephesenum*, 33, 146; 45, 114; 62, 143 (Schwartz, 1927, 1, 1, 2, p. 7.29.61); 73, 142; 79, 137 (Schwartz, 1929, 1, 1, 7, p. 88.115); see also 95, 83 (Schwartz, 1927, 1, 1, 3, p. 36); 11, 1, 147; 19, 11, 134 (Schwartz, 1925-1926, 1, 2, p. 30.73); 24, 1, 145; 46, 43, 138 (Schwartz, 1929,



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(3, 6) Ἀλυπίου Σελή (33, 146; 73, 142) - Alypio Selae (11, 1, 147; 24, 1, 145) - Alypio Sele (38, 1, 141) - (3a) Alypio Selensi (911, 146)

'Alypios of Sele'

(4) Ἀλύπιος ἐπίσκοπος Σέλης ἐπαρχίας Αὐγουσταμνικῆς (45, 114)

'Alypios bishop of Sele in the eparchia of Augustamnica'

(5, 7) Ἀλύπιος ἐπίσκοπος πόλεως Σελή (62, 143; 79, 137) - Alypius episcopus civitatis Selo (19, 11, 134) - Alypius episcopus civitatis Selenuntis (46, 43, 138) - Alypius episcopus civitatis Seuleu (38, 84, 133).

'Alypios bishop of the city of Sele'

In the Coptic lists of the Council (3-4) the name of the town is transliterated rather unsuccessfully into Coptic<sup>3301</sup>:

ολυμπιος πεπισκοπος νελλη ('Olympios the bishop of Helle') - αλυπιος νηλη, ('Alypios of Nele') - αλυπιος πεπισκοπος νεση ετη ετεπαρχια νταγκουσταμνικη ('Alypios the bishop of Sele belonging to the eparchia of Augustamnica').

Alypios of Sele is probably identical with the bishop Alypios who is an addressee in the correspondence of Isidoros of Pelousion<sup>3302</sup>.

The Greek *Notitia Alexandrina* (8-10), found on a map of 1722 AD, is based upon an alphabetically arranged Latin bishops' list of 1661 AD, that goes back on a not alphabetical list of 1641 AD. The bishopric Σέλη (Sela [1641] - Selae [1661]) is situated in the province Augustamnica I<sup>3303</sup>.

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1, 3, p. 56.138); 38, 1, 141; 38, 84, 133 (Schwartz, 1924-1925, 1, 5, 1, p. 88.114); *Concilium universale Chalcedonense*, 911, 146 (Schwartz, 1935, 2, 3, 1, p. 202); cf. Gams, 1873, p. 461; Aigrain, R., s.v. Alypius 3, in DHGE, II 9, 1913, col. 902; Worp, 1994, p. 306.309.316. Fedalto, 1988, p. 608 specifies that Alypius was present in Ephesos from 22 June to 22 July 431. Daressy, 1929, p. 296, n. 2 incorrectly states that a bishop of Sele was present at the Council of Nikaia.

<sup>3301</sup> Cf. Bouriant, 1892, p. 71.135; Amélineau, 1893, p. 458-459; Kraatz, 1904, p. 65.125; Gauthier, 1929, VI, p. 67 (who also incorrectly (?) gives the form σλη); Gerland, 1936, p. 96, no. 280; Munier, 1943, p. 17; Muysier, 1946, p. 146; Kosack, 1971, p. 30.32.35.83; Westendorf, 1976, p. 480; Timm, 1991, V, p. 2329-2330 and p. 2332, n. 3. The two deviant forms are probably mere mistakes; Kosack's suggestion that νελλη is influenced by the Greek word ἔλος, 'swamp', is too far-fetched.

<sup>3302</sup> Isidoros of Pelousion, *Epistulae*, with at least three letters addressed to Alypius; cf. Abd el-Maksoud, 1992a, p. 89-90; Éviéux, 1995, p. 62-63.74.388; Éviéux, 1997, I, p. 374-377.

<sup>3303</sup> *Notitia Alexandrina*, 38 (Honigmann, 1961, p. 156-157); cf. Gelzer, 1893b, p. 25.

## *Arab and modern periods*

### *The area of the eastern laguna*

## **T4**

### **Topographical situation**

The Israeli northern Sinai expedition found a site immediately north of Tell Kedwa (T21), which was labelled as T4<sup>3304</sup>. The place lies some 12 km north of Habwa I.

### **Archaeological finds**

T4 is a large New Kingdom site, but because of a recent military presence the place could not be entirely examined<sup>3305</sup>. No traces of a fortress have yet been recorded. The site apparently also yielded late Iron Age material dated to the 6th century BC<sup>3306</sup>.

### **Identifications**

Because of the immediate presence of Tell Kedwa and Tell el-Heir, which are identified respectively as Migdol / Magdolos of the Saite and of the Persian / Graeco-Roman period, Oren tentatively located (one of) the Migdol(s) of the New Kingdom in T4, but this hypothesis is not confirmed by any real evidence<sup>3307</sup>.

In P.Anastasi V two army officials under Ramses II transport three stelae by ship from the king's residence via the fortress of Tcharou to T3-<sup>c</sup>.t-(R<sup>c</sup>mssw-mry-Imn) <sup>c</sup>nh wd3 snb ('The dwelling of Ramses-beloved-of-Amon - life, prosperity,

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<sup>3304</sup> Cf. the map Oren, 1987a, p. 79.

<sup>3305</sup> Oren, 1982a, p. 16; Oren, 1984a, p. 35; Valbelle, 1990a, p. 103; Chartier-Raymond, 1993, p. 69, n. 87.

<sup>3306</sup> Cf. Oren, 1984a, p. 18, fig. 21, 3, with more comment on this kind of storage jars of Syro-Palestinian or Phoenician origin on p. 17.

<sup>3307</sup> Oren, 1982a, p. 16; Oren, 1984a, p. 35; rejected by Valbelle, 1990a, p. 103. See s.v. Itineraries and s.v. Migdol / Magdolos.

health!'). The place has generally been identified with the station T3 ʿ.t p3 m3i ('The dwelling of the lion') on the Karnak relief, corresponding with T3 ʿ.t n (Ssw) ʿnh wd3 snb ('The dwelling of Sese - life, prosperity, health!') in P.Anastasi I. Because the New Kingdom site of T4, which lies north of Tcharou (Habwa I), could probably be reached by ship over the so-called eastern lagoon, Chartier-Raymond tentatively suggests an identification<sup>3308</sup>, but this hypothesis, which could not take into account the more recently discovered New Kingdom fortress at Tell el-Burdj, still has to be confirmed by epigraphic evidence. Hoffmeier, on the other hand, stresses that it is not likely that the main military road as it is known from the Karnak relief and P.Anastasi I, left from Habwa I in northern direction along the sandy ridge at the northwestern side of the eastern lagoon because of the many openings between the lagoon and the sea<sup>3309</sup>; this makes an identification with any of the New Kingdom toponyms mentioned not really likely.

## **TELL KEDWA (T21)**

Ancient name: Magdolos (Saite period)

### **Topographical situation**

Clédat passed by Tell Kedwa in 1904 and in 1909, a few km (north)west of Tell el-Heir. He knew a nearby well and mentioned that the site was surrounded by groves of tamarisks, but he does not provide any further information<sup>3310</sup>. From 1974 to 1976 the Israeli northern Sinai expedition excavated a site, about 3 (?) km northwest of Tell el-Heir<sup>3311</sup>, which was referred to as T21 or as Migdol. Only later on T21 was identified - on sufficient grounds? - as Tell Kedwa<sup>3312</sup>.

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<sup>3308</sup> P.Anastasi V, 24, 8 (Gardiner, 1937, p. 69-70; Caminos, 1954, p. 265-269); Karnak, 1986, IV, pl. 6, 38 (D); P.Anastasi I, 27, 3 (2). See s.v. Itineraries. Cf. Chartier-Raymond, 1993, p. 69, n. 87.

<sup>3309</sup> Hoffmeier, 2004a, p. 59, n. 12 and p. 64, n. 32, against his own previous suggestion in Hoffmeier, 1997, p. 186-187 and the map fig. 2.

<sup>3310</sup> Clédat, 1905c, p. 603 and 1910a, map; cf. Fontaine, 1948, p. 64 and map 1; Valbelle, 1999a, p. 73.

<sup>3311</sup> The distance differs: 1 km north (Oren, 1979b, p. 190 till 1993a, p. 1392; Defernez, 1998, p. 73; Figueras, 2000, p. 28.202); 2 km north (Valbelle, 1990a, p. 103); 2,5 km northwest (Redford, 1998, p. 49); 3 km northwest (Valbelle, 1995a, p. 95 and the map p. 100). Chartier-Raymond, 1993, p. 51 gives the coordinates as 30° 59,916' north latitude and 32° 28,437' eastern longitude.

<sup>3312</sup> For the first time - as far as I know - by Valbelle, 1990a, p. 103.

## 9. *The northwestern Sinai*

Tell Kedwa lies some 25 km northeast of Qantara East, some 17 km northeast of Habwa I and some 7 km southwest of Tell el-Farama<sup>3313</sup>, at the northern end of the so-called eastern lagoon, which is situated immediately south of the sandy ridge along the coastline formed during the last Flandrian transgression about 6000 BC. It has been stated that Tell Kedwa lies close to the alleged eastern border canal<sup>3314</sup>, but the traces referred to, a few km east of the site, have nothing to do with an ancient canal.

Some surface material can possibly be dated to the 9th century BC, but the real occupation of the site started with the construction of a large fortress ca. 625 BC. It was destroyed in the first half of the 6th century BC, got rebuilt and was destroyed again in the second half of that century, possibly during the Persian invasion of 525 BC. The rebuilding of the fortress was apparently planned, but the site was finally abandoned before 500 BC.

### **Archaeological finds**

Clédat noticed that the ground in Tell Kedwa was full of scattered pottery, bricks and splinters of sandstone and granite, and he particularly mentioned a large urn with a diameter of 60-80 cm, which he compared to others found in Tell Abu Seifa<sup>3315</sup>.

T21, a site of some 10 ha, was occupied by a large fortress (200 x 200 m) enclosed by massive mud brick walls, 15-20 m wide<sup>3316</sup>. Within the walls were compartments of 3 x 2 m. The northern, western and southern wall each have five massive buttresses, also containing hollowed compartments. The eastern wall, which has no buttresses and is thicker, contains corridors and larger, rectangular compartments. The entrance gate has not been found. Oren suggests that the compartments served for a proper drainage of the brick masses and to relieve the

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<sup>3313</sup> Redford, 1998, p. 45.49.

<sup>3314</sup> Oren, 1979a, p. 199 till 1993a, p. 1392. See s.v. The alleged eastern border canal.

<sup>3315</sup> Valbelle, 1999a, p. 73.

<sup>3316</sup> For the excavations in T21, cf. Oren, 1977a, p. 71-76 (Hebrew), with fig.; 1979a, p. 199; 1979b, p. 190; Boardman, 1980, p. 134, with fig.; Oren, 1980b, p. 114-119 (Hebrew), with fig.; Oren, 1982a, p. 14-17, with fig.; Oren, 1984a, p. 10-30 with fig.; Oren, 1993a, p. 1392-1393, with fig.; Aufrère, 1997, p. 291-294, with fig.; French, 1997, p. 141-143; Hamza, 1997, p. 81-82.84. The site is unfortunately sometimes discussed by Oren under a title referring to Tell el-Heir or to the Persian period (cf. also erroneously Leclant, 1986, p. 250; Quaegebeur, 1990, p. 262-263).

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pressure<sup>3317</sup>. Against the enclosure wall and in the wide, open courtyard some buildings and a lot of installations for storage and industry were found. Excavations yielded Egyptian vessels of the Saite period, Syro-Palestinian or Phoenician vessels of the 6th century BC, as well as a lot of Archaic east-Greek wine amphorae from Chios, Samos, Lesbos, Korinthos and possibly Attica, closely parallel to material from Naukratis and Daphnai. Some of the Greek models were locally imitated. The different kinds of imported pottery apparently reflect the ethnic composition of the inhabitants of the fortress, possibly Jewish, Phoenician and Greek mercenaries. The evidence of copper ores, slag, crucibles and a lot of arrowheads implies a copper-working industry, particularly for weapons. According to Oren the assemblage of materials points to a late 7th and 6th century BC date for the occupation of the fortress and its destruction by fire about 525 BC, apparently as a direct result of the Persian invasion. Afterwards the site was abandoned. According to a further analysis of the pottery found by Oren, however, most of the material came from the second half or even from the last quarter of the sixth century BC, which implies that the place was still inhabited in the early Persian period<sup>3318</sup>.

In 1993-1999 the University of Toronto under the direction of Donald Redford excavated in the fortress<sup>3319</sup>. The findings of Oren were more or less confirmed, but some specifications were made. The fort was apparently constructed in the last third of the 7th century BC (phase 1). As time passed a settlement of poor mud brick houses and campsites grew up along the northern, western and southern wall. This village was destroyed (phase 2) and the fort was rebuilt (phase 3)<sup>3320</sup>. In the second half of the 6th century BC the fort and the extramural settlement were again destroyed in a violent conflagration (phase 4). The rebuilding of the fortress was planned. The houses of the settlement were levelled and a moat was dug around three sides of the fortress (phase 5). The construction was perhaps never completed or else the mud bricks must have been removed systematically at some unknown period. Anyway

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<sup>3317</sup> The fortress has been compared mainly with constructions in Naukratis and Tell Defenne (Daphnai) that were built according to a similar technique, but Muhs, 1994, p. 107-113 convincingly argued that the latter two buildings were no fortresses.

<sup>3318</sup> Cf. French, 1997, p. 141-142; Defernez, 1998, p. 73; Oren, 1998, p. 82, n. 25; see also Dupont, 1992, p. 153-166 *passim*.

<sup>3319</sup> Leclant, 1994, p. 366 (who incorrectly calls it a New Kingdom fortress); Leclant, 1995, p. 248-249; Redford, 1995, p. 7-8 (*non vidi*); Leclant, 1998, p. 337; Redford, 1998, p. 45.49-60; Giddy, 1999a, p. 28; Leclant, 1999, p. 338-339; Leclant, 2000b, p. 229-230.

<sup>3320</sup> Mumford, Gregory D., s.v. Sinai, in Redford, 2001, p. 291, mentioning a destruction by the Babylonians in the early 6th century BC, apparently refers to this phase.

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there are no indications that the fortress was inhabited in the 5th century BC. The Greek pottery found during these excavations was dated to ca. 625-550 BC (phase 1-4), the Phoenician ware to the 6th century BC and the Egyptian bowls to the Saite period. Redford also found a fragmentary scarab, which he dates to the 7th-6th century BC. In the cartouche he tentatively reads the name [Mn]-hpr-[Rʿ], which he links to king Necho I (ca. 671-664 BC) (1)<sup>3321</sup>.

The date of ca. 625-500 BC, however, has been challenged. The plan of the fortress is said to resemble some Persian constructions, and some of the locally produced pottery published by Oren was redated to the second Persian period. Tell Kedwa is therefore sometimes considered a Persian administrative basis<sup>3322</sup>. One cannot exclude the possibility that ca. 525-500 BC the final phase of the site indeed took place under Persian influence, but since the Toronto excavations there is no doubt that its predecessor was a Saite fortress.

Within the fortress of Tell Kedwa some pottery was found - apparently at the surface -, which appears to be of the Third Intermediate period, perhaps of the 9th century BC. French stresses that there is no further evidence that the fortress itself would be so early<sup>3323</sup>.

Some 500 m east of the fortress of Tell Kedwa, at site T73, the Israeli expedition found a cemetery with cremation burials. The remains were deposited in Egyptian jars and were accompanied by east-Greek pottery. The cremation practice was clearly introduced by the Greek population that occupied the Saite fortress<sup>3324</sup>. In 1992 the northwestern part of Tell Kedwa has been excavated because it was threatened by an irrigation canal, and a cemetery of the 26th dynasty with a lot of contemporary pottery was found<sup>3325</sup>.

The site of Tell Kedwa outside the fortress was apparently still inhabited in later periods. During a survey in 1991, in a trench made west from the fortress,

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<sup>3321</sup> Redford, 1998, p. 56-57 and fig. 14-15; cf. Leclant, 2000b, p. 230.

<sup>3322</sup> Valbelle, 1990a, p. 103; BIA, 1992, VI, p. 28; Chartier-Raymond, 1993, p. 51 and n. 24; Giddy, 1994a, p. 12; Traunecker, 1995, p. 113-114 and n. 82; Valbelle, 1995a, p. 96-97; Hoffmeier, 1997, p. 73, n. 76 (in contradiction with p. 189); Carrez-Maratray, 2000b, p. 165-166.

<sup>3323</sup> French, 1997, p. 141.

<sup>3324</sup> Oren, 1979b, p. 191; Boardman, 1980, p. 134; Oren, 1980b, p. 117 (Hebrew), with fig.; Oren, 1982a, p. 16, with fig.; Oren, 1984a, p. 30, with fig.; Oren, 1993a, p. 1392, fig.

<sup>3325</sup> BIA, 1991, IV, p. 52.

pottery was collected that was dated to the period 350-200 BC<sup>3326</sup>. In an area 'several kilometres north' of the fortress the 1992 survey also yielded camp sites without any fixed construction, with pottery dated by Valbelle to the Persian period, and more specific to the 4th century BC. Another survey in 1993 showed similar Persian camp sites also elsewhere near Tell Kedwa<sup>3327</sup>. Because no general map of the Tell Kedwa area has been published, it is very difficult to assess how those different findings relate to each other.

### **Identifications**

Oren locates in Tell Kedwa the fortified city of Migdol / Magdolos of king Necho II and of the biblical prophets, and indeed the general chronological and geographical framework and the multi-ethnicity of the inhabitants of the fortress match the identification<sup>3328</sup>. Because, however, nothing is known about the exact position of the Saite Migdol, this plausible hypothesis should be confirmed by epigraphic evidence. Oren also tentatively links Tell Kedwa with the Assyrian Migdol mentioned in 671 BC<sup>3329</sup>, but - as long as no more details are known about the earliest housing at the site - this identification cannot be confirmed because the fortress itself of Tell Kedwa is only created in the late 7th century BC.

Oren also identifies the Stratopeda or 'Camps' granted by Psammetichos I to his Ionian and Carian mercenaries, with Tell Kedwa<sup>3330</sup>. The fact, however, that the Stratopeda were peacefully abandoned under Amasis, does not match the destruction by fire of Tell Kedwa in the second half of the 6th century BC.

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<sup>3326</sup> Chartier-Raymond, 1993, p. 51 and n. 26; Haikal, 1995, p. 187 ('Persian and Graeco-Roman Periods'); Valbelle, 1995b, p. 32.

<sup>3327</sup> Valbelle, 1995, p. 97, probably referring to the sites Kedwa III (west) and Kedwa II; the former (?) is described as a 'Late period encampment', some 700 m west of the fortress, with pottery from the 'Saite/Persian period', very similar to that found on the tell itself (cf. Hamza, 1997, p. 81-102, with pl. 1-17; Leclant, 1998, p. 337).

<sup>3328</sup> Oren, 1979a, p. 199; 1979b, p. 190-191; Boardman, 1980, p. 134; Oren, 1982a, p. 16; 1984a, p. 30-38; Hoffmeier, 1997, p. 189; Oren, 1998, p. 79; rejected by Valbelle, 1990a, p. 103. See s.v. Migdol / Magdolos.

<sup>3329</sup> Oren, 1984a, p. 34. See s.v. Migdol / Magdolos.

<sup>3330</sup> Oren, 1979a, p. 199; 1979b, p. 191; 1982a, p. 16; 1984a, p. 38; followed by Fischer-Elfert, 1986, p. 233; Quaegebeur, 1990, p. 261-264. See s.v. Stratopeda.

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In a mutilated passage the 6th-4th century geographer Skylax mentions a royal palace in Pelousion<sup>3331</sup>. Carrez-Maratray wonders whether this palace is a reference to the fortress of Tell Kedwa, for which he follows Valbelle's Persian interpretation. There is little to recommend this suggestion.

### Etymology

Redford translates the name Tell Kedwa as 'Mound of the opening'<sup>3332</sup>.

### TELL EL-HEIR

Ancient name: Magdolos (Persian and Graeco-Roman period)

### Topographical situation

Tell el-Heir lies at the northeastern end of the so-called eastern laguna<sup>3333</sup>, which is situated immediately south of the sandy ridge along the coastline formed during the last Flandrian transgression about 6000 BC. The fortress most likely controlled the track of the road from Syria to Egypt that went south of the laguna, but probably also the track north of the laguna was in sight<sup>3334</sup>. The site lies some 3 (?) km southwest of Tell Kedwa<sup>3335</sup>, some 10 km south of Tell el-Farama<sup>3336</sup> and some 18 km northeast of Tell Abu Seifa<sup>3337</sup>. Tell el-Heir has been localised immediately west

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<sup>3331</sup> Skylax, 106 (Müller, 1855, I, p. 80): [Πηλούσιον πόλις καὶ λιμὴν (?) καὶ βασιλείον ('Pelousion, a city and a harbour (?) and a royal palace'). Cf. Carrez-Maratray, 1996a, p. 34, n. 12 and 2000, p. 165-166.

<sup>3332</sup> Redford, 1998, p. 45 and n. 1.

<sup>3333</sup> Cf. Bietak, 1975, p. 201; Bietak, Manfred, s.v. Horuswege, in LÄ, III, 1980, col. 63.

<sup>3334</sup> Cf. Valbelle, 1993b, p. 20; 1995a, p. 95; 2000a, p. 80.

<sup>3335</sup> For the different distances given, ranging from 1 to 3 km, see s.v. Tell Kedwa (T21).

<sup>3336</sup> The distance differs: 8 km (Figueras, 1988, p. 55); 10 km (Griffith, 1888, p. 102: 6 miles; Gardiner, 1920, p. 109 and Ball, 1942, p. 150: 7 Roman miles; Oren, 1984a, p. 34 and 1993, p. 1394; Rozenberg, 1997, p. 112; Carrez-Maratray, 2000a, p. 8); 12 km (Noth, 1947, p. 182; Helck, Wolfgang, s.v. Magdolon, in KP, III, 1969, col. 873); 15 km (Clédat, 1921, p. 194 and 1924, p. 49; Abel, 1938, II, p. 387; Lipiński, 1972, p. 238); 18 km (Clédat, 1905a, p. 55 [probably influenced by the figure of 12 Roman miles between Magdolos and Pelousion in the *Itinerarium Antonini*]); 20 km (Gauthier, 1926, III, p. 22). Leclant, 1986, p. 249 incorrectly locates Tell el-Heir some 10 km west of Tell el-Farama.

<sup>3337</sup> The distance differs: 15 km (Oren, 1984a, p. 34); ca. 18 km (Griffith, 1888, p. 102: 11 or 12 miles; Gardiner, 1920, p. 109: 12 Roman miles); 20 km (Carrez-Maratray, 2000a, p. 18 and fig. 7); 20 km northeast of el-Qantara (Ball, 1942, p. 142.172); 25 km from el-Qantara (Valbelle, 1987, p. 27). The location '5 miles north of Tcharou' in Rothenberg, 1961, p. 119 is a mere mistake. TAVO Register, 1994, p. 1018-1019.1584-1585 gives as coordinates 30° 45' or 50' north latitude and 32° 20' or 30' eastern longitude.



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of the alleged eastern border canal<sup>3338</sup>, but the traces referred to have nothing to do with an ancient canal.

The tell, which now has a diameter of 200 m and is 10 m high, was originally a small sandy hill some 4 m high<sup>3339</sup>. The oldest fortress at the tell was built in the late 6th or the early 5th century BC, apparently under Persian rule, and stayed in use till the end of the 5th century BC. In the early 4th century BC a larger fortress was built on the existing walls, apparently by the pharaohs of the 28-30th dynasty. The palatial complex within its walls was destroyed about the middle of the 4th century BC, probably after the Persian reconquest of Egypt in 342 BC. In the Ptolemaic period new fortifications were built, and the housing on the site persisted till the Roman period. Southeast of the tell a considerable town came into being<sup>3340</sup>.

About 288-296 AD, under Diocletianus, a Roman castellum was built on top of the previous fortresses and the structures of the Graeco-Roman period, and is therefore contemporary with the fortress built in 288 AD in Tell Abu Seifa<sup>3341</sup>. According to some scholars it was part of an extensive programme of fort construction in Egypt and elsewhere in the east, to counter the political insecurity of the 3rd century AD<sup>3342</sup>, but others rather stress the fortresses' function for guarding the roads and as storehouses of the *annona* (sc. the taxes paid in kind)<sup>3343</sup>. Carrez-Maratray suggests that the small fortress of Tell el-Heir, which could only house a limited number of soldiers, was garrisoned by units from the larger fortresses of Pelousion or Tell Abu Seifa<sup>3344</sup>. The castellum stayed in use till about 360 AD, but the tell probably remained inhabited by civilians till the 6th century AD. Some coins and pottery of the Arab period were found in Tell el-Heir, but the site was apparently no longer inhabited in that period.

### Archaeological finds

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<sup>3338</sup> Cf. the map of Sneh, 1975, p. 543; Bietak, Manfred, s.v. Schi-Hor, in *LÄ*, V, 1984, col. 624; Hoffmeier, 1997, p. 168. See s.v. The alleged eastern border canal.

<sup>3339</sup> Cf. Leclant, 1997, p. 243; Valbelle, 2000a, p. 80.

<sup>3340</sup> There is some disagreement about the extension of the site: Dothan, 1971, p. 32 (Hebrew) and Oren, 1993, p. 1394: 800 dunam, 200 acres [i.e. ca. 80 ha]; Oren, 1984a, p. 34: 400 dunam, 100 acres [i.e. ca. 40 ha]; Valbelle, 1989, p. 601: more than 60 ha; Valbelle, 1993c, p. 22: about 30 ha.

<sup>3341</sup> See s.v. Tell Abu Seifa.

<sup>3342</sup> Cf. Alston, 1995, p. 147-148.204-207.

<sup>3343</sup> Cf. Carrez-Maratray, 2000a, p. 29-30.58-63.

<sup>3344</sup> Cf. Carrez-Maratray, 2000a, p. 30-31.

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The ruins of Tell el-Heir have already been noticed about 1800 AD<sup>3345</sup>. In 1880 Chester described the site as a town of large extent and considerable importance, with its surface strewn with innumerable sherds of pottery, glass of fine quality and bits of hewn stone<sup>3346</sup>. He noticed numerous L-shaped blocks in what he identified as blue volcanic stone (trachyte?) from the Syrian Hauran and tentatively suggested that they served as frames of windows or were used for the mouths of cisterns or wells. These blocks are not mentioned in later reports. On the west side of the site he saw the remains of a massive 'square tower', each of whose sides measured about 94 'paces', probably referring to the Roman castellum. The eastern side of this fortress was built in mud brick and was linked with the rest of the site, which extended eastwards. There he noticed several Ptolemaic coins, while on the fortress a gold coin of the Fatimid dynasty (969-1171) was found. Griffith, who incorrectly locates the castellum at the eastern end of the site, describes it as a high Arab, medieval (sic) fortress about 100 yards [ca. 91,4 m] square<sup>3347</sup>.

In 1905 Clédat excavated at the site<sup>3348</sup>. He investigated the fortress (100 x 100 m at the base, 80 x 80 m at the top), whose entrance was situated in the western (sic) wall into the direction of the nearby city. In the fortress Clédat found material from the Saite (sic) till the Roman period, including terra cotta statues of the god Bes in the position of Harpocrates, a fragmentary limestone block with traces of a cartouche and the figures of Amon and Ra, the socles of two statuettes in bekhen stone, a limestone sarcophagus, some fragmentary, unpublished Greek inscriptions, and seven Jewish bronze coins from the years 2, 3 and 4 of the Jewish war (67-69 AD)<sup>3349</sup>. In the late 6th century AD or later part of the tell was used as a cemetery.

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<sup>3345</sup> Description, 1809, *État moderne*, I, pl. 10. The 'fort in ruins' on the map in Butler, 1978 [= 1902], p. 214 perhaps corresponds with Tell el-Heir.

<sup>3346</sup> Chester, 1880, p. 146.148.

<sup>3347</sup> Griffith, 1888, p. 101-103; cf. Gardiner, 1920, p. 108-109.

<sup>3348</sup> Clédat, 1905a, p. 55-56; 1905b, p. 135-136; 1921, p. 193-194; 1923b, p. 177, n. 2; 1924, p. 49-50; Valbelle, 1999a, p. 73 and pl. 4a-b; Valbelle, 2000a, p. 70-73.120 and fig. 51-54.75.89b with extracts from Clédat's journal and some sketches and photos; cf. Louis, 1988, p. 61 and n. 4. Fontaine, 1948, p. 69 and n. 1 refers to some of the excavated objects in the Ismailia Museum. Venit, 1985, p. 397 mentions two Attic red-figured lekythoi and ten more vases from Tell el-Heir in the same museum, which all seem to be 5th century BC or later. Cazelles, 1987 [= 1955], p. 210 (followed by Fontaine, 1956b, p. 164) too hastily supposes on the basis of the 'Saite' material that the fortress has been founded under Psammetichos I.

<sup>3349</sup> In 1991 and 1994 two other coins of this series have been found. For this type of coins in general, cf. Meshorer, 1982, p. 96-131. For the Jewish coins of Tell el-Heir, cf. also Noe, 1937, p. 284, no. 1084; Cazelles, 1987 [= 1955], p. 210; Carrez-Maratray, 1999a, p. 11; Carrez-Maratray, 2000a, p. 205, no. 132-133. A similar coin of the year 3 has been found by Oren in Qasr Ghet. The Ismailia Museum contains several coins from Tell el-Heir, but unfortunately the catalogue of el-Khachab, 1956, p. 97-

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Already before 1971 and again from 1972 to 1975 Tell el-Heir (site T58) was surveyed by the Israeli Northern Sinai expedition<sup>3350</sup>. The traces of three consecutive fortresses were identified, the oldest one built in the 5th century BC; both the city and the fortress flourished in the Graeco-Roman period and were only abandoned in the Arab period<sup>3351</sup>. In the city, which covered a surface of more than 8 ha, streets were visible, public buildings, houses, storehouses and industrial installations with debris of metal, glass, faience and pottery, including Greek amphorae and fine ware, including an Athenian krater<sup>3352</sup>. A number of small 'daughter' settlements are nearby. Some remarkable objects are found. The lower part of a bronze sistrum was recovered, which can probably be dated to the Graeco-Roman period; its exact place of origin is not indicated<sup>3353</sup>. In the western section of the site an Achaemenid cylinder seal made of chalcedony was found; it is engraved with a figure of a crowned hero dominating two rampant winged lions<sup>3354</sup>. On the same spot lay a miniature limestone incense altar decorated with geometric designs on its sides and rim<sup>3355</sup>. At three sides of Tell el-Heir at least five cemeteries extended, covering more than 20 ha<sup>3356</sup>. Especially the eastern cemetery T47 yielded a lot of funerary masks in a composite Greek - Cypriote - Egyptian style, to be dated from the late 6th to the early 3rd centuries BC.

The site of Tell el-Heir has been excavated since 1984 by the Egyptian Antiquities Organisation and since 1985 in cooperation with a French team from the Université de Lille III under the direction of Dominique Valbelle. The work is still

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136 (cf. Christiansen, 1988, I, p. 28) does not specify the exact place of origin for each piece separately.

<sup>3350</sup> Cf. Dothan, 1971, p. 32 (Hebrew); Dar, 1976, p. 79; Oren, 1982a, p. 16.24; Oren, 1984a, p. 34; Oren, 1993, p. 1393-1395; Arthur, 1998, p. 193-209, including fig. 4.7 (on the amphorae found at the site); Oren, 1998, p. 78-80; cf. Lipiński, Édouard, s.v. Migdol, in Bogaert, 1987, p. 829; Valbelle, 1987, p. 26-27.

<sup>3351</sup> Dar, 1976, p. 79, however, also mentions Mameluke pottery (i.e. ca. 1250-1517 AD) at the site.

<sup>3352</sup> For the krater, cf. Oren, 1977a, p. 75 (Hebrew), fig.; Oren, 1980b, p. 119 (Hebrew), with fig.; Oren, 1998, p. 79, with fig. 68.

<sup>3353</sup> Dar, 1975, p. 82 (Hebrew), with fig; Dar, 1976, p. 79-80, with pl. 2, 1-2.

<sup>3354</sup> Oren, 1977a, p. 76, fig.; 1982a, p. 14, fig. 13; 1993, p. 1394, with fig.; 1998, p. 79. BIA, 1991, II, p. 30 incorrectly describes the seal as 'a rectangular bas-relief of the Persian period'.

<sup>3355</sup> Oren, 1993, p. 1393; 1998, p. 79-80.

<sup>3356</sup> Oren, 1975, p. 77-81 (Hebrew), with fig.; 1980b, p. 120-121 (Hebrew), with fig.; 1982a, p. 19-22, with fig.; 1993, p. 1394, with fig; 1998, p. 79-80, with fig.; cf. Valbelle, 1987, p. 26. From the numerous fragments six funerary masks [five from T47, one from T18] are restored and have been studied in detail by Rozenberg, 1997, p. 112-120 and pl. 43. The cemeteries T61 and T72, which yielded fragments of funerary masks (cf. Rozenberg, 1997, p. 117-118, n. 7.10), are probably other cemeteries of Tell el-Heir.

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going on, so - except for the Roman fortress - only a preliminary summary of the findings can be given.

Most of the research has concentrated on the tell<sup>3357</sup>. The oldest traces on the tell are a square enclosure wall, often repaired, of about 124 m<sup>3358</sup> with buttresses and towers on the angles. This Persian fortress was founded in the late 6th or the early 5th century BC and was densely occupied in the 5th century BC<sup>3359</sup>. The fortress contained an unidentified, probably oriental sanctuary with niches (ca. 6,5 x 6 m), a kitchen complex and some houses. The fortress was pulled down ca. 425 BC, but the tell remained inhabited and Greek pottery of ca. 430-400 BC is found in the filling after the abandonment<sup>3360</sup>.

In the early 4th century<sup>3361</sup> a new fortress was built with a square wall of about 140 m, for which unparalleled cylindrical mud bricks were used. Several construction levels were discerned, but their chronological sequence is not always clear. The gate,

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<sup>3357</sup> For the excavations on the tell, cf. Abd el-Maksoud, 1986a, p. 15-16, with fig.; Leclant, 1986, p. 249; Leclant, 1987, p. 308, with fig.; Valbelle, 1987, p. 24-38, with fig.; Leclant, 1988, p. 321-322, with fig.; Louis, 1988, p. 61-71, with fig.; Leclant, 1989, p. 352-354, with fig.; Valbelle, 1989, p. 596-602, with fig.; BIA, 1990, I, p. 59-60; Leclant, 1990, p. 351-352, with fig.; Valbelle, 1990a, p. 103-105; Leclant, 1991, p. 177-178; Leclant, 1993, p. 191-192, with fig.; Valbelle, 1993c, p. 22; Giddy, 1994a, p. 12 (with a correction in Giddy, 1994b, p. 9); Leclant, 1994, p. 367-368, with fig.; Giddy, 1995a, p. 28; Leclant, 1995, p. 247-248, with fig.; Valbelle, 1995a, p. 97-99; Valbelle, 1995b, p. 33-42, with fig.; Giddy, 1996a, p. 12; Gratien, 1996, p. 51-53; Leclant, 1996, p. 256-257; Defernez, 1997b, p. 57-70, with pl. 1-3; French, 1997, p. 141-143; Gratien, 1997, p. 71-80, with pl. 1-7; Leclant, 1997, p. 242-243; Defernez, 1998, p. 67-74; Giddy, 1998b, p. 27; Leclant, 1998, p. 336-337; Valbelle, 1998b, p. 799-817; Leclant, 1999, p. 338; Valbelle, 1999b, p. 784-786; Giddy, 2000b, p. 32; Leclant, 2000b, p. 227-229; Valbelle, 2000a, especially p. 74-142, with fig.55-90; Valbelle, 2000b, p. 53-64, with fig.; Giddy, 2001a, p. 28-29, with fig.; Giddy, 2001b, p. 31-32; Leclant, 2001, p. 368-369; Valbelle, 2001a, p. 12-14, with fig.; Valbelle, 2001b, p. 53-63; Giddy, 2002a, p. 30; Giddy, 2002b, p. 31; Grimal, 2003, p. 23-24; Defernez, 2004, p. 30; Grimal, 2004, p. 22-30; cf. Oren, 1993, p. 1394.1396; Alston, 1995, p. 201 (who mixes up the dates). With the kind permission of Mohammed Abd el-Maksoud I was able to visit the site in May 1996.

<sup>3358</sup> Valbelle, 1987, p. 31; 1995a, p. 98 (ca. 122 m); Valbelle, 1989, p. 599; 1990a, p. 104; 1993c, p. 22; Defernez, 1998, p. 69 (124 m); Valbelle, 2000a, p. 80 (ca. 125 m).

<sup>3359</sup> For the date of this oldest level (for which many different suggestions have been made), cf. Leclant, 1988, p. 322: Saite period, possibly even earlier; Leclant, 1989, p. 353: 7th century BC; Valbelle, 1989, p. 599: possibly before 525 BC; Leclant, 1990, p. 351: before the 6th century BC; Louis, 1990, p. 74: at least the 8th century BC; Valbelle, 1990a, p. 103.105: much older than the Persian period; Valbelle, 1993c, p. 22: at least the middle of the 1st millennium; Valbelle, 1995a, p. 98: built in the tradition of Egyptian fortresses and still in use in the Persian period; Valbelle, 1996, p. 65: New Kingdom material is still expected to be found; French, 1997, p. 142: initial occupation in the 5th century BC; Leclant, 1997, p. 242: densely occupied in the 5th century BC; Defernez, 1998, p. 73: no traces yet that the tell was occupied before the 5th century BC, so a foundation in the first half of the 5th century BC is possible; Giddy, 1998b, p. 27; 5th century BC; Carrez-Maratray, 2000a, p. 8: early 5th century BC; Valbelle, 2000a, p. 80 and 2001b, p. 55: late 6th or early 5th century BC; Valbelle, 2001a, p. 12: 5th century BC.

<sup>3360</sup> For the date of the abandonment, cf. Valbelle, 2001b, p. 55.

<sup>3361</sup> For the date of the second fortress, cf. Valbelle, 1995a, p. 98: the middle of the 5th century (apparently including the transitional period); Valbelle, 1995b, p. 33 and 2000a, p. 80: early 4th century BC; Valbelle, 2000b, p. 53: first half of the 4th century BC; Valbelle, 2001b, p. 55: late 5th or early 4th century BC.

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which had a nummulite limestone coating, lay near the southwest corner; a ramp was leading to the entrance some 2 m above ground level. The constructions at the inner court were mainly independent houses, perhaps for the mercenaries living together with their families. In the northwestern part of the fortress a large palatial complex with annexes was found. The complex was severely destroyed by war (or a heavy earthquake?) about the middle of the 4th century BC<sup>3362</sup>. New constructions arose at the spot, were again destroyed, and arose anew, all apparently in the second half of the 4th century BC.

In the middle of the 4th century BC<sup>3363</sup> a large mud brick building ('building B') (25 x 20 m) was constructed, immediately east of the former gate. It was built on a large platform that contained several compartments. Till the 4th century AD it was often repaired and it was even spared from destruction when the Roman fortress was built. In a cache the plaster busts of a queen, a king (possibly Ptolemaios II), a god with the head of a ram, the head of a man in terra cotta, two pairs of plaster arms and fragmentary legs were found, probably *ex votis* used as a foundation deposit<sup>3364</sup>. The building has tentatively been identified as an Egyptian temple dedicated to the cult of the king.

In the early Ptolemaic period<sup>3365</sup> another fortress was built, demolishing many of the earlier constructions. In many parts of the former fortress houses were built more or less according to the previous plan. Over the northeastern wall of the fortress, however, a kind of defensive tower was constructed, of which only the cellar is preserved. This tower, possibly built in the Ptolemaic period<sup>3366</sup>, probably lay in ruins in the 3rd century AD.

In the Roman period some houses were built again following the previous plan, but in general not many traces of the Early Imperial period are preserved at the tell<sup>3367</sup>.

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<sup>3362</sup> For the date of the palatial complex, cf. Valbelle, 2000a, p. 60-61.

<sup>3363</sup> For the date of building B, cf. Leclant, 1995, p. 248: middle of the 4th century BC; Valbelle, 1995a, p. 99: first quarter or middle of the 4th century BC; Valbelle, 1995b, p. 33: the 6th century BC (sic).

<sup>3364</sup> For the deposit, cf. Leclant, 1995, p. 248, with fig.; Valbelle, 1995b, p. 35-37, with fig.; Valbelle, 2001a, p. 98-100.

<sup>3365</sup> For the date of the Ptolemaic fortress, cf. Valbelle, 2000a, p. 82: Hellenistic; Valbelle, 2000b, p. 60-61: early Ptolemaic.

<sup>3366</sup> For the date of the tower, cf. Valbelle, 1995b, p. 39: perhaps the Roman period; Valbelle, 2000a, p. 82: Hellenistic; Valbelle 2001b, p. 56.61: Ptolemaic.

<sup>3367</sup> Cf. Valbelle, 2000a, p. 82 and 2001b, p. 62-63.

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In the late 3rd century AD a Roman castellum of some 90 x 90 m was built on top of the previous fortresses, the red bricks used probably recuperated from the nearby town. The coins found date its foundation between 288 and 296 AD<sup>3368</sup>. It had four square towers at the corners, two intermediary towers in the northern and southern walls and three intermediary towers in the western wall. The main gate, flanked by two towers and covered with limestone slabs, lay in the eastern wall and can be considered the 'porta praetoria'. In the northern wall another small gate was found, and perhaps another one existed in the southern wall. Casemate chambers aligned along the ramparts, possibly the housing of the soldiers. A small street - called the 'via sagularis' or the 'intervallum' - passed between those chambers and the inner constructions. In the prolongation of the main gate ran the 'via praetoria', 4,1 - 4,4 m wide, with a portico at each side<sup>3369</sup>. This street probably led to the 'principia' or headquarters and its 'sacellum' or sanctuary, but hardly any traces of this building A have been found. The open place in front of the 'principia' probably reached building B, the older temple which was still preserved and integrated in the western wall immediately south of building A. South of the 'via praetoria', near the main gate, building C probably housed the commander of the camp, while its officers perhaps stayed in area D north of the 'via praetoria', next to which a red brick well was found. The mud brick constructions in areas E, F, G and possibly a fourth one between areas D and E perhaps were 'horrea' or storerooms. Hardly any traces remain of the constructions in the southern part of the inner fortress, so one can only guess about their nature. No traces of stables for horses were found. The fortress stayed in use till ca. 360 AD<sup>3370</sup>, after which it lost its military significance, although the tell apparently remained (partially?) occupied by civilians till the 6th century AD<sup>3371</sup>. There are no traces of a violent destruction. The brick walls and constructions of the

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<sup>3368</sup> For the date of the Roman fortress, cf. Carrez-Maratray, 2000a, p. 30-31.52-54: 289-296 AD; p. 54: maybe in 293 AD; p. 167 (and Valbelle, 2000a, p. 120): 288-296 AD; Valbelle, 2001b, p. 56: ca. 282-288/289 AD. The oldest coin found in a construction level is dated 288/289 AD, while the many coins found with Greek legends were no longer in use after 296 AD.

<sup>3369</sup> The name of the street that runs from the eastern gate, was apparently subject to discussion; for Louis, 1988, p. 67-68 and Valbelle, 2000a, p. 124 it is the 'via praetoria', while Valbelle implies that there is no 'via principalis' in the camp; for Valbelle, 1989, p. 606 and Leclant, 1991, p. 178, however, it is the 'via principalis'. For the terminology of the elements of a Roman camp, cf. Neumann, Alfred Richard, s.v. *Castra*, in *KP*, I, 1964, col. 1080-1082.

<sup>3370</sup> For the end of the Roman fortress, cf. Carrez-Maratray, 2000a, p. 44-46: the first years of the decennium 360; p. 52.55: ca. 360 AD; p. 206: the end of the reign of Constantius II (351-361); Reddé in Valbelle, 2000a, p. 3: ca. 360 AD?; Valbelle, 2000a, p. 120: in the years 360. The date is based upon the absence of coins of the years 361-383 AD.

<sup>3371</sup> For the date of abandonment, cf. Valbelle, 2000a, p. 120: 6th century AD; Valbelle, 2001b, p. 56: late 5th century AD.

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Roman fortress were gradually stripped in the 5th-6th centuries AD and possibly reused in Pelousion or other nearby places.

Although Griffith and especially the Israeli expedition noticed some Arab remains, except for a single coin near the southeastern corner, no traces of an Arab occupation have been noticed in the more recent excavations<sup>3372</sup>.

The town, which covers a surface of some 15 ha, lies southeast of the fortress and does not show any regular urbanisation<sup>3373</sup>. The earliest traces are a coin of Ptolemaios I and one of Ptolemaios II. Two sectors may be distinguished. The first lies in the west, along the laguna, and one gets the impression that it is aligned along a road leading up to the fortress. In this area in 1984/1985 an early Ptolemaic bath (18,5 x 25 m) has been excavated<sup>3374</sup>. Somewhat north of the baths, a small mud brick house (7,5 x 7,5 m) has apparently quite often been reconstructed. Only material of the Ptolemaic and Roman periods has been found. Also in the eastern sector of the town two houses have been excavated. The northern one hardly left any traces, but the southern one is quite large (14 x 14 m) and the pottery found corresponds with the Persian - Ptolemaic and Roman fortresses. A quarter some 200 m southeast of the town probably dates to the Roman period. In 1995 an area was excavated northeast of the tell, which was apparently used for industrial or domestic activities ca. 450-400 BC<sup>3375</sup>. In a quarter some 500 m southwest of the tell fourteen buildings of the Graeco-Roman period were excavated<sup>3376</sup>, one of them possibly being a religious construction<sup>3377</sup>.

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<sup>3372</sup> Cf. Louis, 1988, p. 65.70.

<sup>3373</sup> For the excavations in the town, cf. Abd el-Maksoud, 1986a, p. 15-16; Leclant, 1989, p. 353-354; Valbelle, 1989, p. 601; Leclant, 1990, p. 352; Louis, 1990, p. 71-83, with fig.; Valbelle, 1995b, p. 33.39-40; Giddy, 1997a, p. 27; Notes, 1997, p. 15; Boyrivent, 1998, p. 59-69, with fig. (and a map of the area p. 60-61); Leclant, 1998, p. 336-337; Valbelle, 1998b, p. 811.813; Valbelle, 1999b, p. 784-786; Valbelle, 2000a, p. 82.

<sup>3374</sup> For the bath, cf. Abd el-Maksoud, 1986a, p. 15-16 and pl. 1a ('500 m west [sic] of the tell'); Abd el-Maksoud, 1986b (non vidi); Valbelle, 1987, p. 27-28 ('a few hundreds metres southeast of the tell'); Louis, 1988, p. 65 ('500 m southeast'); Abd el-Maksoud, 1989a, p. 135, n. 3; Valbelle, 1989, p. 601 ('south on the site'); Louis, 1990, p. 71-72, with its exact position on the map p. 73; Valbelle, 1995b, p. 33.39; Boyrivent, 1998, p. 62; Valbelle, 1998b, p. 811; Valbelle, 1999b, p. 784.786. This bath is probably identical with the large Roman bath 300 m west of the tell mentioned by Leclant, 1986, p. 249. Haikal, 1995, p. 187 mentions 'a number of different kinds of public baths', which is probably a mistake.

<sup>3375</sup> Cf. Leclant, 1997, p. 243; Boyrivent, 1998, p. 59; Leclant, 1998, p. 336.

<sup>3376</sup> Cf. Boyrivent, 1998, p. 62-69.

<sup>3377</sup> Cf. Giddy, 1997a, p. 27; Leclant, 1998, p. 337; Boyrivent, 1998, p. 64.68 (building 2).

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Four cemeteries cover a surface of some 12 ha<sup>3378</sup>. The main one lies north of the town and east of the tell. Several types of burial occur, including vaulted tombs and - possibly - cremation graves. In the centre of the cemetery some dead are covered with plaster funerary masks. Of the three other cemeteries - northeast, east and southeast of the town -, the first one seems to be somewhat richer than the main cemetery, and yielded the only decorated limestone fragment of the burial grounds. Excavations in 1996 showed that the tombs were mostly of Ptolemaic date, but some graves can go back to the Persian period.

Only a limited number of the inscriptions found in Tell el-Heir has yet been published:

(1) A small stone fragment of possibly a funerary inscription with two incomplete lines in Archaic Greek was found in building B on the tell.

1 [ ΧΣΙΠ[ ]  
2 [ ]Φ[ ]

The letters, which probably belong to the alphabet of Rhodos, can palaeographically be dated to the period 490-470 BC, and perhaps [ ]ξιπ[ ] in the first line contains a personal name such as [Ana]xip[pos], [Pra]xip[pos] or [Ana]xip[olis]<sup>3379</sup>.

(2) In a large Ptolemaic grave the letter epsilon was chiselled out in the plaster that sealed the entrance<sup>3380</sup>.

(3) A fragmentary limestone stele found on the tell in 1988 and dated to the 3rd-4th centuries AD has two armed horsemen facing each other and a small Greek inscription (SEG L, 1609)<sup>3381</sup>:

1 ε[π] δ-  
2 γαθῶ  
'Pour le bien.'

The men are perhaps 'divine horsemen', which are quite popular in military camps, in which case they can be identified as the Dioskouroi.

<sup>3378</sup> For the cemeteries, cf. Leclant, 1986, p. 249; Leclant, 1990, p. 352; Louis, 1990, p. 71-75, with fig.; Valbelle, 1995b, p. 33; Giddy, 1997a, p. 27; Leclant, 1997, p. 243; Notes, 1997, p. 15; Boyrivent, 1998, p. 69-83; Leclant, 1998, p. 335-337; Valbelle, 1998b, p. 811.813; Leclant, 1999, p. 338; Valbelle, 1999b, p. 784. The main cemetery probably corresponds with T47 of the Israeli expedition, which, however, mentions five cemeteries over a surface of 20 ha.

<sup>3379</sup> Cf. Leclant, 1995, p. 248; Valbelle, 1995a, p. 99; Valbelle, 1998b, p. 815, n. 30; Carrez-Maratray, 2000b, p. 170-171.

<sup>3380</sup> Cf. Boyrivent, 1998, p. 82.

<sup>3381</sup> Cf. Valbelle, 1989, p. 602 and p. 607, fig. 9; Carrez-Maratray in Valbelle, 2000a, p. 62.152 and p. 63, fig. 50; BE, 2002, p. 749, no. 517; SEG L, 2000 [= 2003], p. 543, no. 1609.



Another stele of the same period with three horsemen and some soldiers was already found at the tell by the Israeli survey<sup>3382</sup>.

Thirteen Greek ostraka palaeographically dated to the 4th century AD have been found in the Roman castellum in 1988-1995<sup>3383</sup>. One of them is illegible and is therefore not published.

(4) O.Tell el-Heir 1<sup>3384</sup>

Five soldiers (?) Paulos, Abraam [Abraham], Elemon, Petesonsis [Petechonsis] and Heraklides [Herakleides] apparently had to stand guard at one of the (minor?) gates of the camp:

1 εἰς τὴν ἰδείαν  
 πόλιν  
 Παῦλος  
 Ἀβραάμ  
 5 Ἐλήμων  
 Πετεσόνης  
 7 Ἡρακλίδης

'To the private gate: Paulos, Abraam, Elemon, Petesonsis, Heraklides.'

(5) O.Tell el-Heir 2<sup>3385</sup>

A list of five names, whose purpose is not clear. Only the names Orsounouphis [Orsenouphis] and Mouse [Mouses, perhaps Moyses?<sup>3386</sup>] are certain; the Egyptian name Sone[ ] can e.g. be restored as Sonesonsis:

1 [...]ελος [ ]  
 [...]μουνεδ (vacat)  
 Ὀρσουνοῦφι[ ]  
 Μουση (vacat)  
 5 Σονε[ ]  
 '[...]elos, [...]mouned, Orsounouphi[ ], Moyses, Sone[ ]'

(6) O.Tell el-Heir 3<sup>3387</sup>

An account for annona mentioning the men Pihathres and Abraam [Abraham]:

<sup>3382</sup> Cf. Carrez-Maratray, 2000a, p. 62 and fig. 49.

<sup>3383</sup> Cf. Wagner, 2000, p. 146-151.

<sup>3384</sup> Wagner, 2000, p. 146, no. 1 and p. 151, with fig. 101; cf. Hussein, 1996, p. 210; Carrez-Maratray, 2000a, p. 62.68.

<sup>3385</sup> Wagner, 2000, p. 147, no. 2, with fig. 102.

<sup>3386</sup> According to the editors the name Mouse(s) is a variant of the Christian / Hebrew name Moyses (Moses), a point of view perhaps strengthened by the occurrence of the Christian names Abraam (in O.Tell el-Heir 1 and 3) and Paulos (in O.Tell el-Heir 1) in the same group of texts. Willy Clarysse (in a personal communication), on the other hand, prefers to regard Mouses and Moyses as two separate names that later on got mixed up, and considers the first one (attested from the 3rd century AD on) a Greek name, a point of view perhaps strengthened by the occurrence of the name Mouses in P.Oxy. L, 3580, 8, which is a list of soldiers with Egyptian or Greek names stationed in Skenai ektos Gerrous in the 4th century AD (see s.v. Skenai ektos Gerrous). It therefore seems appropriate to judge for every instance of the name Mouses separately whether the biblical or the Greek name is referred to. For the use of the name Moses in antiquity, cf. Derda, 1997, p. 257-260 and 1999, p. 210 and Williams, 1997, p. 274.

<sup>3387</sup> Wagner, 2000, p. 147, no. 3, with fig. 103; cf. Carrez-Maratray, 2000a, p. 63.

## 9. The northwestern Sinai

1 Παῦνι ια ἀν(νῶναι)  
Πιαθρῆς α  
'Αβραάμ .  
4 γίν(εται?) [ ]  
'Pauni 11, annonae  
Pihathres 1  
Abraam [ ]  
Total(?) [ ]'

### (7) O.Tell el-Heir 4<sup>3388</sup>

The first line mentions the Christian abbreviation Ch( ) M( ) G( ), for which many different interpretations have been proposed<sup>3389</sup>. In l. 3 the Latin name Quintus occurs for a man who was possibly a primicerius or superior, but the meaning of the text is not clear:

1 Χ Μ Γ  
[ ]ανιμις ἀντὶ κ..( ) Οὐ[ ]  
3 [ ]ονας Κουίντου πριμι(κηρίου?)  
'Ch( ) M( ) G( )  
[ ] in the place of [ ]  
[ ] of Quintus primi(cerius?)'

### (8) O.Tell el-Heir 5<sup>3390</sup>

The end of a letter mentioning the unparalleled Egyptian name Psaous:

1 (traces)  
ἐπ' ὁμοίᾳ  
εὐ προσέχω  
υἱὸν τοῦ ἔμοῦ  
5 Ψαοῦς καὶ τῆν  
6 γυνή. χαίρει.  
'[ ] in the same way I take care of (the) son of my Psaous and of his wife. Greetings.'

### (9) O.Tell el-Heir 6<sup>3391</sup>

The text perhaps refers to bran or fodder for horses, but nothing is certain:

1 [ἔ]γραψαν εἰεροῦ ἕως τοῦ ἄλλου  
2 ἀχοίρου  
'they wrote - holy - to the other - bran' (?)

### (10) O.Tell el-Heir 7<sup>3392</sup>

Perhaps an account (for annona?):

1 [[ἀνθρ..... ..]]  
θυ...ερ( ) ...  
.υσιδ( ) ατρῖς ..ατον γι( )  
4 .... Παῦνι (μυριάδες)  
'[ ] Pauni 10.000's (of denarii or talenta)'

### (11) O.Tell el-Heir 8<sup>3393</sup>

<sup>3388</sup> Wagner, 2000, p. 148, no. 4, with fig. 104.

<sup>3389</sup> Cf. the remarks of Bernard, 1992, p. 162 and Derda, 1992, p. 21-27.

<sup>3390</sup> Wagner, 2000, p. 148, no. 5, with fig. 105.

<sup>3391</sup> Wagner, 2000, p. 149, no. 6 and p. 151, with fig. 106; cf. Carrez-Maratray, 2000a, p. 62; Valbelle, 2000a, p. 127 and n. 393.

<sup>3392</sup> Wagner, 2000, p. 149, no. 7, with fig. 107; cf. Carrez-Maratray, 2000a, p. 63. The editors write Ατρῖς, but they do not comment why they add a capital; the name Atris or Hatris, however, does not seem to be attested elsewhere.

Perhaps an account (for annona?):

1        νιαω    η  
           ...     ηΣ  
           [ ]     Παῦνι(?)  
 4        [ ]     η  
       ' [ ] 8  
       [ ] 8,5  
       [ ] Pauni(?)  
       [ ] 8'

(12) O.Tell el-Heir 9<sup>3394</sup>

Perhaps an account (for annona?):

1        ...ων    δ  
           [ ]     β  
           [ ]     β  
           [ ]     γ  
 5        [            ]α  
       ' [ ] 4  
       [ ] 2  
       [ ] 2  
       [ ] 3  
       [ ]'

(13) O.Tell el-Heir 10<sup>3395</sup>

Perhaps a name (Harsis? Har(sie)sis?) or an account (ἀργυρίου δραχμαί) Cις?):

αρCιC

(14) O.Tell el-Heir 11<sup>3396</sup>

Perhaps part of an account:

ἀπὸ τοῦ ποίργου)  
 'from the tower'

The editors interpret the Greek word πύργος as the equivalent of the Latin expression 'burgus', which is explained as a 'castellum parvulum' or 'a small fort' by the Latin author Vegetius, and they suppose that the fortress of Tell el-Heir is referred to. Because of the lack of context, however, it seems perhaps better to retain the more general translation of πύργος as 'tower'.

(15) O.Tell el-Heir 12<sup>3397</sup>

The Egyptian name Ouersinouphios [Orsenouphis] occurs also in O.Tell el-Heir 2:

1        [ ] .ρκ Οὔερσινούφιος  
 2        [ ] .ειτης πλ.( ) σε( )  
       '... Ouersinouphios ...'

Also other inscriptions and ostraka have been found, but their publication is still expected:

<sup>3393</sup> Wagner, 2000, p. 149, no. 8, with fig. 108; cf. Carrez-Maratray, 2000a, p. 63.

<sup>3394</sup> Wagner, 2000, p. 150, no. 9, with fig. 109; cf. Carrez-Maratray, 2000a, p. 63.

<sup>3395</sup> Wagner, 2000, p. 149, no. 10, with fig. 110.

<sup>3396</sup> Wagner, 2000, p. 150, no. 11 and p. 151, with fig. 111; cf. Carrez-Maratray, 2000a, p. 60.

<sup>3397</sup> Wagner, 2000, p. 150-151, no. 12, with fig. 112.

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- the lower part of an Egyptian stela with 10 lines of text, found at the surface of the tell<sup>3398</sup>
- four Ptolemaic demotic ostraka from the tell<sup>3399</sup>
- 'Hellenistic' inscriptions from the tell<sup>3400</sup>
- a Greek inscription on the rim of a basin from the tell<sup>3401</sup>.

On the tell and in the town a lot of coins were recovered, dating from the Ptolemaic till the Byzantine period. Two Jewish coins of 67-69 AD (similar to the ones found by Clédat), 122 coins from Aurelianus (270-275 AD) to Constantius II (337-361), four coins from Valentinianus II (383-392 AD), and five coins from the 6th century AD have already been published, the others still being studied<sup>3402</sup>.

Other archaeological findings include statues, stelae, bronze arrowheads, fragments of cuirasses, fibulae, amulets, lithic material<sup>3403</sup>, and - of course - pottery. Especially the proportion of Egyptian (47 %) and imported pottery (53 %) found in the fortress of Tell el-Heir is remarkable, although some refining is necessary for the different periods<sup>3404</sup>. For the Egyptian group pots of the so-called 'Nile mud' and the 'Marl' classes occur at all periods; Gratién's typology, based upon the material found at the eastern wall of the fortress, now provides the possibility of a chronological differentiation. The imported ware comes from the east-Greek world, Attica, Cyprus and the area of Phoenicia and Palestine. It are mainly (wine) amphorae from Chios and Phoenicia, but also a lot of other types occur. The Attic imported pottery can mainly be dated to the last quarter of the 5th century BC.

Eight amphora stamps have been found in Tell el-Heir, one on the tell itself (TATEH 8), the other seven in the town area<sup>3405</sup>.

**(16)** Carrez-Maratray, 1996b, p. 192, no. TATEH 3: a Greek rectangular stamp

<sup>3398</sup> Cf. Abd el-Maksoud, 1986a, p. 16 and pl. 2; Valbelle, 1987, p. 36.

<sup>3399</sup> Cf. Valbelle, 1987, p. 36; Louis, 1988, p. 64; Valbelle, 1989, p. 601; Valbelle, 2000b, p. 60.

<sup>3400</sup> Cf. Valbelle, 1995b, p. 39.

<sup>3401</sup> Cf. Valbelle, 1987, p. 36.

<sup>3402</sup> Carrez-Maratray, 2000a, p. 154-206 (with fig. 9-10.113-196 and the two tables p. 244-246); cf. Leclant, 1998, p. 336; Valbelle, 1998b, p. 811-815; Leclant, 2001, p. 368-369.

<sup>3403</sup> For these different objects, see also § Illustrations.

<sup>3404</sup> For the pottery, cf. Gratién, 1986, p. 14-16; Gratién, 1987, p. 9-10; Gratién, 1988a, p. 23-55, with fig.; Gratién, 1988b, p. 26-28, with fig.; Louis, 1990, p. 76-82, with fig.; Gratién, 1993, p. 18-19; De Paepe, 1995, p. 61-81 (non vidi); Valbelle, 1995a, p. 96-98; Gratién, 1996, p. 51-105, with fig. The table of Gratién, 1996, p. 54 contains some printing mistakes: 4A / LM: read (188) instead of (18); 9-10 / LM: (267) instead of (276); Total / IM: (1783) instead of (1784).

<sup>3405</sup> Cf. Carrez-Maratray, 1996b, p. 179.191-195 (cf. Leclant, 1997, p. 244, n. 101); SEG, XLVI, 1996 [= 1999], p. 616, no. 2147; the abbreviation TATEH stands for 'Timbre amphorique Tell el-Heir'. Unfortunately no photos of the stamps have been published.

## 9. The northwestern Sinai

Ἀγλουμ[βρό]το(υ). | Πάναμος

'(Under the priesthood of) Agloubrotos. (The month of) Panamos'

Stamps of the same priest Agloubrotos of Rhodos, who lived about 190-175 BC, have also been found in Tell el-Farama<sup>3406</sup>.

(17) Carrez-Maratray, 1996b, p. 192, no. TATEH 2: a Greek rectangular stamp

Ἀρχοκ[κρά]τη(ς) - 'Archok{k}rates'

The priest Archokrates of Rhodos lived about 215 BC; for the omission of the usual preposition ἐπὶ ('under (the priesthood of)') parallels are known. Stamps of the same priest has also been found in Tell el-Mufariq and Tell el-Farama<sup>3407</sup>.

(18) Carrez-Maratray, 1996b, p. 191, no. TATEH 1: a Greek rectangular stamp

Δρακοντ[ί]δα - 'Of Drakontidas'

Under the name an anchor is written, which is the attribute of the manufacturer Drakontidas of Rhodos, who lived ca. 150-140 BC. A parallel stamp has also been found in Qasr Ghet<sup>3408</sup>.

(19) Carrez-Maratray, 1996b, p. 192, no. TATEH 4: a Greek rectangular stamp

Σωράτ[ε]υς] - 'Of Sokrates'

The name is possibly followed by the symbol of the torch. Stamps of the manufacturer Sokrates of Rhodos, who lived about 215-180 BC (?), have also been found in Tell el-Mufariq<sup>3409</sup>.

(20) Carrez-Maratray, 1996b, p. 192-193, no. TATEH 8 (cf. Valbelle, 1989, p. 603, fig. 5): a Greek rectangular stamp

ἐπὶ Τιμοδ[ί]κου. | Ἀγριανίου

'Under (the priesthood of) Timodikos. In (the month of) Agrianios'

The priest Timodikos of Rhodos lived about 146-100 BC.

(21) Carrez-Maratray, 1996b, p. 192, no. TATEH 7: a Greek circular stamp of the 3rd-2nd centuries BC, with the image of the rose of Rhodos

[ κρᾶ ]

The inscription probably contained the name of a priest or manufacturer followed by the name of a month.

(22) Carrez-Maratray, 1996b, p. 192, no. TATEH 5: an illegible Greek circular stamp of the 3rd-2nd centuries BC, with the image of the rose of Rhodos

<sup>3406</sup> Cf. Carrez-Maratray, 1996b, p. 185, TAFE ('Timbre amphorique Farama est') 30 and the unpublished TAFO ('Timbre amphorique Farama ouest') 3.

<sup>3407</sup> Cf. Abdallah, 1996, p. 146, TATEM ('Timbre amphorique Tell el-Mufariq') 8 and Carrez-Maratray, 1996b, p. 188, TAFE 44.

<sup>3408</sup> Cf. SB I, 5741 s.v. Qasr Ghet.

<sup>3409</sup> Cf. Abdallah, 1996, p. 145-147, TATEM 5.9.19.

(23) Carrez-Maratray, 1996b, p. 192, no. TATEH 6: a Greek rectangular stamp of the 3rd-2nd centuries BC, perhaps of Egyptian origin

[ ]υε.[ ]  
[ ]υοοσ[ ]

Four other east-Greek amphorae found in the fortress are marked with Greek letters (fig. 16d: ·Σ; fig. 16e: five illegible letters) (24-25), a circular sign (fig. 16f) or a stamp showing a krater (fig. 17a)<sup>3410</sup>. A torpedo amphora of the 4th century BC has two fragmentary Aramaic inscriptions that remain unpublished<sup>3411</sup>. Also other jars and pottery inscribed in demotic, Greek and Aramaic from the levels of the 4th century BC await publication<sup>3412</sup>.

### Identifications

Since Ritt and Chester<sup>3413</sup> Tell el-Heir has generally been identified with the city of Magdolos. According to the *Itinerarium Antonini* this road station lies some 18 km south of Pelousion and some 18 km north of Sele. The distance between Tell el-Heir and Tell Abu Seifa (Sele) matches, but Tell el-Heir in fact lies only some 10 km south of Tell el-Farama. The distances on the track between Pelousion and Klysm are indeed somewhat high, and the figure of '12 miles' between Magdolos and Pelousion might be influenced by the preceding '12 miles' between Sele and Magdolos, so that 'XII' is perhaps a mistake for 'VII'. Whatever the explanation of the deviant figure<sup>3414</sup>, an identification with Magdolos is indeed quite plausible because Tell el-Heir is the only major site in the area from the Graeco-Roman period. The archaeological remains in Tell el-Heir go back to the late 6th or the early 5th century BC, and probably the few testimonies for the northeastern Magdolos from the Persian and the Graeco-Roman period refer to this site. The location in Tell el-Heir of the

<sup>3410</sup> Gratien, 1988a, p. 51 and fig. 16d-e-f and fig. 17a.

<sup>3411</sup> Cf. Leclant, 2001, p. 368.

<sup>3412</sup> Cf. Grimal, 2003, p. 24.

<sup>3413</sup> Ritt, 1869, pl. 4; Chester, 1880, p. 146-148 and the map p. 144, referring to a map of 1861. Some objects and some mineralogical samples mentioned in a catalogue of 1867 are said to originate from Magdolos, and perhaps also here the site of Tell el-Heir is referred to (cf. De Wachter, 1982, p. 225 and n. 32).

<sup>3414</sup> Carrez-Maratray, 2000a, p. 18 considers the figure 'a simplification' by the *Itinerarium*; Ball, 1942, p. 146-151 and especially p.149 suggests that the high figure can be due to the fact that the actual road was less direct than one would assume now; it is, however, not very likely that the Pelousiac mouth and the nearby marshes would still have caused a detour of some 8 km about 300 AD.

Migdol / Magdolos of the New Kingdom and of the Assyrian and Saite periods, as so often has been maintained, can, however, not be confirmed<sup>3415</sup>.

The name Tell el-Heir is only attested from about 1800 AD, and cannot be identified with any of the toponyms in the area mentioned in the Arab itineraries.

Both the cities of Auaris and Pelousion have been located in Tell el-Heir, but these identifications are no longer accepted<sup>3416</sup>.

The village Lychnos, attested for 359 AD, probably lies in the desert south or southeast of Pelousion. The location of the *Description*, therefore, between Pelousion and Magdolos is quite acceptable, but its identification with the site of Tell el-Heir is not based upon any evidence<sup>3417</sup>.

In the early 5th century *Notitia dignitatum* the Equites Stablesiani are stationed in Pelousion<sup>3418</sup>. Carrez-Maratray wonders whether this cavalry unit was actually stationed in Tell el-Farama (Pelousion) or perhaps in the camp of Tell el-Heir. There is, however, no reason to doubt the location of Pelousion given by the *Notitia*.

## Etymology

Lepsius suggests that the name Tell el-Heir reflects the name Auaris, which he, however, incorrectly located at Tell el-Heir<sup>3419</sup>.

Instead of W3.wt-Ḥr, 'Ways-of-Horos', Maspero reads 'Hiraouïtou-Ḥarou' and he wonders whether this name survives in the toponym Tell el-Heir<sup>3420</sup>. There is little to recommend this kind of suggestions.

Clédat links the name Tell el-Heir with the Semitic and Egyptian root ḥr, 'to be high', and translates 'Tell of the mountain', referring to the high ruins in the deserted plain<sup>3421</sup>.

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<sup>3415</sup> See s.v. Migdol / Magdolos.

<sup>3416</sup> Lepsius, 1866, p. 31-32; Brugsch, 1875, map; Dümichen, 1879, p. 72; Brugsch, 1880, p. 1240 (cf. Gauthier, 1925, II, p. 124-125); Ebers, 1881, p. 74-75; rejected by Chester, 1880, p. 141.147-148; cf. Clédat, 1922, p. 191 and 1924, p. 50.

<sup>3417</sup> *Description*, 1830, XVIII, p. 174 and map 2. See s.v. Lychnos.

<sup>3418</sup> *Notitia dignitatum*, 28, 16 (Seeck, 1876, p. 59): Equites Stablesiani, Pelusio ('the Stablesiani cavalymen, in Pelusium'); cf. Carrez-Maratray, 1995, p. 150. For this army unit, cf. Speidel, 1984 [= 1974], p. 391-396.

<sup>3419</sup> Lepsius, 1866, p. 32 and 1867, p. 293.

<sup>3420</sup> Maspero, 1908, p. xlv.134; cf. Clédat, 1920, p. 111-112 and 1921, p. 193; Mallon, 1921, p. 168, n. 1; Gauthier, 1925, I, p. 174. For 'Ways-of-Horos', see s.v. Tcharou.

Carrez-Maratray tentatively links the name 'el-Heir' with the Syrian Arabic word 'heir' for 'reservoir'<sup>3422</sup>.

### **Homonyms**

On the desert road between Koptos and the Red Sea the toponym 'el-Herr' occurs<sup>3423</sup>. In Syria the castella 'Kasr al-Heir (al-Gharbi)' and 'Kasr al-Heir' are known.<sup>3424</sup>

## **TELL EBEDA (T116)**

### **Topographical situation**

Tell Ebeda (T116) is situated some 2 km south of Tell el-Heir on the eastern side of the lagoon<sup>3425</sup>. The name is mentioned for the first time by local Beduin in 2002.

### **Archaeological finds**

The Israeli Northern Sinai expedition listed T116 as a New Kingdom site, but further information is lacking<sup>3426</sup>. In 2002 the team of Hoffmeier's North Sinai Archaeological Project identified New Kingdom sherds on the surface of this small tell<sup>3427</sup>.

### **Identifications**

Hoffmeier tentatively identifies Tell Ebeda with the fortress of P3 mktr n (Mn-m3<sup>c</sup>.t-R<sup>c</sup>) ('The migdol of Men-ma'at-Ra') on the Karnak relief, but on his map he

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<sup>3421</sup> Clédat, 1920, p. 111-112, n. 3 and 1921, p. 193-194; cf. Mallon, 1921, p. 168, n. 1 (with critical remarks).

<sup>3422</sup> Cf. Carrez-Maratray, 2000a, p. 61.

<sup>3423</sup> Cf. Lesquier, 1918, p. 452-453.

<sup>3424</sup> Cf. Carrez-Maratray, 2000a, p. 61.

<sup>3425</sup> Cf. Hoffmeier, 2004a, p. 65 and the map fig. 2.

<sup>3426</sup> Oren, 1987a, p. 79.

<sup>3427</sup> Hoffmeier, 2004a, p. 65.



apparently prefers an identification with the next station, W3dy.t [n (Sty-mry-n-Pth)] ('W3dy.t of Sethos Mer-n-Ptah')<sup>3428</sup>.

## **TELL EL-GHABA**

### **Topographical situation**

Tell el-Ghaba lies about 2,5 km northeast of Tell el-Mufariq and some 6,5 km northeast of Habwa I, at the sandy ridge along the coastline, which is formed during the last Flandrian transgression about 6000 BC. South of the site lies a depression, which is called the eastern laguna and which still stands under water the whole year long<sup>3429</sup>. The site lies on a jutting plateau ca. 1,2-1,5 m above the laguna<sup>3430</sup>.

### **Archaeological finds**

The site of Tell el-Ghaba, discovered during the survey of 1990, covers a surface of 11 ha and shows traces of constructions from the New Kingdom till the Islamic period<sup>3431</sup>. They are sometimes visible in ground plan or are inferred by concentrations of limestone architectural elements, one of which was part of a building that was later used for burials. The rather small size of the 28 blocks (0,30 x 0,30-0,50 m) suggests a date in the 1st millennium BC. Two of them are decorated. The first one shows the calf of a running man, probably the king. The decoration on the other block cannot be identified. Tell el-Ghaba therefore most likely possessed some religious or official buildings. A mud brick construction of 2,7 x 13 m<sup>3432</sup> is dated to the New Kingdom. The material of the 1st millennium BC contains imported Cypriote pottery, very similar to that found at Habwa II. Some of the material certainly belongs to the Saite period<sup>3433</sup>. Peter French also identifies a few sherds from the 8th or early 7th century BC, which come from the surface of the so-called

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<sup>3428</sup> Karnak, 1986, IV, p. 21, referring to Gardiner, 1920, pl. 11 (E), and pl. 6, 39 (G); cf. Hoffmeier, 2004a, p. 65 and the map fig. 2.

<sup>3429</sup> Cf. BIA, 1990, I, p. 62; Valbelle, 1992, p. 14.18.

<sup>3430</sup> Chartier-Raymond, 1993, p. 54.

<sup>3431</sup> BIA, 1991, IV, p. 56-57; Leclant, 1991, p. 176-177; Le Saout, 1991, p. 17; Leclant, 1992, p. 237; Valbelle, 1992, p. 18.22 and the map p. 20; Chartier-Raymond, 1993, p. 53-54 with a map.

<sup>3432</sup> Chartier-Raymond, 1993, p. 53, however, gives 2,8 x 8 m as its dimensions.

<sup>3433</sup> Valbelle, 1993b, p. 20 and 1995a, p. 99.

fortress site<sup>3434</sup>. Bottoms of crucibles, slag and mortars are indications of industrial activities. At the higher part of the site some glazed Islamic pottery was found. There were two probe excavations in 1991 and the site was excavated in 1993-1994, but no results have been published thus far<sup>3435</sup>. In 1995-1998 there were four seasons of Argentine excavations, revealing some large mud brick structures and confirming a date in the Saite period, ca. 650/625-575/550 BC<sup>3436</sup>.

### Identifications

In P.Anastasi V two army officials under Ramses II transport three stelae by ship from the king's residence via the fortress of Tcharou to T3-ʿ.t-(Rʿmssw-mry-Imn) ʿnh wd3 snb ('The dwelling of Ramses-beloved-of-Amon - life, prosperity, health!'). The place has generally been identified with the station T3 ʿ.t p3 m3i ('The dwelling of the lion') on the Karnak relief, corresponding with T3 ʿ.t n (Ssw) ʿnh wd3 snb ('The dwelling of Sese - life, prosperity, health!') in P.Anastasi I. Because the New Kingdom site of Tell el-Ghaba, which lies north of Habwa I (Tcharou), could probably be reached by ship over the so-called eastern laguna, Chartier-Raymond tentatively suggests an identification<sup>3437</sup>, but this hypothesis, which could not take into account the more recently discovered New Kingdom fortress at Tell el-Burdj, has to be confirmed by new epigraphic evidence.

### Etymology

The name Tell el-Ghaba, 'Tell of the reed', was given in 1990 at the discovery of the site and apparently refers to the plants growing in the nearby laguna<sup>3438</sup>.

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<sup>3434</sup> French, 1997, p. 141.

<sup>3435</sup> Leclant, 1995, p. 247.

<sup>3436</sup> Cf. Pereyra, 1999, p. 59-73 (non vidi); Fuscaldo, 2000a, p. 66 (non vidi); Fuscaldo, 2000b, p. 3-6 (non vidi); Lupo, 2000, p. 115 (non vidi); Leclant, 2000b, p. 229; Leclant, 2001, p. 370; Lupo, 2002, p. 753-762 (non vidi); Fuscaldo, 2003a, p. 63-81; Fuscaldo, 2003b, p. 189-194; Cremonte, 2003? (unpublished) (non vidi); Rosso, 2003, p. 380-386; Basílico, 2004b, p. 15; Basílico, 2004b, p. 3-11; Grimal, 2004, p. 22. Most likely also Kemet, 1997a, p. 71 (non vidi), Kemet, 1997b, p. 60 and Leclant, 1998, p. 334, briefly mentioning military installations probably from the time of Ramses II at a site whose name is not given, refer to these excavations.

<sup>3437</sup> P.Anastasi V, 24, 8 (Gardiner, 1937, p. 69-70; Caminos, 1954, p. 265-269); Karnak, 1986, IV, pl. 6, 38 (D); P.Anastasi I, 27, 3 (2). Cf. Chartier-Raymond, 1993, p. 69, n. 87. See s.v. Itineraries and s.v. T4.

<sup>3438</sup> Cf. Leclant, 1991, p. 176; Le Saout, 1991, p. 17; Leclant, 1995, p. 247 ('Tell des roseaux').

## **TELL EL-MUFARIQ**

### **Topographical situation**

Tell el-Mufariq, which has a length of some 300 m, lies about 2,5 km southwest of Tell el-Ghaba and some 4 km northeast of Habwa I<sup>3439</sup>, at the sandy ridge along the coastline, which is formed during the last Flandrian transgression about 6000 BC. South of the site lies a depression, which is called the eastern lagoon and which still stands under water the whole year long. The site of Tell el-Mufariq itself is also flooded for a great part of the year<sup>3440</sup>.

On a high dune immediately southeast of Tell el-Mufariq possibly another site was located (at 'cote 19'), but the presence of mines prevented the archaeologists from visiting the spot<sup>3441</sup>.

### **Archaeological finds**

During the survey of 1990 and two excavation campaigns in 1992-1993 a settlement of the Ptolemaic period has been found in Tell el-Mufariq<sup>3442</sup>. No brick constructions occurred. Each hut contained circular ovens used for baking bread and other food, and some large jars, plates, jugs, a limestone knife, terra cotta statues, bones of birds and fishes. The numerous fragments of bronze apparently come from fish hooks. The jars containing fish bones are an indication that the men also pickled their catch on the spot. The site was apparently mainly used by fishermen and was probably only inhabited temporarily. Six crocodile skeletons have been found, but because those animals live just as well in fresh, brackish or salt water, little can be

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<sup>3439</sup> Cf. Haikal, 1995, p. 187.

<sup>3440</sup> BIA, 1990, I, p. 62; Valbelle, 1992, p. 14.19.

<sup>3441</sup> Chartier-Raymond, 1993, p. 53-54 and the map p. 53; the coordinates for 'cote 19' are 30° 57,445' north latitude and 32° 24,110' eastern longitude (the last figure incorrectly given in the text as '30°').

<sup>3442</sup> BIA, 1991, IV, p. 52; Le Saout, 1991, p. 17; Valbelle, 1992, p. 18-19; Chartier-Raymond, 1993, p. 53-54.65; Leclant, 1994, p. 366; Haikal, 1995, p. 186-187; Abdallah, 1996, p. 143-151; Leclant, 1997, p. 241. The presence of a cemetery, suggested by Valbelle and Abdallah, was enfeebled by Chartier-Raymond.

## 9. The northwestern Sinai

deduced about the nature of the nearby water<sup>3443</sup>. Ptolemaic pottery<sup>3444</sup>, coins and amphora stamps date the site to the 3rd-1st centuries BC.

The 32 Greek stamps, most of them from Rhodos, can be dated to the period 240-146 BC, with a majority from the years 220-175 BC. They are fully edited and commented upon, so I do not need to repeat them in extenso (1-32)<sup>3445</sup>. The stamps mention the Rhodian eponymous priests Agemachos (TATEM 12), Aristophanes (TATEM 2)<sup>3446</sup>, Archokrates (TATEM 8), Theuphanes (TATEM 17), Kleitomachos (TATEM 13-14), Kleukrates (TATEM 30), Pausanias (TATEM 27) and Peisistratos (TATEM 1), and the Rhodian manufacturers Agathokles (TATEM 21-22), Amyntas (TATEM 16), Arist[ ] (TATEM 26), Ariston (TATEM 18), Damokrates (TATEM 11), Ko( ) (TATEM 3), Nikagis (TATEM 10)<sup>3447</sup> and Sokrates (TATEM 5, 9, 19). The origin of the manufacturers Demeas (TATEM 25) and Hippodamos son of Karneiskos (TATEM 28) is not clear, while the manufacturer Peki or Peki( ) (TATEM 29) might be an Egyptian. One circular stamp has the number ρα, '91' (TATEM 4), and some stamps are (partially) illegible or cannot be identified (TATEM 6, 7 = 32, 15, 20, 23, 24, 31).

For stamp TATEM 1, however, I would like to suggest a different reading. The editors have ἐπὶ Πεισιστράτου. | Βαρνέου ('Under (the priesthood of) Peisistratos. Of (the manufacturer) Barneos'), while considering Barneos a variant of the Semitic name Barnaios. No manufacturer with that name, however, is attested as far as I know on a Rhodian stamp, and it seems more plausible to read Καρνέου, which is a common variant for Καρνείου ('In (the month) Karneios')<sup>3448</sup>.

### Etymology

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<sup>3443</sup> Chartier-Raymond, 1993, p. 53-54, against Haikal, 1995, p. 187 and Abdallah, 1996, p. 144, who suppose that the crocodiles came from the Pelousiac branch; cf. Valbelle, 1996, p. 62-63. Leclant, 1993, p. 191 mentions a newspaper article about crocodiles found in Habwa I, but most likely the crocodiles of Tell el-Mufariq are referred to.

<sup>3444</sup> Ballet, 1997a, p. 47-55, with pl. 1-2; French, 1997, p. 142-143.

<sup>3445</sup> Cf. Abdallah, 1996, p. 143-151, TATEM ('Timbre amphorique Tell el-Mufariq') 1-32, unfortunately without photos or facsimiles (cf. Ballet, 1997a, p. 47; Leclant, 1997, p. 241); SEG, XLVI, 1996 [= 1999], p. 615-616, no. 2145; see also some parallels in Carrez-Maratray, 1996b, p. 179-195.

<sup>3446</sup> For a possible parallel from Qasr Ghet, see the stamp SB I, 5732.

<sup>3447</sup> For a possible parallel from Qasr Ghet, see the stamp Clédat, 1912a, p. 166, no. 6.

<sup>3448</sup> Cf. the parallel stamp IG XII 1, 1180, 5: ἐπὶ Πεισιστράτου. | Καρνείου; see also Carrez-Maratray, 1996b, p. 180 no. TAFE 2 (from Tell el-Farama): ἐπὶ Πεισιστράτου. | Δ[αλί]ου.

## 9. *The northwestern Sinai*

The name Tell el-Mufariq, 'Tell of the crossroad', was given in 1990 at the discovery of the site and refers to the nearby modern crossroad<sup>3449</sup>.

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<sup>3449</sup> Cf. Le Saout, 1991, p. 17; Abdallah, 1996, p. 143 ('le tell des carrefours'). Chartier-Raymond, 1993, p.53, fig. 5 clearly shows the crossroad referred to.

## *The area of the western laguna*

### **BIR HEDEUA**

Bir Hedeua lies along the track between Bir el-Goga and Tell Habwa, according to Paoletti at some 13 km of the former and some 3 km of the latter<sup>3450</sup>, which more or less matches the actual distance of 14 km between Bir el-Goga and Tell Habwa<sup>3451</sup>. Bir Hedeua is therefore situated some 2 to 3 km northeast of Tell Habwa and some 7 to 8 km southwest of Bir el-Djilbana.

### **DJEBEL EL-ADAM**

The Djebel el-Adam is a chain of hills whose northern part had to be crossed to get from Tell Habwa to Tell el-Heir in 1880 AD<sup>3452</sup>.

### **T78**

#### **Topographical situation**

The New Kingdom site T78 of the Israeli Northern Sinai lies in the area along the road between Tell el-Heir and el-Qantara, but further information is lacking. Hoffmeier was not able to locate the site in 2002<sup>3453</sup>.

#### **Identifications**

Hoffmeier tentatively identifies T78 with the fortress of P3 mktr n (Mn-m3<sup>c</sup>.t-R<sup>c</sup>) ('The migdol of Men-ma'at-Ra') on the Karnak relief<sup>3454</sup>.

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<sup>3450</sup> Paoletti, 1903, p. 104 ('deux milles' - 'huit milles') and map.

<sup>3451</sup> Cf. Bietak, 1975, pl. 4.

<sup>3452</sup> Cf. Chester, 1880, p. 147 and the nameless chain of hills on the map p. 144.

<sup>3453</sup> Cf. the map Oren, 1987a, p. 79; Hoffmeier, 2004a, p. 65 and the map fig. 2.

<sup>3454</sup> Karnak, 1986, IV, p. 21, referring to Gardiner, 1920, pl. 11 (E); cf. Hoffmeier, 2004a, p. 65 and the map fig. 2.

## HABWA AND TELL HABWA

Tell Habwa, alternative name: Tell el-Ahmar

Tell Habwa, alternative name (?): Tell el-Semut

### Topographical situation

In the 14th-15th centuries AD Habwa is situated on the road from Cairo to Gaza between el-Qusair and el-Ghurabi (1, 4), apparently near of el-Aqula (2, 5), but no exact distances are given. The road station was not a proper settlement, but just a place to change horses, and water had to be brought in from a well in the neighbourhood<sup>3455</sup>.

In the late 19th and the early 20th century AD<sup>3456</sup> the name Tell Habwa was still known for a small site with a probably medieval red brick construction, about 10 km northeast of el-Qantara<sup>3457</sup>. The place was situated on the south side of the caravan route<sup>3458</sup> and the telegraph line passed on top of the site<sup>3459</sup>. Because of the onomastic continuity, the general location and the archaeological findings, the site Tell Habwa certainly corresponds with the former road station Habwa. The name possibly survived till the 19th century AD because the tell with its red brick remains served as a landmark for caravans<sup>3460</sup>. The tell has apparently recently been used as a military post<sup>3461</sup>.

In 1981, however, Abd el-Maksoud investigated a huge site, a fortified city of the Second Intermediate period and the New Kingdom, quite north of the present-day road and at the western side of a laguna, but *linea recta* also some 10 km northeast of el-Qantara and some 4 km north of Tell Abu Seifa<sup>3462</sup>. The local Beduin named the

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<sup>3455</sup> Hartmann, 1916a, p. 487 suggests that the water came from Bir el-Duwaidar, but this is a mere guess. Dalman, 1924, p. 46 and Popper, 1955, I, p. 47 locate Habwa near Bir el-Duwaidar, which lies some 7 km east of el-Ghurabi, but this is too far west.

<sup>3456</sup> Cf. also the name 'Haowe' incorrectly situated between el-Salhiya and el-Aqula on the not dated map of Baines, 1981 [= 1980], inner cover. The nameless mound of the map of the Description, which is identified with Magdolos, probably corresponds with the site of Tell Habwa (Description, 1809, *État moderne*, I, pl. 10; Description, 1830, XVIII, map 1.2 and p. 174; cf. Griffith, 1888, p. 101; Gardiner, 1920, p. 107; Chartier-Raymond, 1993, p. 67, n. 75).

<sup>3457</sup> Cf. Chester, 1880, p. 147 (at about three hours from el-Qantara); Paoletti, 1903, p. 104 (at 6,5 miles, i.e. ca. 10,5 km); Gardiner, 1920, p. 107 (5,5 km along the road from the extreme edge of lake Menzala).

<sup>3458</sup> Griffith, 1888, p. 101.

<sup>3459</sup> Paoletti, 1903, map; cf. Couyat-Barthoux, 1913, p. 458.

<sup>3460</sup> Cf. Griffith, 1888, p. 101.

<sup>3461</sup> Wagner, 1993a, p. 8.

<sup>3462</sup> See s.v. Habwa I-V.

place Habwa and Abd el-Maksoud identified the place with the Habwa on the maps of Daressy and Bietak<sup>3463</sup>. Abd el-Maksoud's description of the site, however, does in no way match the situation of the small Tell Habwa, and Abd el-Maksoud himself is rather surprised to notice that he did not find any traces of the red brick construction still visible there in the 19th century<sup>3464</sup>. At the same time, and at least since 1971, the name Tell el-Ahmar, 'Red hill', which perfectly matches the red brick constructions that belong to an Islamic settlement, occurs on a lot of maps at about the same place as the former Tell Habwa<sup>3465</sup>. It is obvious that Abd el-Maksoud has made a mistake in identifying his nameless site with Tell Habwa. He was apparently influenced by the fact that the name Habwa was used by locals to indicate the whole region northeast of el-Qantara<sup>3466</sup>. There are, therefore, no further links between the Islamic Tell Habwa and the site of Abd el-Maksoud, which lies some 5 km northwest of the former place<sup>3467</sup>. However, the name Habwa is now in use for more than twenty years for the site of the fortified city and it is rather late to make up a new name for it, especially because also a lot of other sites in the neighbourhood are named after the main site. I will, therefore, use the name Tell Habwa for the Islamic road station at the present-day Tell el-Ahmar, and the expression Habwa I for the site excavated by Abd el-Maksoud.

### **Archaeological finds**

In 1880 Chester described Tell Habwa as a small site with burnt red bricks and a little pottery<sup>3468</sup>. According to Griffith the site only covered a surface of some 18 x 18 m, which is probably underestimated, and the remains have tentatively been identified with a medieval guardhouse<sup>3469</sup>. At the foot of the hill Clédat noticed a well in soft limestone and he dated the site to the Roman period<sup>3470</sup>, but this date is

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<sup>3463</sup> Cf. Abd el-Maksoud, 1983, p. 3, n. 2.

<sup>3464</sup> Abd el-Maksoud, 1987a, p. 15.

<sup>3465</sup> See s.v. Tell el-Ahmar. Cf. also Bietak, 1975, p. 201, n. 844 and fig. 10, who was not able to locate Tell Habwa precisely and therefore identifies the place with Tell el-Ahmar on the basis of the map of Gardiner, 1920, pl. 13.

<sup>3466</sup> Cf. Chartier-Raymond, 1993, p. 67; Abd el-Maksoud, 1998b, p. 24.

<sup>3467</sup> Cf. also Hoffmeier, 2003, p. 171 and 2004a, p. 61, who distinguishes 'Tell Habwe' (sc. Habwa / Tell Habwa) from 'Tell Hebua' (sc. Habwa I).

<sup>3468</sup> Chester, 1880, p. 147 and the map p. 144; cf. also Paoletti, 1903, p. 104.

<sup>3469</sup> Griffith, 1888, p. 101 ('20 yards square'); Gardiner, 1920, p. 107; cf. Abd el-Maksoud, 1987a, p. 14-15 (who incorrectly speaks of more than one guardhouse at the spot).

<sup>3470</sup> Clédat, 1923a, p. 70 and 1923b, p. 151; cf. Couyat-Barthoux, 1913, p. 458; Daressy, 1929, p. 300.



probably not to be trusted. Tell Habwa is probably identical with site T121, where the Israeli survey found fired bricks, 14th-16th century pottery and two 15th century coins<sup>3471</sup>. During a survey in 1990 a lot of glazed Arab sherds have been found<sup>3472</sup>. The site raises 1 to 2 m above the plain<sup>3473</sup> and has a surface of some 70 x 50 m. Rescue excavations in 1992 yielded a small Byzantine (?) and Islamic settlement with some red brick houses<sup>3474</sup>, some of which might have been visible in 1482 AD (5). The site apparently lay at the entrance of the road across the el-Qantara isthmus<sup>3475</sup>.

### Identifications

Gardiner tentatively suggests an identification of Tell Habwa with the station T3 ʿ.t p3 m3i ('The dwelling of the lion') on the Karnak relief, the corresponding T3 ʿ.t n (Ssw) ʿnh wḏ3 snb ('The dwelling of Sese - life, prosperity, health!') in P.Anastasi I and T3-ʿ.t-(Rʿmssw-mry-Imn) ʿnh wḏ3 snb ('The dwelling of Ramses-beloved-of-Amon - life, prosperity, health!') of P.Anastasi V, although he admits that the site seems to be too unimportant to match<sup>3476</sup>.

In 1880 Chester did not find any trace of the Tell el-Semut mentioned by Brugsch and he supposes that in fact Tell Habwa is referred to, an identification which has generally been followed<sup>3477</sup>.

Tell Habwa has been identified with the Magdolos of the *Itinerarium Antonini*, which lies halfway between Pelousion and Sele<sup>3478</sup>, but no significant Roman remains have been found in Tell Habwa.

<sup>3471</sup> Cytryn-Silverman, 2001, p. 23-24.

<sup>3472</sup> Le Saout, 1991, p. 17; Chartier-Raymond, 1993, p. 54.

<sup>3473</sup> According to Daressy, 1929, p. 300 the tell reaches a height of 59 feet (ca. 17 m), which is probably measured above sea level.

<sup>3474</sup> BIA, 1991, IV, p. 52 (who is the only one to mention a Byzantine settlement); Chartier-Raymond, 1993, p. 54; Leclant, 1993, p. 191.

<sup>3475</sup> Chartier-Raymond, 1993, p. 54 links this road also with the sites 'i' and 'f' between el-Qantara and Tell el-Ahmar on the map of Valbelle, 1992, p. 16.

<sup>3476</sup> Karnak, 1986, IV, pl. 6, 38 (D); P.Anastasi I, 27, 3 (2); P.Anastasi V, 24, 8 (Gardiner, 1937, p. 69-70; Caminos, 1954, p. 265-269). See s.v. Itineraries. Cf. Gardiner, 1920, p. 106-108.113 and map; see also Clédat, 1923a, p. 70; Gauthier, 1925, I, p. 161; Caminos, 1954, p. 266.269; Berg, 1973, p. 49; Bietak, 1975, p. 134, n. 588; Abd el-Maksoud, 1981, p. 38-39; Abd el-Maksoud, 1987a, p. 13-16; Leclant, 1988, p. 321, n. 70; Abd el-Maksoud, 1989b, p. 173-175; Aufrère, 1997, p. 291; Cavillier, 2001b, p. 25; rejected by Daressy, 1929, p. 300.

<sup>3477</sup> See s.v. Tell el-Semut.

<sup>3478</sup> Cf. the maps of the Description mentioned § Topographical situation (see also s.v. Tell el-Semut). See s.v. Migdol / Magdolos.

## Etymology

According to Chartier-Raymond the name Habwa is based upon an Arab root meaning 'berry, fruit, grain, ...'<sup>3479</sup>. Abd el-Maksoud, on the other hand, points out three possible meanings: (1) a high pile of sand with many plants, (2) a sheltered place behind a pile of sand, and (3) a wall built in the desert to protect from the wind<sup>3480</sup>.

## Analysis of the sources

el-Omari (1), who wrote ca. 1345 AD, lists the road stations between Cairo and Gaza, including el-Salhiya, Bir Ghazi, el-Qusair, Habwa and el-Ghurabi. The same post stations on the same road are still mentioned in Abu'l-Mahasin (before 1470 AD) (4). The itinerary of Qalqashandi junior (1464 AD) (3) for unknown reasons does not mention el-Qusair, but makes Bir Ghazi the first station west of Habwa<sup>3481</sup>. el-Omari adds that there is no water in Habwa, nor any buildings, and that all the water has been brought in from a well further on; it is more a resting-place just to change horses<sup>3482</sup>.

About 1420-1442 AD Maqrizi (2) mentions Habwa and el-Aqula as points of reference to locate the city of Hatein, but the context is very obscure<sup>3483</sup>.

In 1482 AD Joos van Ghistele (5) travelled from Gaza to Cairo via Cattia (Qatia), Bierdodare (Bir el-Duwaidar), Acole (el-Aqula), Haouwe (Habwa) and Salahija (el-Salhiya). In Haouwe, which is situated 'shortly after' el-Aqula, one could find very good sweet water and there was a kind of Islamic chapel gone to ruin<sup>3484</sup>.

## TELL EL-SEMUT

Alternative name (?): Tell Habwa

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<sup>3479</sup> Chartier-Raymond, 1993, p. 67.

<sup>3480</sup> Abd el-Maksoud, 1998b, p. 23.

<sup>3481</sup> el-Omari (translated in Hartmann, 1916a, p. 487); cf. Hartmann, 1910, p. 688.691; Dalman, 1924, p. 46. Qalqashandi junior (mentioned in Hartmann, 1910, p. 688.691). Abu'l-Mahasin, *Chronicle* (mentioned in Popper, 1955, I, p. 47).

<sup>3482</sup> Abd el-Maksoud, 1983, p. 4-5 certainly exaggerates stating that Habwa was famous for its horses.

<sup>3483</sup> Maqrizi (translated in Bouriant, 1900, p. 672); cf. Hartmann, 1910, p. 691. See s.v. Hittin / Hatein.

<sup>3484</sup> *Tvoyage van Mher Joos van Ghistele* (Gaspar, 1998, p. 171).

### Topographical situation

Tell el-Semut is mentioned - for the first time? - on two maps of 1855 and 1859<sup>3485</sup>, between Tell el-Heir and el-Qantara. Brugsch included the place in some topographical considerations<sup>3486</sup>, and all later scholars mentioning Tell el-Semut seem to copy Brugsch. In 1880 Chester did not find any trace of the name, and Tell el-Semut is often considered a dubious toponym<sup>3487</sup>.

### Identifications

Chester supposes that the Tell el-Semut of Brugsch is identical with the site of Tell Habwa (Tell el-Ahmar), a name which the locals do know<sup>3488</sup>, and indeed the place might match the position on Brugsch's map. Most scholars apparently follow the identification with Tell Habwa and the name Tell el-Semut is only rarely mentioned without an explicit link with the former site<sup>3489</sup>.

Because of the parallel expressions 'from Elephantine to "Samout"' in an inscription of Amenhotep IV and 'from Migdol to Syene' in *Ezechiel*, Brugsch identifies "Samout" and Migdol / Magdolos and locates the place in Tell el-Semut<sup>3490</sup>. Nothing of this can be accepted. Instead of "Samout" the toponym has to be read as "Sm3-bḥdt", i.e. Dios Polis Inferior of the Graeco-Roman period, and every link with Migdol or Tell el-Semut disappears. In the same tradition Tell el-Semut has also been identified with the Magdolos of the *Itinerarium Antonini*, which lies halfway between

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<sup>3485</sup> Cf. Fontaine, 1955, p. 108.120.

<sup>3486</sup> Brugsch, 1875, p. 19-20 and map.

<sup>3487</sup> Cf. Maspero, 1877, p. 324; Chester, 1880, p. 147; Gardiner, 1920, p. 108; Abd el-Maksoud, 1987a, p. 14.

<sup>3488</sup> Chester, 1880, p. 147; cf. Fontaine, 1947a, p. 26; Bietak, 1975, fig. 10 and map 4; Bietak, Manfred, s.v. Isthmus von Qantara, in *LÄ*, III, 1980, col. 207-208. It is not clear whether the identification of Tell el-Semut and (Tell) Habwa in Fontaine, 1955, p. 120 reflects this general view or is an actual identification on the map of 1859 discussed. See s.v. Habwa and Tell Habwa.

<sup>3489</sup> Cf. e.g. the maps Fontaine, 1948, p. 62 (with the identification with Tell Habwa in the accompanying text p. 64) and 1952a, p. 41 and Berg, 1973, p. 49 (with the identification Tell el-Semut / T3 ʿ.t p3 m3i he undoubtedly refers to Tell Habwa).

<sup>3490</sup> Brugsch, 1875, p. 20 and map; Brugsch, 1979, p. 265; cf. Maspero, 1877, p. 324; Dümichen, 1879, p. 72.75; Delitzsch, 1881, p. 313; Ebers, 1881, p. 523 and the maps p. 72.108.626; Perthes, 1910(9), pl. 3.3b ('Sam-hud'); Kütthmann, 1911, p. 39; Miller, 1916, col. 857; Cazelles, 1987 [= 1955], p. 210; Fontaine, 1956b, p. 164; rejected by Chester, 1880, p. 148; Griffith, 1888, p. 102; Gardiner, 1920, p. 108, n. 5; Gauthier, 1927, IV, p. 207 and 1928, V, p. 33-34; Kees, Hermann, s.v. Magdolon, Magdolos, in *RE*, XIV 1, 1928, col. 300; cf. Schlott-Schwab, 1981, p. 85 and Zauzich, 1984, p. 193. See s.v. Migdol / Magdolos.

Pelousion and Sele, but no Roman remains have been found in Tell Habwa / Tell el-Semut.

## **TELL EL-AHMAR**

Alternative name: Tell Abu Seifa

Alternative name: Tell Habwa

### **Topographical situation**

The location of the toponym Tell el-Ahmar in the area east of el-Qantara is very confusing. I try to make a reconstruction. In 1912 Chabân states that Tell Abu Seifa, which lies some 3 km east of el-Qantara, is also called Tell el-Ahmar<sup>3491</sup>, 'Red hill', a name which often occurs in Egypt and apparently describes the outlook of the site. While the name Tell Abu Seifa is known from 1847 on, it is not clear when or why the toponym Tell el-Ahmar came into existence. Later scholars also linked the two names<sup>3492</sup>, but sometimes only the name Tell el-Ahmar was used to indicate the site of Tell Abu Seifa<sup>3493</sup>. In the First World War a railway track was constructed through the northern Sinai and the first station east of the Suez Canal became Tell el-Ahmar, situated some 5 km east of el-Qantara and possibly named after the archaeological site of Tell Abu Seifa<sup>3494</sup>. Ball apparently mixes up the site and the station when he locates Sele / Tell el-Ahmar 5 km east of el-Qantara, i.e. 2 km too far to the east<sup>3495</sup>. From 1971 on the name Tell el-Ahmar is located on some maps at

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<sup>3491</sup> Chabân, 1912, p. 69.76. See s.v. Tell Abu Seifa.

<sup>3492</sup> Alt, 1914, p. 63; Dalman, 1924, p. 44; Daressy, 1929, p. 298 and 1933, p. 185; Abel, 1938, II, p. 217; Gardiner, 1947, II, p. 202\*; Servin, 1947, p. 68; Fontaine, 1955, p. 205; Vergote, 1959, p. 28; Helck, 1971, p. 311 and n. 13 (?); Bietak, 1975, fig. 10; Wüst, 1975, p. 34; Bietak, Manfred, s.v. Isthmus von Qantara, in LÄ, III, 1980, col. 207-208 (with the name Tell Abu Seifa confusingly at the other side of lake Ballah); Nibbi, 1985, p. 54; TAVO B V 21, 1989 and the Register, 1994, p. 1579-1580; Timm, 1991, V, p. 2330.2332; Ahituv, 1996a, p. 220; Hoffmeier, 1997, p. 183. Fontaine, 1947a, p. 26 incorrectly links Tell el-Ahmar and el-Qantara. The form 'Tell Abou Ahmar' (Fontaine, 1952a, p. 41) is a mistake.

<sup>3493</sup> A map of 1917 mentioned by Dalman, 1924, p. 44; Daressy, 1929, p. 298; Abel, 1940, p. 237; Caminos, 1954, p. 73.111 and 1964, p. 92; Bietak, 1975, map 4; Bietak, 1984b, p. 66; Calderini, 1986, IV 3, p. 280; Winnicki, 1994, p. 174.

<sup>3494</sup> Gauthier, 1931, VII, map 1; for a similar naming, cf. the indication 'Pelusium Station' also at quite a distance from Tell el-Farama. Chartier-Raymond, 1993, p. 67 supposes that the station is named after the site Tell el-Ahmar / Tell Habwa at 8 km east of el-Qantara, but because this site is only mentioned from 1971 on, it seems more likely that the station is named after the well-known Tell el-Ahmar / Tell Abu Seifa.

<sup>3495</sup> Ball, 1942, p. 142.150.162 (followed by Fontaine, 1955, p. 53 and apparently also by Calderini, 1986, IV 3, p. 280); cf. the remarks of Gardiner, 1947, II, p. 202\* and Timm, 1991, V, p. 2330.

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some 8 to 10 km northeast of el-Qantara<sup>3496</sup>, apparently referring to the site of Tell Habwa, which was located there in the late 19th century AD<sup>3497</sup>. This spot is sometimes incorrectly linked with Tell Abu Seifa<sup>3498</sup>. Bietak, however, clearly distinguishes Tell el-Ahmar / Tell Abu Seifa from Tell el-Ahmar / Tell Habwa, which he situates some 8 km northeast from el-Qantara<sup>3499</sup>.

There have therefore apparently been three places east of el-Qantara that have been called Tell el-Ahmar: the site of the Graeco-Roman Tell Abu Seifa, the site of the modern railway station, and the site of the Islamic Tell Habwa<sup>3500</sup>.

### Homonyms

Toponyms as Tell el-Ahmar or Kom el-Ahmar are quite common in Egypt and abroad<sup>3501</sup>.

## BIR EL-BURDJ

### Topographical situation

Bir el-Burdj ('Well of the tower'), known since 1859<sup>3502</sup>, lies some 6 km east of Tell Habwa - which locates it east of the caravan road that was commonly in use till the early 20th century -, some 5 km south-southwest of Bir el-Djilbana, some 10 km southeast of Tell el-Burdj and some 13 km northeast of el-Qantara<sup>3503</sup>.

### Archaeological finds

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<sup>3496</sup> Margovsky, 1971, p. 18; Bietak, 1975, fig. 10; Baumgarten, 1990, map; Abd el-Samie, 1992, p. 92; Valbelle, 1992, p. 15; Chartier-Raymond, 1993, p. 49; Valbelle, 1993b, p. 20; Wagner, 1993a, p. 1; Kümmerly, 1995(?); Valbelle, 1995a, p. 100. Chartier-Raymond, 1993, p. 54 places Tell el-Ahmar at 30° 54,090' north latitude and 32° 25,160' eastern longitude.

<sup>3497</sup> See s.v. Habwa and Tell Habwa. This Tell Habwa is not to be confused with the site of the New Kingdom fortress Habwa I.

<sup>3498</sup> Oren, 1975, p. 77; Baumgarten, 1990, p. 301.

<sup>3499</sup> Bietak, 1975, fig. 10; cf. Bietak, 1975, p. 201, n. 844 and Chartier-Raymond, 1993, p. 67 and n. 75.

<sup>3500</sup> The archaeological data ascribed to the first and the third Tell el-Ahmar, will be discussed s.v. Tell Abu Seifa and s.v. Habwa and Tell Habwa.

<sup>3501</sup> Bietak, 1975, map 4 (cf. the index p. 229), e.g., knows in the eastern and central Delta at least seven toponyms with the element 'el-Ahmar'; Tell el-Ahmar here also occurs as an alternative name for the sites of Tell el-Balamun and Baqliya, just as in the case of Tell Abu Seifa / Tell el-Ahmar. Cf. also TAVO Register, 1994, p. 1579-1580.

<sup>3502</sup> Cf. the map of 1859 discussed by Fontaine, 1955, p. 120.

<sup>3503</sup> Cf. Bietak, 1975, pl. 4; Hoffmeier, 2003, p. 174, n. 23.

In 1909 and in 1913 Clédat noticed some fired brick ruins, stone and plaster scattered over a surface of some 40 m diameter, and he considered the site a small fortress. To the west were the traces of a mud brick wall and a well almost completely dilapidated<sup>3504</sup>. Because of these remains Clédat apparently named the site Tell el-Burdj, which lead Hoffmeier to believe that Clédat described the New Kingdom site that was also called Tell el-Burdj at the latest from 1998 on. Hoffmeier's findings on the latter site, however, do not match Clédat's description<sup>3505</sup>, and especially the presence of the fired brick structures in my view points to a small Roman, Byzantine or medieval site next to the well of Bir el-Burdj.

### **Homonyms**

Bir el-Burdj, situated next to Khirbet el-Burdj, is the name of a well east of el-Arish<sup>3506</sup>.

## **TELL EL-BURDJ**

### **Topographical situation**

The name Tell el-Burdj ('Tell of the tower') was given to a site some 10 km north-northeast<sup>3507</sup> of Tell Abu Seifa, some 5 km east of Habwa I and some 2,5 km north of Tell Habwa<sup>3508</sup>. When in 1998 the New Kingdom site was pointed out to James Hoffmeier by Egyptian archaeologists, they called it Tell el-Burdj, apparently convinced that it corresponded with the Bir el-Burdj / Tell el-Burdj of the earlier maps. The latter, however, was situated some 10 km more to the southeast, and - just as in the case of Tell Habwa and Habwa I - the name seems to have been incorrectly

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<sup>3504</sup> Clédat, 1921, p. 194; Valbelle, 1999a, p. 73 (the map on p. 78 actually seems to refer to the New Kingdom Tell el-Burdj).

<sup>3505</sup> See s.v. Tell el-Burdj.

<sup>3506</sup> See s.v. (Khirbet Umm) el-Kharruba - Khirbet el-Burdj.

<sup>3507</sup> Tell el-Burdj is sometimes situated east of Tell Abu Seifa or el-Qantara (Notes, 2000, p. 11; Cavillier, 2001b, p. 25; Leclant, 2001, p. 367; Hoffmeier, 2003, p. 173), but the map in Hoffmeier, 2003, p. 170 shows that this indication is not really accurate.

<sup>3508</sup> Cf. Hoffmeier, 2002, p. 18 and the map; Hoffmeier, 2003, p. 173-174 and the map p. 170.

transferred to the New Kingdom site<sup>3509</sup>. Tell el-Burdj probably corresponds with site T108 of the Israeli survey<sup>3510</sup>.

### **Archaeological finds**

Between 1967 and the 1980s Tell el-Burdj was used as a military camp by both Israeli and Egyptian forces, but it also became partially destroyed by the more recent construction of pipelines, roads and canals through the site and by recent robbing. In 1998 some members of the Supreme Council for Antiquities (SCA) discovered the New Kingdom site, and they invited James Hoffmeier of the Trinity International University in Deerfield to investigate the site. After a preliminary survey in 1999, excavations followed in 2000-2002 and 2004-2005 on several spots in the area, labelled Fields I-VIII<sup>3511</sup>. Further excavations are planned.

In the lower parts between the tell in the northwest and the fortress in the southeast an ancient channel was detected on satellite photos, and its presence was confirmed by excavations in Field II. It came from the Delta and emptied into the palaeo-laguna some 2 to 3 km to the northeast, and might have been part of or connected to the New Kingdom Pelousiac Nile branch<sup>3512</sup>.

In Field I, 400 m south of the fortress, some eight limestone blocks were found in January 2000 in the embankment of a canal that was dug in 1995 or 1996. Five of them were inscribed, including a block with a male deity, a Horos falcon and a serech with the horn of a bull, which stylistically dates from the Ramesside period (TBO 1 = TBO I 1, in 2002 matched to TBO 133), the top of a cartouche with the name 's3 [R'] Dḥwty[-ms]s', possibly Thoutmosis III (TBO 8 = TBO I 2), a sun-disc (TBO 6 = TBO I, 3), a part of an arm or leg (TBO I 4), and an arm in the archer's pose (TBO 5 = TBO I 5). In March - April 2000 and 2001 the place was excavated and eighteen uninscribed and seven inscribed blocks were recovered from a pit, where they were apparently stored away after the dismantlement of the buildings to which they belonged. Two of the uninscribed blocks appear to be talatat from the Amarna

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<sup>3509</sup> See s.v. Bir el-Burdj, s.v. Habwa and Tell Habwa and s.v. Habwa I-V.

<sup>3510</sup> Cf. Hoffmeier, 2003, p. 174; for site T108, cf. the map in Oren, 1987a, p. 79.

<sup>3511</sup> For the excavations at Tell el-Burdj, cf. Hoffmeier, 2000-2005 (internet); Giddy, 2000b, p. 32; Notes, 2000, p. 11; Giddy, 2001b, p. 32; Leclant, 2001, p. 367; Giddy, 2002b, p. 31; Hoffmeier, 2002, p. 18-20; Pinch Brock, 2002, p. 2; Hoffmeier, 2003, p. 169-197; Hoffmeier, 2004a, p. 53-66; Hoffmeier, 2004b, p. 59-60; Hoffmeier, 2005b, p. 79-93; Morris, 2005, p. 177-179.294-295.526.

<sup>3512</sup> Cf. Hoffmeier, 2003, p. 195 and the map p. 170; Moshier, 2004, p. 85.

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period, a date that is confirmed by a sherd found in the pit. Possibly three blocks yielded cartouches of Ramses II (TBO I 13, 16, 17). Other blocks contain a scene where a god offers a sword to the king (TBO I 6, 18), a chariot scene (TBO I 10, 11) and the text 'nsw bity' (TBO I 12). In 2002 another thirty uninscribed and ten inscribed blocks were found, some of them apparently associated with a temple of Ramses II (TBO 125, 126, 128, 129, 131, 133, 134), but also an incomplete stele with a king bashing the head of a foe (TBO 132), and two blocks with a damaged cartouche (TBO 127, 130). Also a fragmentary limestone statuette was recovered (TBO 135) and some 3 km west of Tell el-Burdj a fragmentary granite royal statue was found, which probably also came from the site (TBO 111). In general, the blocks seem to belong to two or three temples from the early to middle 18th dynasty (Thoutmosis III?), the late 18th dynasty (Amarna) and the 19th dynasty (Ramses II).

In the debris near the canal a ceiling block of a temple was found (TBO X 36) and a block with the cartouche of Ramses II (TBO X 57). Most interesting is a small limestone block that may have been a name plate for a military officer who served at the site (TBO X 27):

s3 '3 Imn, Imn ḥ' nḥt | n Wsr-m3't-R' stp-n-R' di 'nh mi R' dt | ir.n t3i-h'w H'

'The Great Company (of) Amon, "Amon appears gloriously and victorious | for Ouser-ma'at-Ra Setep-n-Ra (sc. Ramses II), given life like Ra forever", | made by the weapons-bearer Kha'

Field II is at the south side of the tell. Its western area yielded a pit with a staircase perhaps descending to a well, possibly constructed in the Ramesside period. Several uninscribed, reused talatat were found, a stamped jar handle with the cartouche of Semenchkare, the coregent or successor of Echnaton (TBO II 37 = TBP 0207), and two jar handles with the cartouche of Toutanchamon (TBO II 36 = TBP 222; for the second one no inventory number has been given). A ceiling block (TBO II 33) matches the other one found in the debris, an indication that Field II might have been the origin for the blocks found in Field I and elsewhere. Also the widespread presence of limestone chips suggests that one or more temples in Field II have been violently dismantled.

In the eastern area of Field II a huge, uninscribed pink granite block was found (TBO II 3), perhaps the base of an obelisk, a large plinth or a naos. Two other granite fragments turned up, both possibly inscribed with the name of Ramses II (TBO X 34, 43). Near the large block a flat mud brick structure might have been the floor of a temple that can be dated to the early to middle 18th dynasty. A rubbish pit nearby contained fragments of a small royal statue.



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The surface of the tell itself, Field VI, was littered with thousands of sherds, and excavations revealed some burnt reed huts, some with a surrounding wall or fence. The presence of early 18th dynasty pottery suggests that these humble dwellings may have housed the earliest occupants of the site. A stamped jar handle with the cartouche of Nefer-neferou-aten, the successor of Echnaton, and a seal impression with the name of Haremheb indicate that the reed-hut village was occupied for a long period of time.

Field III, along the eastern face of the tell, yielded several larger and smaller mud brick tombs. Tomb 1 can be dated to the late 18th dynasty and tomb 2 to the 19th dynasty. In tomb 4 a sherd with the cartouche of Amenhotep II was found (TBO 0071 = TBP 0248, also (incorrectly?) numbered as TBP 71), but it might have been intrusive from an older part of the tomb that was reused in the late 18th to early 19th dynasty. Near another tomb, which contained a partially intact clay coffin, a faience ring with the name of queen Tiye was discovered, the wife of Amenhotep III.

The western cemetery Field VII, which was apparently used by people from lower classes, yielded no small finds or fine quality pottery, and the tombs were actually cut into the bedrock.

In Fields IV, V and VIII, some 200 m south of the tell, a fortress was found that knew three building phases. The first fortress might have been built during the reign of Thoutmosis III or Amenhotep II; it probably covered a surface of some 75 x 75 m. The fill of its moat contained fragments from ceiling blocks of a temple and a stamped jar handle with the cartouche of Semenchkare. The fortress was apparently abandoned because of the flooding of the nearby Nile branch. The fired bricks that were used to cover the moat, were later robbed, perhaps in the Graeco-Roman period, for reuse elsewhere. A second fortress, partially built over the previous one, probably covered a surface of ca. 75-80 x 75-80 m and dates to the late 18th dynasty, perhaps from the reign of Haremheb. The latter fortress knew a second building phase, probably during the reign of Ramses II. In the gate area a number of inscribed fragments were uncovered containing the cartouches of Ramses II. The fortress was probably still in use during the 20th dynasty till the 12th century BC. It was apparently violently destroyed. In 2002 near the fortress a stone installation was discovered that appears to be a well; it contained another ceiling block, and two blocks originating from a funerary context, one of them from the Old Kingdom. In 2005 limestone blocks used as the foundation for the moat of the second fortress

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revealed inscriptions with the name of Amenhotep II and with the titles of a high-ranking private official, and another piece of an Old Kingdom tomb. Among the seventeen blocks representing seven different doorjambs with cartouches of Amenhotep II, two inscriptions contain the toponym Tcharou; in the first one the god 'Amon-Ra who is in Tcharou' occurs (TBO 714) and in the second one the goddess 'Nout, foremost of Tcharou' (TBO 726):

(TBO 714) s3 R' n ht=f mr=f [Imn]-ḥtp ḥq3 ntry Iwnw mry Imn-R' ḥry-ib Ṛ3rw [ ]  
'Bodily son of Ra whom he loves, Amenhotep, divine ruler of Heliou Polis, beloved of Amon-Ra who is in Tcharou [ ]'

(TBO 726) s3 R' n ht=f [Imn-ḥtp] ḥq3 ntry Iwnw mry Nwt wr.t ḥnt.t Ṛ3rw dt  
'Bodily son of Ra, Amenhotep, divine ruler of Heliou Polis, beloved of Nout, the great one, foremost of Tcharou for ever'

In 2004 also potsherds with the cartouche of Thoutmosis III and Echnaton and a statuette of a deity were found, but their field of origin has not yet been listed.

### Identifications

It is not unlikely that the fortress of Tell el-Burdj corresponds with one of the fortresses shown on the Karnak relief of Sethos I and mentioned in P.Anastasi I. Hoffmeier tentatively identifies Tell el-Burdj with the station T3 't p3 m3i ('The dwelling of the lion') on the Karnak relief, which corresponds with T3 't n (Ssw) 'nh wḏ3 snb ('The dwelling of Sese - life, prosperity, health!') in P.Anastasi I and T3-'t-t (R'mssw-mry-Imn) 'nh wḏ3 snb ('The dwelling of Ramses-beloved-of-Amon - life, prosperity, health!') in P.Anastasi V<sup>3513</sup>, although he does not exclude an identification with the next station, P3 mktr n (Mn-m3't-R') ('The migdol of Men-ma'at-Ra')<sup>3514</sup>.

### HABWA I-V

Habwa I, Egyptian name: Tcharou (Middle till New Kingdom)

### Topographical situation

<sup>3513</sup> Karnak, 1986, IV, pl. 6, 38 (D); P.Anastasi I, 27, 3 (2); P.Anastasi V, 24, 8 (Gardiner, 1937, p. 69-70; Caminos, 1954, p. 265-269). See s.v. Itineraries. Cf. Hoffmeier, 2003, p. 196-197; Hoffmeier, 2004a, p. 64-65; Hoffmeier, 2005b, p. 86.

<sup>3514</sup> Karnak, 1986, IV, p. 21, referring to Gardiner, 1920, pl. 11 (E); cf. Cavillier, 2001b, p. 25-26 for a similar identification.

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In 1981 Abd el-Maksoud investigated a huge site, a fortified city of the Second Intermediate period and the New Kingdom, quite north of the present-day road and at the western side of a lagoon, *linea recta* some 10 km northeast of el-Qantara and some 4 km north of Tell Abu Seifa<sup>3515</sup>. He was apparently convinced that this site corresponded with the medieval road station Habwa and the Tell Habwa of the 19th-20th century maps and therefore named his site Habwa. The medieval Habwa, however, was situated some 5 km southeast of the New Kingdom site, so the use of the name Habwa for the latter site is rather misleading. To avoid confusion I reserve the name Habwa for the medieval road station, while the name Habwa I will be used to refer to the recently discovered site<sup>3516</sup>.

In 1981 Abd el-Maksoud describes the site of Habwa I as two circular hills with an average diameter of 150 m and an approximate height of 3 m, situated at some 50 m from each other<sup>3517</sup>. The site of Habwa I, which was used as an Israeli military base from 1967 till 1975<sup>3518</sup>, is situated on the sandy ridge along the coastline, which is formed during the last Flandrian transgression about 6000 BC. This ridge of some 200 to 500 m wide probably remained the actual coastline till the 1st millennium BC. Southeast of it extend two lagoons - depressions about 1 m below the present-day sea level and still often under water - that are connected with each other near Habwa I<sup>3519</sup>. The Pelousiac branch, which often changed its course, apparently ran in the immediate neighbourhood of Habwa I in the 1st millennium BC<sup>3520</sup>, while Abd el-Maksoud assumes that the site was also situated near or on that branch in the Second Intermediate period and in the New Kingdom<sup>3521</sup>.

### Archaeological finds

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<sup>3515</sup> Abd el-Maksoud, 1983, p. 3 (10 km); BIA, 1992, V, p. 46 (incorrectly 4 km - cf. p. 47); BIA, 1994, IX-X, p. 83 (4 km); Valbelle, 1996, p. 65 (5 km); Hoffmeier, 1997, p. 194, n. 73 (about 8 km); Abd el-Maksoud, 1998b, p. 23 (4 km). The place probably corresponds with one of the New Kingdom sites in the cluster northeast of el-Qantara on the map of Oren, 1987a, p. 79.

<sup>3516</sup> See s.v. Habwa and Tell Habwa.

<sup>3517</sup> Abd el-Maksoud, 1983, p. 3.

<sup>3518</sup> Cf. Abd el-Maksoud, 1989b, p. 177 (1967 till 1975); Hoffmeier, 1997, p. 185 (1967 till 1979).

<sup>3519</sup> Abd el-Maksoud, 1993, p. 21; Chartier-Raymond, 1993, p. 46-47, with fig. 1 and p. 61.

<sup>3520</sup> Cf. Marcolongo, 1992, p. 26-27; Haikal, 1995, p. 187; Bietak, 1997, p. 88; Hoffmeier, 1997, p. 186-187 and fig. 22.

<sup>3521</sup> Cf. Abd el-Maksoud, 1998a, p. 62 ('near the Pelousiac branch'); Abd el-Maksoud, 1998b, p. 7 ('near the mouth of the Pelousiac branch'); p. 28 ('it is very likely that the situation of Habwa I depends on the orientation and the proximity of the Pelousiac branch'); p. 121.124 ('Habwa I is situated on the Pelousiac branch'); p. 123: ('the site is very near the Pelousiac branch').

*Habwa I*

Habwa I, the site of a large fortified city of the Second Intermediate period and the New Kingdom, was surveyed by Abd el-Maksoud in 1981 and has been excavated from 1986 on<sup>3522</sup>. Excavations till 1991 took place along the northern and western city wall, and in four areas inside the city, sc. sector A and B against the northern wall, sector C in the southern part of the city, and sector D immediately south of sector B. From 1993 on also other sectors have been investigated such as the southwestern part of the town and the eastern wall, but the results are still unpublished. The major part of the city remains as yet unexcavated.

The oldest objects at Habwa I date from the Middle Kingdom, but no constructions from this period have yet been excavated. In 1993-1994 near the western wall a stone vase was found with a fragmentary inscription mentioning the name of Sesostris I<sup>3523</sup>. A seal with the name of Sesostris II<sup>3524</sup> and a alabaster statue of a sitting man<sup>3525</sup> have been found in sector B, together with other Middle Kingdom material.

Mud brick houses, granaries, streets, tombs and horse burials<sup>3526</sup> of the Second Intermediate or Hyksos period have been found in Habwa I, which was apparently densely occupied at that time. The city was surrounded by a wall, 6 m thick, of which

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<sup>3522</sup> The excavations at Habwa I till 1991 have been published by Abd el-Maksoud, 1998b, which is mainly based on his unpublished thesis Abd el-Maksoud, 1992c (non vidi); other reports include Abd el-Maksoud, 1981, p. 38-39; Abd el-Maksoud, 1983, p. 3-5; Abd el-Maksoud, 1987a, p. 13-16 and map 1 and pl. 1a-b; Leclant, 1987, p. 307-308; Leclant, 1988, p. 321 and fig. 27-28; Abd el-Maksoud, 1988b, p. 4-5 (non vidi); Abd el-Maksoud, 1989b, p. 173-192, with fig. 5 and two photos; Leclant, 1989, p. 352; Valbelle, 1989, p. 598-599; Valbelle, 1990a, p. 96.99-100; BIA, 1991, IV, p. 52; Leclant, 1991, p. 177; Abd el-Maksoud, 1992b, p. 7-8; BIA, 1992, V, p. 46.47; BIA, 1992, VI, p. 27-28; Abd el-Maksoud, 1993, p. 21 with fig. 25; Leclant, 1993, p. 191 (incorrectly linking the crocodiles of Tell el-Mufariq with Habwa I); Oren, 1993, p. 1388; Valbelle, 1993b, p. 19-20; BIA, 1994, IX-X, p. 83; Haikal, 1995, p. 186-188 and pl. 19, 1; Valbelle, 1995a, p. 95; Valbelle, 1996, p. 62-63, with two fig.; Bourriau, 1997b, p. 137-139; Defernez, 1997a, p. 35-39, with pl. 1; French, 1997, p. 142; Hoffmeier, 1997, p. 185-187 and fig. 24-26; Seiler, 1997, p. 23-33, with pl. 1-3; Abd el-Maksoud, 1998a, p. 61-65, with fig. 50-52; Leclant, 1998, p. 335; Leclant, 1999, p. 337; Abd el-Maksoud, 2004, p. 8; Abd el-Maksoud, 2005, p. 1-43, with fig. 1-13 and pl. 1-11; Morris, 2005, p. 56-60.177.293-294.509-511. With the kind permission of Mohammed Abd el-Maksoud I was able to visit the site in May 1996.

<sup>3523</sup> Cf. Abd el-Maksoud, 2005, p. 4, no. 2 and fig. 2a-b.

<sup>3524</sup> Cf. Abd el-Maksoud, 1998b, p. 39.127.255-259 and fig. 44, no. 447; Abd el-Maksoud, 2005, p. 4, no. 1.

<sup>3525</sup> Cf. Abd el-Maksoud, 1998b, p. 39.127.268-269 and fig. 50, no. 497.

<sup>3526</sup> The horse bones noticed in 1981 (cf. Abd el-Maksoud, 1983, p. 4-5 and pl. 2a-b) have nothing to do with the Islamic road station Habwa, as suggested by Abd el-Maksoud, but they can be compared with another horse burial found in 1994, which apparently belongs to the Hyksos period (cf. Hoffmeier, 1997, p. 185); for similar equine burials in the eastern Delta and Canaan, cf. Oren, 1997c, p. 265-266.

the southwest corner is excavated, together with 100 m of the southern wall and 45 m of the western wall. There are no traces of destruction and perhaps the site was partially abandoned at the end of the Second Intermediate period<sup>3527</sup>.

Some 300 m east of the site Abd el-Maksoud discovered in 1981 two limestone stelae identical in shape and writing, each containing one of the names of king Aa-seh-Ra Nehesy (nṯr nfr (‘3-sh.-R’) di ‘nh and s3 R’ (Nḥs) dt), who probably ruled during the 14th dynasty about 1720 BC. Two similar steles that did not have any inscriptions, were apparently not finished<sup>3528</sup>. A fifth stele found in 1992-1993 in sector B has a very damaged inscription<sup>3529</sup>. In 1990 a limestone doorjamb was found in a building in sector B with only one of the four columns still legible; Abd el-Maksoud at first dated the inscription to the Middle Kingdom, but later on he preferred a date during the 14th dynasty<sup>3530</sup>:

'... offrandes que donne [le roi] à Wadjyt déesse de Imet afin qu'elle donne des offrandes de nourriture et [toutes bonnes] choses [ ] [pour le ka] du noble et comte (rp’ ḥ3ty-’), chancelier du roi de Basse-Égypte, ami unique et directeur des choses scellées Aper-Baal (‘pr-B’3r) aimé de Wadjyt.'

In 2004 near the western wall several fragmentary statues and a stele were found that were also dated to the Second Intermediate period. A limestone statue of a god with a lion's head might represent Horos of Mesen, who is often depicted and described as a lion in the Graeco-Roman period<sup>3531</sup>. A limestone statue of a seated man has two inscriptions that identify him as Setech-m-ousechet, an official in the city of Tcharou<sup>3532</sup>:

qnbt(‘?) n T3rw | Sṯḥ-m-wsḥt wḥm ‘nh - mry m<n>wt

'Le conseiller de Tcharou | Setech-m-ousechet, renouvelé de vie - aimé de Renenoutet'

On a stele a man described as 'son of Ra Nehesy' (s3 R’ Nḥs), but bearing no royal insignia, offers an incense vase to a god with a ram's head 'Ba-neb-djed born for life (?)' (B3-nb-dd msy n ‘nh); a third text, which might have been added afterwards, refers to 'his sister, mistress of the Double Land, Tany, may she live!' (sn.t=f nb.t

<sup>3527</sup> Cf. Abd el-Maksoud, 1998a, p. 61; Abd el-Maksoud, 1998b, p. 37-38.127.

<sup>3528</sup> Abd el-Maksoud, 1981, p. 39; Leclant, 1982, p. 422; Abd el-Maksoud, 1983, p. 3-5, with fig. 1-2 and pl. 1a-b; Bietak, 1984b, p. 59-75 (with the date of ca. 1720 on p. 65); Leclant, 1984, p. 358; Abd el-Maksoud, 1987a, p. 14; Leclant, 1987, p. 307, n. 80; Abd el-Maksoud, 1989b, p. 177-178, with fig. 3; Valbelle, 1989, p. 598; Valbelle, 1990a, p. 92; Dijkstra, 1991, p. 127, n. 5; Abd el-Maksoud, 1993, p. 21 (mentioning four royal stelae, therefore including the two without inscriptions); Hoffmeier, 1997, p. 185; Abd el-Maksoud, 1998b, p. 18.31.39.127.271-272; Mumford, Gregory D., s.v. Sinai, in Redford, 2001, p. 289 (for unknown reasons referring to two stelae of king Apophis, 1605-1565 BC); Abd el-Maksoud, 2005, p. 4-5, no. 3-4 and fig. 3a-b.

<sup>3529</sup> Cf. Abd el-Maksoud, 1998b, p. 39; Abd el-Maksoud, 2005, p. 4-6, no. 5 and fig. 4a-b.

<sup>3530</sup> Cf. Abd el-Maksoud, 1998b, p. 18.39.271 and p. 278, pl. 1; Abd el-Maksoud, 2005, p. 11, no. 9.

<sup>3531</sup> Cf. Abd el-Maksoud, 2005, p. 5-7, no. 6 with pl. 3.

<sup>3532</sup> Cf. Abd el-Maksoud, 2005, p. 7-8, no. 7 with fig. 5 and pl. 4; Hoffmeier, 2005b, p. 82.

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t3wy (T3ny) ḥnh.ty); both the royal son Nehesy (whose name here is not written in a cartouche) and queen Tany are also known from other sources, but there is some discussion about their chronology and identification<sup>3533</sup>.

In the early 18th dynasty the city expanded to the east and to the west, and was surrounded by a double mud brick wall over some 600 x 300 m<sup>3534</sup>, 4 to 7 m thick and fortified with buttresses. The smaller outer wall probably had to keep the sand from piling up against the real fortifications. At the western side the (main?) entrance is flanked by two towers. In the city mud brick houses, storehouses and granaries with many silos were found together with some larger buildings that possibly served an administrative function, one of them having a garden. The cartouches of Thoutmosis I and Thoutmosis III occur on several seals on jars<sup>3535</sup>. A limestone doorpost with a fragmentary inscription perhaps can be dated to the same period<sup>3536</sup>.

Near a construction in the southwestern part of the site that is described as a 'late temple', four limestone fragments were found. A fragmentary royal stele is most likely to be ascribed to Thoutmosis I, although Amenhotep II cannot be excluded<sup>3537</sup>. No specific date can be given for a fragmentary inscription with traces of two cartouches<sup>3538</sup> and for a fragmentary doorpost<sup>3539</sup>. Another fragmentary doorpost with the inscription 'the good god, column of [heaven]' (nṯr nfr wh3 n [ ]) might be dated to the Ramesside period<sup>3540</sup>.

In the 19th dynasty, probably under Sethos I, the fortifications were strengthened. In sector C in the south of the city a large official building was excavated - a palace or a temple? - yielding some limestone thresholds and parts of columns<sup>3541</sup>. In this area a fragmentary limestone doorjamb was found in 1981 with the cartouches of king Sethos I<sup>3542</sup>:

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<sup>3533</sup> Cf. Abd el-Maksoud, 2005, p. 8-10, no. 8 with fig. 6 and pl. 5.

<sup>3534</sup> Cf. Abd el-Maksoud, 1998b, p. 111-113 (at least 400 x 300 m); Hoffmeier, 1997, p. 185 and p. 195, n. 90 (a projection of 800 x 400 m); Abd el-Maksoud, 1998a, p. 61 (600 x 300 m).

<sup>3535</sup> Cf. Abd el-Maksoud, 1998a, p. 61-62; Abd el-Maksoud, 1998b, p. 36-37.127; Abd el-Maksoud, 2005, p. 11, no. 10-13 and pl. 6.

<sup>3536</sup> Cf. Abd el-Maksoud, 2005, p. 11-12, no. 14 and fig. 7.

<sup>3537</sup> Cf. Abd el-Maksoud, 2005, p. 11-13, no. 15 and fig. 8.

<sup>3538</sup> Cf. Abd el-Maksoud, 2005, p. 13, no. 16 and fig. 9.

<sup>3539</sup> Cf. Abd el-Maksoud, 2005, p. 14, no. 17 and fig. 10.

<sup>3540</sup> Cf. Abd el-Maksoud, 2005, p. 14-15, no. 18 and fig. 11.

<sup>3541</sup> Cf. Abd el-Maksoud, 1998a, p. 63-64; Abd el-Maksoud, 1998b, p. 35-36.127.

<sup>3542</sup> Abd el-Maksoud, 1981, p. 38-39, with a photo; Leclant, 1982, p. 422; Abd el-Maksoud, 1983, p. 3; Bietak, 1984b, p. 60-61; Abd el-Maksoud, 1987a, p. 14-16; Abd el-Maksoud, 1989b, p. 175-177 (incorrectly called an architrave); Valbelle, 1989, p. 598; Valbelle, 1990a, p. 100; Abd el-Maksoud, 1993, p. 21; Hoffmeier, 1997, p. 185; Abd el-Maksoud, 1998a, p. 63; Abd el-Maksoud, 1998b, p. 31.36.39.80.120.272-273; Abd el-Maksoud, 2005, p. 15-16, no. 19 and pl. 7. According to Haikal,

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[ ] r ḥq3 t3 nb nsw-bity nb t3.wy (Mn-m3<sup>c</sup>.t-R<sup>c</sup>) s3 R<sup>c</sup> nb [ḥ<sup>c</sup>w ]

'[ ] pour le chef du pays entier, roi de Haute et Basse-Égypte, Men-ma'at-Ra fils de Ra, seigneur [des apparitions ]'

In 1998-1999 three Ramesside (?) statues have been found within a New Kingdom temple in the southwestern part of town. An unfinished block statue (?) is uninscribed<sup>3543</sup>. The inscription on the statue of Paser and his wife Henout shows the man to be a military commander<sup>3544</sup>:

ḥtp di nsw Wsir nb 3bdw di=f prt-ḥrw t3 ḥnqt k3w 3pdw n k3 n ḥry-pdt P3-sr

ḥtp di nsw Wsir ḥq3 dt di=f ḥt nb.t nfr.t w<sup>c</sup>b.t n k3 n ḥmt=f nb.t pr Ḥnwt

'L'offrande que donne le roi à Osiris, seigneur d'Abydos, afin qu'il donne l'offrande vocale - pain, bière, bétail, volaille - pour le ka du commandant de régiment Paser.

L'offrande que donne le roi à Osiris, maître d'éternité, afin qu'il donne toutes choses bonnes et pures pour le ka de son épouse, la maîtresse de maison Henout.'

An incomplete stele statue belongs to Nechem-sou-her (?), a high official with some military functions. The inscription also mentions the god Horos lord of Tcharou<sup>3545</sup>:

1 [ ] n ... n k3 n mr-mš<sup>c</sup> [ ]

[ ] n ntr.w (?) ḥsy n ntr nfr mh ib [ ]

[ ] sḏm (?) rmt [ ]

[ ] is nb=f r ir=f [ ]

5 [ ] snny n ḥm=f Nḥm-sw-ḥr (?) [ ]

6 [nsw] di ḥtp Ḥr nb T3rw di=f

8 ḥnh wḏ3 snb ḥr spd m s.t nb.t n k3 n mr-mš<sup>c</sup> [ ]

9 [ ]

'[ ] pour le ka du général [ ] | [aimé] des dieux (?), loué du dieu parfait, l'homme de confiance [du roi] | [qui écoute (?)] les hommes [ ] | [ ] son maître pour qu'il fasse [ ] | [ ] le guerrier de char de sa Majesté Nechem-sou-her (?) [ ] | L'offrande que donne le roi à Horos maître de Tcharou afin qu'il accorde | vie, prospérité, santé, intelligence en toute place pour le ka du général | [ ] (added later?)

7 ... n p3 iḥw n Pr-<sup>c</sup>3 ḥnh wḏ3 snb ḥry pdt T3

[ ] de l'écurie du Pharaon - vie, prospérité, santé! - le commandant du régiment To.'

No material was excavated dating to the Third Intermediate or the Saite periods. In two Hyksos buildings, however, excavated in 1993-1994, pottery of the Persian period (both 5th and 4th century BC) was found, while in 2004 some Persian buildings were discovered<sup>3546</sup>. At least 50 tombs (one of them being an uninscribed limestone sarcophagus) have been excavated from the Graeco-Roman period<sup>3547</sup>.

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1995, p. 187 also a New Kingdom inscription mentioning the toponym Tcharou has been found, but because no such block has been found before 1998, I suppose that the block of Sethos I is meant.

<sup>3543</sup> Cf. Abd el-Maksoud, 2005, p. 16, no. 20 and pl. 9a.

<sup>3544</sup> Cf. Abd el-Maksoud, 2005, p. 16-17, no. 21 with fig. 12 and pl. 9b.

<sup>3545</sup> Cf. Hoffmeier, 2003, p. 172; Abd el-Maksoud, 2005, p. 18-21, no. 22 with fig. 13 and pl. 10-11; Hoffmeier, 2005b, p. 82.

<sup>3546</sup> BIA, 1994, IX-X, p. 83 (referring to a fortress of the Persian period, which is probably a mistake); Valbelle, 1995a, p. 95; Defernéz, 1997a, p. 35-39, with pl. 1; French, 1997, p. 142; Abd el-Maksoud, 1998a, p. 65 ('les restes de campements perses'); Abd el-Maksoud, 2005, p. 3 ('bâtiments datant de la période perse').

<sup>3547</sup> Cf. Abd el-Maksoud, 1998b, p. 35.91-93.127; for the sarcophagus (T.157), cf. Abd el-Maksoud, 1998b, p. 105, p. 150, fig. 26 and p. 160, pl. 10.

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No Arab remains are recorded at Habwa I. Only three small sites, labelled a-c, about 1 km northeast of Habwa I, yielded some pottery characteristic for the late Byzantine or early Islamic period<sup>3548</sup>.

### *Habwa II-V*

In 1990-1992, during French-Egyptian surveys of the Habwa area, several new sites have been discovered, labelled Habwa II, III, IV, V, V A-B and Habwa West A-D, K-N, T. This last cluster of sites on the southern shore of the western laguna is also grouped under the name of Shatt el-Bohaira<sup>3549</sup>. Excavations in the Habwa area were organized by the Österreichisches Archäologisches Institut in 1993-1995 and by the East Frontier Archaeological Project in 1994-1995<sup>3550</sup>. The material found dates from the Ancient Kingdom to the Late period.

On Habwa II a small fragmentary octagonal limestone column from the Middle Kingdom was reused as a doorjamb by Sethos I ([ ] (Sty-[mry]-n-[Pth]) di 'nh mi R'). Probably from the same monument came a fragment of an octagonal column also with the name of Sethos I added ([ ] Mn-m3'.t-R' [ ]), which was afterwards used as a millstone. The cartouches of this king also occur on a limestone lintel, which is still unpublished<sup>3551</sup>. Another New Kingdom fortress has been found at the site, but further information is lacking for the moment<sup>3552</sup>. Habwa II yielded also pottery from the 4th century BC<sup>3553</sup>.

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<sup>3548</sup> Valbelle, 1992, p. 18 and the map p. 16; Chartier-Raymond, 1993, p. 67. These sites probably correspond with the Habwa East of Dorner, 1994, p. 8 and 1996, p. 167, who describes a camping spot for caravans and Beduin, constantly in use from the Second Intermediate till the Early Arab period.

<sup>3549</sup> Cf. BIA, 1991, IV, p. 56 ('Chatt el-Bohaira'); Abd el-Maksoud, 1992b, p. 8 ('Chatt el-Bohayer'); Leclant, 1992, p. 236-237 ('Chatt el-Bohaira').

<sup>3550</sup> For the surveys and excavations at Habwa II-V and the neighbouring sites, cf. BIA, 1990, I, p. 62; BIA, 1991, IV, p. 56-57; Leclant, 1991, p. 176; Le Saout, 1991, p. 15-17; Abd el-Maksoud, 1992b, p. 8; Caneva, 1992b, p. 39-44, with fig. 1 and pl. 4; Leclant, 1992, p. 236-237; Valbelle, 1992, p. 14-22 with the map p. 16, fig. 3-5 and pl. 1a-b; Chartier-Raymond, 1993, p. 67-68; Dorner, 1994, p. 8; Leclant, 1994, p. 366-367; Dorner, 1995, p. 4; Valbelle, 1995a, p. 95; Aston, 1996, p. 179-197, with pl. 1-11; Dorner, 1996, p. 167-177, with pl. 1-4 and plan 1-4; Giddy, 1996a, p. 12; Leclant, 1996, p. 256; Valbelle, 1996, p. 63; Aufrère, 1997, p. 291; Bourriau, 1997b, p. 137-139; Dorner, 1997, p. 41-45, with pl. 1-2; Leclant, 1997, p. 241-242; Valbelle, 1997, p. viii; Maksoud, 1998a, p. 62-64; Abd el-Maksoud, 1998b, p. 23-24.30.32.36; Hoffmeier, 2003, p. 196-197.

<sup>3551</sup> BIA, 1991, IV, p. 56; Leclant, 1991, p. 176; Leclant, 1992, p. 236 and fig. 10; Valbelle, 1992, p. 17-18, with fig. 4 and pl. 1b; Chartier-Raymond, 1993, p. 68 with fig. 12; Abd el-Maksoud, 1998a, p. 63-64 (who supposes that the blocks have been transported there from Habwa I); Abd el-Maksoud, 1998b, p. 30.36; Valbelle, 1999c, p. 96-97 (non vidi); Abd el-Maksoud, 2005, p. 16 and pl. 8. For the New Kingdom pottery at Habwa II, cf. Bourriau, 1997b, p. 139.

<sup>3552</sup> A personal communication of Al-Ayedi in Morris, 2005, p. 511, n. 434 and p. 524-525.

<sup>3553</sup> Valbelle, 1995a, p. 95.



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The 18 ha area of Habwa III yielded a New Kingdom habitat and an extensive cemetery from the 1st millennium BC, which are also known as Tell el-Tabut ('Tell of the sarcophagus')<sup>3554</sup>.

Habwa IV, excavated in 1993-1995, apparently contains the New Kingdom cemetery belonging to the fortified city of Habwa I. The graves can be dated to the 18th dynasty, most of them to the reign of Thoutmosis IV or Amenhotep III, a single one to the later 18th dynasty<sup>3555</sup>.

### Identifications

#### *Habwa I*

Although Abd el-Maksoud at first followed Gardiner's identification with T3 ʿ.t p3 m3i, his excavations in Habwa I revealed a huge site whose remains date from the Second Intermediate period and the New Kingdom. The archaeological context matches what is known from New Kingdom sources about the fortified city of Tcharou, and there is little doubt among modern scholars that the Tcharou of the 2nd millennium BC has to be looked for in Habwa I<sup>3556</sup>.

#### *Habwa II*

On the Karnak relief of Sethos I a fortress labelled 'The fortress of Tcharou' (P3 ḥtm n T3rw) is mentioned at the eastern side of a bridge across 'The dividing canal' (T3 dni.t), but also at the western side of the bridge some buildings are depicted, which are not named explicitly<sup>3557</sup>. Hoffmeier tentatively suggests that the fortress corresponds with Habwa II, which is separated from Habwa I / Tcharou by a

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<sup>3554</sup> Leclant, 1991, p. 176; Le Saout, 1991, p. 16; Valbelle, 1992, p. 17; Dorner, 1996, p. 168; Bourriau, 1997b, p. 139; Abd el-Maksoud, 1998a, p. 63. The name Tell el-Tabut ('Tell el-Tabout') does not appear in earlier surveys and is apparently created quite recently.

<sup>3555</sup> Dorner, 1994, p. 8; Leclant, 1994, p. 366-367; Dorner, 1995, p. 4; Aston, 1996, p. 179-197, with pl. 1-11; Dorner, 1996, p. 167-177, with pl. 1-4 and plan 1-4; Giddy, 1996a, p. 12; Leclant, 1996, p. 256; Aufrère, 1997, p. 291; Bourriau, 1997b, p. 137-139; Dorner, 1997, p. 41-45, with pl. 1-2; Leclant, 1997, p. 241-242; Valbelle, 1997, p. viii; Abd el-Maksoud, 1998a, p. 62; Hoffmeier, 2003, p. 175.

<sup>3556</sup> Cf. Abd el-Maksoud, 1989b, p. 188-191; BIA, 1992, V, p. 47; BIA, 1992, VI, p. 27-28; Abd el-Maksoud, 1993, p. 21; Chartier-Raymond, 1993, p. 69, n. 91-92; Leclant, 1994, p. 366; Hoffmeier, 1997, p. 183-187.224; Abd el-Maksoud, 1998a, p. 61-65. See s.v. Tcharou and s.v. Sele.

<sup>3557</sup> Karnak, 1986, IV, pl. 6, 36-37 (A-B). See s.v. Tcharou.

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narrow lagoon or canal<sup>3558</sup>, but as long as the site has not been excavated, this identification remains a mere hypothesis. He apparently also supposes that the name 'The fortress of Tcharou' only refers to the fortress and not to the rest of the city at the western side of the canal, but I do not see any reason why the name should not refer to the whole of Tcharou at both sides of the canal.

Al-Ayedi tentatively identifies Habwa II with T3 ʿ.t p3 m3i ('The dwelling of the lion') on the Karnak relief, but Morris rightly points out that its position so close to Habwa I makes such an identification less likely<sup>3559</sup>.

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<sup>3558</sup> Cf. Hoffmeier, 2003, p. 196-197; Morris, 2005, p. 526.

<sup>3559</sup> Karnak, 1986, IV, pl. 6, 38 (D); cf. the personal communication of Al-Ayedi in Morris, 2005, p. 524-525.

## *The area of lake Ballah*

### **EL-QUSAIR**

#### **Topographical situation**

el-Qusair ('the small fortress'<sup>3560</sup>); mentioned in sources of the 13th-15th centuries AD, is situated on the road from Rafah to el-Salhiya. According to the *Devise* (1) the station lies 4 'liues' or about 16 km west of el-Ghurabi, while the *Via* (2) gives a distance of 5 'liues' or about 20 km between the two places. The later sources el-Omari (5) and Abu'l-Mahasin (7) also know the station Habwa between el-Qusair and el-Ghurabi. The *Devise* (1) mentions el-Salhiya as the first place west of el-Qusair at 9 'liues' or about 36 km; the *Via* (2) has a distance of 8 'liues' or about 32 km between the two places and also knows the station Bir Ghazi in between at 4 'liues' or about 16 km. Both the *Devise* (1) and the *Via* (2) have a distance of about 52 km between el-Ghurabi and el-Salhiya, which is perhaps somewhat less than the actual distance<sup>3561</sup>, but in general the division of the tracks in the *Via* (2) seems more trustworthy.

According to the *Devise* (1) el-Qusair has no accommodations for travellers, but is apparently only a watch post giving fire signals to couriers to guide them in the night and to warn for a flooding of the nearby lake of Tennis. For el-Omari (5), who situates el-Qusair in the neighbourhood of the older road station el-Aqula, the place used to have a serai, a mosque and a minaret probably built in the early 14th century AD, but most of it was destroyed about 1345 AD and only the minaret was still used as a lighthouse. el-Qusair probably remained a post station till the 15th century AD, as it is clear from the itinerary of Abu'l-Mahasin (7). It is no longer mentioned in the itinerary of Ibn el-Dji'an of 1478 AD and was then apparently replaced again by el-Aqula.

#### **Identifications**

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<sup>3560</sup> Cf. Schefer, 1884, p. 95.

<sup>3561</sup> Cf. Daressy, 1930, pl., with - linea recta - some 32,5 km between el-Salhiya and el-Qantara and some 25 km between el-Qantara and el-Ghurabi, giving a total distance of some 57,5 km.

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The distances given in the itineraries possibly situate el-Qusair somewhat east of the present-day Suez Canal, in the area of el-Qantara and Tell Abu Seifa<sup>3562</sup>. Clédat did notice some traces of the Arab period in Tell Abu Seifa, but further chronological data are lacking and an exact identification for el-Qusair is hazardous. Anyway there are no reasons to follow Daressy's suggestion that the name Djisir el-Qanatir is a mistake for el-Qusair.

Daressy identifies el-Qusair with the place el-Qasera mentioned in Maqrizi<sup>3563</sup>, but Clédat is probably right situating el-Qasera more south in the eastern Delta.

In the itineraries of Khalil el-Zahiri and of Abu'l-Mahasin as quoted by Quatremère apparently a place called el-Mansura is listed as the first station west of el-Ghurabi. Clédat therefore tentatively identifies this el-Mansura with el-Qusair, also situated west of el-Ghurabi<sup>3564</sup>. Daressy, on the other hand, prefers to locate el-Mansura in Tell Defenne more to the west<sup>3565</sup>. These identifications are not to be accepted since the position of el-Mansura in the two lists is probably just a mistake. Hartmann does apparently not consider the places in the list of Khalil el-Zahiri west of el-Ghurabi as trustworthy<sup>3566</sup> and in Popper's more recent comment on Abu'l-Mahasin the name of the station west of el-Ghurabi is simply el-Qusair (7).

### Homonyms

el-Qusair is also the name of a town at the coast of the Red Sea, at the end of the desert road from Koptos<sup>3567</sup>.

### Analysis of the sources

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<sup>3562</sup> Cf. Daressy, 1914, p. 38 and 1929, p. 321 (in el-Qantara); Clédat, 1923b, p. 153 and p. 154 with n. 1 (in Tell Abu Seifa, and therefore also identified with Tcharou); Popper, 1955, I, map 4 (el-Qantara). See s.v. el-Qantara, s.v. Tell Abu Seifa and s.v. Tell el-Ahmar.

<sup>3563</sup> Maqrizi (translated in Bouriant, 1900, p. 528.669), quoting the itinerary of Ibn Khurdadbeh; cf. Daressy, 1914, p. 38 and n. 1; rejected by Clédat, 1921, p. 175-176 and 1923b, p. 153.189. See also s.v. Tcharou.

<sup>3564</sup> Clédat, 1923b, p. 152-154.

<sup>3565</sup> Daressy, 1929, p. 321-322.

<sup>3566</sup> Hartmann, 1910, p. 687.688.

<sup>3567</sup> Cf. Gauthier, 1931, VII, p. 51 (index); LÄ, VII, 1992, p. 276 (index).

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In *La devise des chemins de Babiloine* (1), written ca. 1289-1291 AD, a military itinerary goes from Rafah to Cairo. It mentions the station El Cosair or le Cosair (el-Qusair) at 4 'liues' (ca. 16 km) west of El Gorabi (el-Ghurabi) and at 9 'liues' (ca. 36 km) east of Salechie (el-Salhiya); when the water of the Nile flood is no longer an obstacle, the latter distance can be reduced to 7 'liues' (ca. 28 km). El Cosair is in fact only a watch post giving fire signals to guide couriers in the night and to warn for a flooding of 'le lac de Tennis', a lake named after the Delta city Tennis. It is impossible to camp there because there is no water except in a cistern for the guards. Also in the desert between El Cosair and Salechie there is no water<sup>3568</sup>:

Item d'El Gorabi iusques au Cosair liues .iiij. Cest est une garde auquel lieu tiennent fanon de nuit pour les berith qu'il n'en perdent le chemin, & là non a aigue que une cisterne pour les garcheus dou lieuc, & ost n'i peut herbergier là; & le lac de Tennis est iignant, de quoi, quant le floum est en son cressant, il abreuve une province qui s'apele Lassarquye. Après ce que la terre a pris son saoul, brisent les escluses & les aigues qui s'escolent vont en celui lac. De quoi le dit lac crest & destorbe le chemin de .ij. legues, & qui vodroit passer de nuit, de legier il peut forveer & periller, si n'est par l'avoyement dou fanon. Item d'El Cosair iusques à la Salechie liues .ix. Entre ces n'y a point d'aigue, & quant le flum est à son amerment, il n'y a lors que .vij. ligues. Et là fine le desert & est l'entrée de Babiloine.

'Next from El Gorabi to Cosair 4 liues. This is a guard post, where a sign is given at night to keep the couriers on the right track; there is no water except for a cistern for the guards and one cannot stay there. The lake of Tennis is nearby; when the river rises, it irrigates a province that is called Lassarquye. When the land is saturated, the dikes break and the water flows into the lake. This lake rises and interrupts the road for 2 leagues; who wants to pass by there at night, easily gets in trouble, unless he is warned by the sign. Next from El Cosair to Salechie 9 liues. Between these places there is no water, but when the river is low, it is only 7 liues. Here the desert ends and lies the entrance to Babiloine.'

A similar itinerary composed before 1289 AD is found in three different documents: the French *Via ad terram sanctam*, written ca. 1291-1293 (2); the Latin *Memoria terre sancte*, written ca. 1300-1321 (3); the Latin work of the Italian geographer Marino Sanudo (4), written in 1321 AD and based upon the *Memoria*. They also describe the road from Rafah to Cairo, each with some minor variants. They mention el-Qusair at 5 'liues' (ca. 20 km) west of el-Ghurabi and 4 'liues' (ca. 16 km) east of Bir Ghazi or 8 'lives' (ca. 32 km) east of el-Salhiya. The road to el-Qusair is rather sandy; there is plenty, but bad water<sup>3569</sup>:

(2) Dou Gourabi a Cousser, V liues, sablon assés et assés d'aigue, mes moult mauvaise. Dou Couseir a Birhysce, IIII liues; sablon poi, aigue assés, mes salée. De Birhysce a la Salehie, IIII liues; bone vile, aigue assés et très bone.

'From Gourabi to Cousser, 5 liues, a lot of sand and plenty of water, but with a bad taste. From Couseir to Birhysce, 4 liues; little sand, plenty of water, but salty. From Birhysce to Salehie, 4 liues; a good city, plenty of very good water.'

<sup>3568</sup> *La devise des chemins de Babiloine* (Michelant, 1882, p. 242-243); cf. Daressy, 1914, p. 38.

<sup>3569</sup> *Via ad terram sanctam* (Kohler, 1904, p. 433); *Memoria terre sancte* (Kohler, 1904, p. 455-456); Marino Sanudo, 3, 14, 12 (Röhricht, 1898, p. 122).

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(3) Augorabi usque ad Couseir, .V. leuce, littora, satis aque sed pessime. de Couseir usque ad Birchisce, .IIII. leuce, parum littoris, aqua satis, sed tamen salsa. de Birchisce ad Saleyte, .IIII. leuce, bona villa et magna, satis aque et peroptime.

'From Augorabi to Cousair, 5 liues, sand, plenty of water, but very bad. From Cousair to Birchisce, 4 leuce, little sand, plenty of water, but salty. From Birchisce to Saleyte, 4 liues, a good, large city, plenty of very good water.'

(4) inde usque Chauseyr leuce V; satis de littore et de aqua, sed pessima. inde usque Birchisce leuce IV; parum de littore et satis de aqua, sed salsa. inde usque Salchie, bonam villam, leuce IV et copia bone aque.

'From there to Chauseyr 5 liues; a lot of sand and water, but very bad. From there to Birchisce 4 liues; little sand and plenty of water, but salty. From there to Salchie, a good city, liues 4, an a lot of good water.'

el-Omari (5-6), who wrote ca. 1345 AD, lists the road stations between Cairo and Gaza, including el-Salhiya, Bir Ghazi, el-Qusair and Habwa, while el-Qusair is also mentioned as a station for the so-called snow-dromedaries between Qatia and el-Salhiya. The same post stations on the same road are still mentioned in Abu'l-Mahasin (7) (before 1470 AD), but he replaces Bir Ghazi by Bir Ifra. The itinerary of Qalqashandi junior (1464 AD) for unknown reasons omits el-Qusair and jumps from Bir Ghazi to Habwa<sup>3570</sup>. el-Omari (5), who situates el-Qusair in the neighbourhood of the older station el-Aqula, adds that in the early 14th century AD a serai, a mosque and a minaret have been built in el-Qusair and that water was provided, but in his days everything was destroyed except for the minaret, which was apparently still used as a lighthouse.

## EL-LAWAWIN

### Topographical situation

About 1697 the road station el-Lawawin lies between Bir el-Duwaidar and el-Salhiya (1), apparently replacing one of the stations el-Aqula, Habwa, el-Qusair, or Bir Ghazi / Bir Ifra mentioned in earlier sources on this track. Further information, however, is lacking.

### Analysis of the sources

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<sup>3570</sup> el-Omari (translated in Hartmann, 1916a, p. 486-487.502); cf. Hartmann, 1910, p. 688.691.696; Gaudefroy-Demombynes, 1923, p. 256; Popper, 1955, I, p. 47 (?). Qalqashandi junior (mentioned in Hartmann, 1910, p. 688.691). Abu'l-Mahasin, *Chronicle* (mentioned in Popper, 1955, I, p. 47).

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About 1697 AD el-Nabulusi (1) went from Bir el-Duwaidar to el-Lawawin and continued to el-Salhiya<sup>3571</sup>. For the place el-Lawawin he mentions 'rooms like great wall niches, with next to each of them a well with salt water', but I do not understand what he means.

### **TELL ABU SEIFA**

Egyptian name: Tcharou (Late and Graeco-Roman periods)

Greek name: Sele

Alternative modern name: Tell el-Ahmar

### **Topographical situation**

Tell Abu Seifa lies about 3 km east of el-Qantara and the Suez Canal<sup>3572</sup>, at the northern end of the dry bed of lake Ballah and some 3 km south of the southeastern, also dry, end of lake Menzala. The site is situated some 28 km (?) south of Tell el-Farama<sup>3573</sup>.

The name Tell Abu Seifa is known since the middle of the 19th century AD. About 1886 and in the early 20th century AD Tell Abu Seifa was also called Qantara el-Qadim, 'Old Qantara' by the inhabitants of the modern village<sup>3574</sup>.

### **Archaeological finds**

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<sup>3571</sup> el-Nabulusi (mentioned in Hartmann, 1910, p. 701); cf. von Kremer, 1850b, p. 824, who incorrectly renders the name as 'Bewâwîn' [el-bwawin] (incorrectly copied as 'Rewâwîn' by Flügel); Flügel, 1862, p. 673, n. 1.

<sup>3572</sup> The distances differ: ca. 2,5 km (Gardiner, 1918a, p. 242: 1,5 miles; Kees, 1977, p. 105); ca. 3 km (Griffith, 1888, p. 97: 2 miles; Clédat, 1916b, p. 21; Lucas, 1941, p. 77: 2 miles; Gardiner, 1947, II, p. 202\*; Gomaà, Farouk, s.v. Sile, in LÄ, V, 1984, col. 946; Nibbi, 1989, p. 69: 2 miles); 4 km (Clédat, 1909b, p. 114; Gauthier, 1925, II, p. 113; 1927, IV, p. 192; 1929, VI, p. 67; Abel, 1938, II, p. 217; Figueras, 2000, p. 27, n. 6). TAVO Register, 1994, passim locates Tell Abu Seifa at 30° 45' or 50' north latitude and 32° 15' or 20' eastern longitude.

<sup>3573</sup> The distances differ: Gardiner, 1918a, p. 243: 'some 19 English miles' [i.e. ca. 30,5 km]; Gardiner, 1947, II, p. 202\* (cf. Timm, 1991, V, p. 2332, n. 5): 'about 26,5 km (= 18 Roman miles)', but he follows the figure of Ball, 1942, p. 142, who locates the place some 2 km too far northeast (see § Identifications and s.v. Tell el-Ahmar). On the map of Bietak, 1975, pl. 4 the distance *linea recta* is some 26 km.

<sup>3574</sup> Cf. Griffith, 1888, p. 101 ('Qanṭarah el Qadîme'); Valbelle, 1999a, p. 72 ('Kantara el-Qâdim').

## 9. The northwestern Sinai

The site of Tell Abu Seifa consists of a mound, measuring some 450 x 650 m<sup>3575</sup>, which contains the remains of a city and of two consecutive fortresses. A large cemetery extends west of the city.

The most puzzling monuments on the mound are some Ramesside blocs which appear in a homogeneous Ptolemaic and Roman context. Already about 1840 Prisse had noticed a red sandstone monument, often incorrectly described as an obelisk or a pyramidion. It was dedicated by Sethos I in honour of his father Ramses I to Horos, lord of Mesen [Hr nb Msn], and later restored by Ramses II in the temple of Horos [Pr-Hr]. On its top a statue was probably placed of Horos of Mesen represented as a falcon. Part of the monument was transported to Port Said about 1862-1865, another part was placed in el-Qantara East, and in 1923 the two parts were joined in the Ismailia Museum. While excavating in 1886 Griffith discovered two more fragments - now lost - of the same monument in the middle of the mound<sup>3576</sup>. Nearby Griffith found another sandstone monument in two fragments, crowned by a cornice. It was decorated under Ramses II and according to the text it served as the pedestal of a statue of Horos, lord of Mesen [Hr nb Msn]. It is not clear whether a statue of a colossal falcon is referred to (Griffith) or a monument as the one previously mentioned (Kitchen)<sup>3577</sup>. Close to the two monuments Griffith discovered a limestone base upon which one of them had been raised. Some 25 m east he found a recumbent lion, natural size, in limestone, without inscriptions, and other limestone bases of monuments<sup>3578</sup>. In 1914 Clédat also heard of two granite animal statues (sphinxes?),

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<sup>3575</sup> Griffith, 1888, p. 97 ('from north to south 500 yards, from east to west 700', i.e. ca. 29 ha); cf. Oren.1982a, p. 24 (incorrectly '200 ha') and 1993, p. 1395 ('50 a(cres)', i.e. ca. 20 ha).

<sup>3576</sup> Ismailia Museum inv. no. 2249; cf. Prisse, 1847, p. 4 and pl. 19, 1-3 (non vidi); Chabas, 1865, p. 34; Lepsius, 1867, p. 291; Brugsch, 1879, p. 301-302.305; Chester, 1880, p. 147; Griffith, 1888, p. 97.103-105 and pl. 51; Griffith, 1890, p. 70; Clédat, 1909b, p. 113-120; Küthmann, 1911, p. 45 and the fig. p. 46; Naville, 1912, p. 311-312; Daressy, 1914, p. 35; Clédat, 1916b, p. 23; Gardiner, 1918a, p. 242; Clédat, 1922, p. 190, n. 1; Gauthier, 1923, p. 176-182 and pl. 1-2; Gauthier, 1925, II, p. 113; Daressy, 1929, p. 307-308 and 1933, p. 186-187; PM, 1934, IV, p. 6-7; Servin, 1947, p. 65.67; Sauneron, 1954, p. 45-58 and pl. 1-5; Montet, 1957, p. 190; Gutbub, 1962, p. 50.70 and 1964, p. 36.38-39.43.44; Kitchen, 1975, I, p. 105-107 and 1993, I, p. 88-90, no. 51; De Wachter, 1982, p. 226-227 and n. 38.48; Yoyotte, 1983a, p. 218.221; Cauville, 1987, I, p. 225; Abd el-Maksoud, 1998a, p. 63-64, with fig. 53.

<sup>3577</sup> Griffith, 1888, p. 97.103-105 and pl. 51; Gardiner, 1918a, p. 242; Gauthier, 1923, p. 177-178; Daressy, 1933, p. 187-188 (who mixes up this block with the limestone base found by Griffith); PM, 1934, IV, p. 6; Sauneron, 1954, p. 46; Gutbub, 1964, p. 38-39.44.56; Kitchen, 1979, II, p. 402-403 and 1996, II, p. 229-230, no. 150a; Yoyotte, 1983a, p. 218.221; Abd el-Maksoud, 1998a, p. 64. Gauthier, Sauneron, Gutbub and Abd el-Maksoud, misinterpreting Griffith's notes, incorrectly identify this plinth with the part of the top of the previous monument also found by Griffith.

<sup>3578</sup> Griffith, 1888, p. 97.



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which were noticed by locals some thirty years ago, but had disappeared since<sup>3579</sup>. It does not seem impossible that the tale is actually based upon Griffith's limestone lion. For Griffith the place was the site of a temple of the Ramesside period, although he admits that he did not notice anything that was certainly earlier than the Ptolemaic period<sup>3580</sup>. Clédat excavated the alleged place of the temple - north of the ruins and east of the fortress - but he did not find anything<sup>3581</sup>. One therefore gets the impression that the Ramesside monuments have been brought to Tell Abu Seifa and were reinstalled there in the Graeco-roman period.

The site of Tell Abu Seifa was already described from 1840 on as an ancient town of considerable extent, with pottery, glass and other ancient debris scattered around<sup>3582</sup>. A lot of objects were collected by French engineers during the construction of the Suez Canal and found their way into numerous European collections<sup>3583</sup>.

According to Griffith the mound was badly damaged by previous diggers and a large well had been stripped of its limestone lining. Near the well Griffith found fragments of a limestone slab which had been broken up and used for paving-stones. Upon it was the Latin inscription CIL III, Suppl. II, 13578, in which the Roman emperors Diocletianus and Maximianus dedicated the camp of the Ala I Thracum Mauretana<sup>3584</sup> in 288 AD to Iuppiter, Hercules and Victoria (1)<sup>3585</sup>:

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<sup>3579</sup> Clédat, 1916b, p. 23-24.

<sup>3580</sup> Griffith, 1888, p. 97 and n. 1.

<sup>3581</sup> Clédat, 1916b, p. 23 (cf. the map in Clédat, 1920, pl. 2); 1919a, p. 191-192 (misinterpreted by Timm, 1991, V, p. 2330, who mixes up the fortress and the temple).

<sup>3582</sup> Prisse, 1847, p. 4 in Griffith, 1888, p. 103, n. 3; Lepsius, 1867, p. 291 (cf. Küthmann, 1911, p. 45); Chester, 1880, p. 146-147 and the map p. 144 (with the indication 'extensive ruins'); cf. the indication 'ruins' on the map Clédat, 1909a, p. 766. In el-Qantara East Chester noticed a monument from the Roman period which "resembles in colour and general contour a red chimney-pot, but the top is conical, and it is perforated with oblong apertures, resembling windows; on one side is an obscene [ithyphallic?] effigy, crowned with the feathers of Bes, and it is probably a comic representation of that deity, although the face is more youthful than is common". It is not clear whether the object came from the tell or from the cemetery and I cannot identify it (cf. De Wachter, 1982, p. 227, n. 48).

<sup>3583</sup> Cf. Clédat, 1909b, p. 117 (objects found at the site in 1862); Philipp, 1972, p. 21.30 and pl. 10-11.34b (a Ptolemaic and a Roman terra cotta statue from the site); De Wachter, 1982, p. 225-226 (with a preliminary inventory of the objects, including capitals, sarcophagi, a silver ring, lamps, amphorae and terra cotta statues).

<sup>3584</sup> For this cavalry unit, cf. Mowat in Griffith, 1888, p. 108; Lesquier, 1918, p. 79-80; Jarrett, 1969, p. 217; Alston, 1995, p. 170-171.

<sup>3585</sup> Now in the British Museum; cf. Griffith, 1888, p. 98.108 and pl. 51; Mommsen, CIL, III, Suppl. II, 1902, p. 2219, no. 13578; Küthmann, 1911, p. 39-40; Thomsen, 1917, p. 20 and n. 2 (who incorrectly supposes that the inscription indicates the beginning of a road on Egyptian territory); Gardiner, 1918a, p. 242; Lesquier, 1918, p. 80.237.475; Kees, Hermann, s.v. Sile 1, in RE, III A 1, 1927, col. 35; Daressy, 1933, p. 186; Gardiner, 1947, II, p. 203\*; Van Berchem, 1952, p. 64.69.71; Carrez-Maratray,

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- 1 [lo]vi Herculi Vi[ctoriae]  
[Im]p(erator) Caesar Gaius Aureliu[s Valerius Diocletianus]  
[Piu]s Felix Invictus Aug(ustus), pont(ifex) [max(imus), Germ(anicus) Max(imus),]  
[tri]b(unicia) potest(ate) V, co(n)s(ul) III, p(ater) p(atriciae), proc[o(n)s(ul) et]
- 5 [Imp(erator)] Caesar Marcus Aurelius [Valerius Maximianus]  
[Pi]us F[elix In]victus Aug(ustus), [pont(ifex) max(imus), Germ(anicus) Max(imus),]  
[tri]b(unicia) po[te]st(ate) I]II, co(n)s(ul) II, p(ater) p(atriciae), proco(n)[s(ul),]  
Invic[tissi]mi Principes N(ostri), t[otius orbis restitutores,]  
castra alae I Thracum M[auretanae]
- 10 providentia Sua[e] Maiestat[is extracta dedicaverunt]

'To Iuppiter, Hercules and Victoria, Emperor Caesar Gaius Aurelius Valerius Diocletianus Pius Felix Invictus Augustus, pontifex maximus, Germanicus Maximus, invested with tribunician power for the 5th time, consul for the 3rd time, father of the fatherland, proconsul, and Emperor Caesar Marcus Aurelius Valerius Maximianus Pius Felix Invictus Augustus, pontifex maximus, Germanicus Maximus, invested with tribunician power for the 3rd time, consul for the 2nd time, father of the fatherland, proconsul, our leaders who have never been defeated, the restorers of the whole world, dedicated the camp of the 1st cavalry unit of the Thracians of Mauretania, which has been built by the providence of their Majesties.'

A similar dedication for the cohorts I Augusta praetoria Lusitanorum - in the same year 288 AD to the same deities - has been found in Deir el-Gabrawi (Hierakon Polis) in Middle Egypt<sup>3586</sup> and a third one for an unidentified unit in the camp in Qaret el-Toub in the Bahriya oasis<sup>3587</sup>. The three camps have apparently been founded or at least thoroughly reorganised at that time. This military activity fits in with the general army reform by Diocletianus.

In the mound Griffith found the remains of a thick wall of unbaked bricks that seemed continuous for more than a 100 m, and which he tentatively identified with the Roman camp enclosure. He further excavated a lot of objects which often can be dated to the Roman period, and some coins ranging from Ptolemaios VIII to the time of Constantinus<sup>3588</sup>.

Apparently the same mud brick wall, 4,55 m thick, has been found during Clédat's excavations in May 1914. The fortress is situated south of the city, on the northern shore of present-day lake Ballah. Its southern side had a length of 195 m, with four round towers along the wall and one on every angle. Within the fortress Clédat found a Roman portico, 26,5 m long, with nine columns whose white marble

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1985, p. 163-164 and p. 175, no. 8; Horn, 1988, p. xv-xvi; Timm, 1991, V, p. 2330; Wagner, 1993b, p. 104; Alston, 1995, p. 33-205 passim; Carrez-Maratray, 1995, p. 150; Abd el-Maksoud, 1997, p. 224; Carrez-Maratray, 1999b, p. 224-231, no. 396, with photo; Carrez-Maratray, 2000a, p. 26-28 and fig. 14.

<sup>3586</sup> CIL III 1, 22 and CIL III, Suppl. I, 6626; cf. Alston, 1995, passim.

<sup>3587</sup> To be published by Frédéric Colin; cf. the communication of Luc Delvaux on 20.10.2001 and a short reference in Colin, 2002, p. 76-82 (non vidi).

<sup>3588</sup> Griffith, 1888, p. 98-99.108; cf. Timm, 1991, V, p. 2330 and p. 2332, n. 6; Valbelle, 1995b, p. 32; Carrez-Maratray, 1999b, p. 287.

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basis still subsisted. An important canalisation went under the eastern end of the portico<sup>3589</sup>. A brick enclosure wall apparently surrounded the city<sup>3590</sup>.

(2) Clédat also discovered a small portable sundial, on top of which the names of the Egyptian months are written, organized in a kind of circle which is to be read clockwise, with the first month Thoth indicated right under (SB III, 7019)<sup>3591</sup>:

|   |                  |          |  |
|---|------------------|----------|--|
| 1 | Παρμοῦ(θι)       |          |  |
|   | Παμε(νωθ)        | Παχ(ων)  |  |
|   | Μεχ(ιρ)          | Παῦ(νι)  |  |
|   | Τῦβι             | Ἐπε(ιφ)  |  |
| 5 | Χοία(κ)          | Με(σορῆ) |  |
|   | Ἄθῦρ             | Θωύ(θ)   |  |
| 7 | Φαῶφι            |          |  |
| 1 | Ἰarmou(thi)      |          |  |
|   | Pame(noth)       | Pach(on) |  |
|   | Mechi(r)Pau(ni)  |          |  |
|   | Tybi             | Epe(iph) |  |
| 5 | Choia(k)Me(sore) |          |  |
|   | Hathyr           | Thoy(th) |  |
| 7 | Phaophi'         |          |  |

Sottas, Kuentz and Borchardt explain how this kind of gnomon or astrological watch works. Because of the position of the marks on the surface, which refer to a specific position of the sun at the time of construction, they conclude that it has been made under Ptolemaios I. According to Sottas it was constructed in the Delta between 323 and 285 BC, according to Kuentz in Memphis between 370 and 254 BC, and according to Borchardt ca. 320 BC ± 60 years in Middle or Upper Egypt; Petrie suggests a date in the 4th century BC, while Carrez-Maratray on palaeographical ground dates the inscription to the 5th-4th century BC.

Clédat states that he found some traces of the Arab period in Tell Abu Seifa, but further information is lacking<sup>3592</sup>.

<sup>3589</sup> Clédat, 1916b, p. 23-24 (cf. Gardiner, 1920, p. 105, n. 3); 1919a, p. 191; 1919b, p. 215, n. 5; 1920, pl. 2; 1922, p. 197 and p. 186, fig. 1; 1923a, p. 164; Valbelle, 1999a, p. 72; cf. Kees, Hermann, s.v. Sile 1, in RE, III A 1, 1927, col. 34; Daressy, 1933, p. 185-186; Abd el-Maksoud, 1994, p. 103, n. 13. Abd el-Maksoud, 1997, p. 221 and n. 2 wonders about a single square tower supposedly mentioned by Clédat, but he apparently misinterprets the phrasing 'quatre tours rondes et une aux angles' [sc. 'four towers (along the wall) and one on the corners'], which corresponds with the actual situation].

<sup>3590</sup> Clédat, 1922, p. 186, fig. 1, showing the wall about 1 km west of the fortress; Clédat, 1923a, p. 164, inconsequently locates its traces at the same distance north of the city.

<sup>3591</sup> Now in the Ismailia Museum; cf. Clédat, 1915b, p. 38-39, with fig. 14; Petrie, 1915, p. 184; Sottas, 1916, p. 1-7; Kuentz, 1916, p. 70-84; Borchardt, 1920, p. 43-47, with fig. 17, 1 (cf. fig. 18-20); Bilabel, SB III, 2, 1927, p. 186, no. 7019; Carrez-Maratray, 1985, p. 148-149 and p. 175, no. 3; Wagner, 1993b, p. 104, n. 12; Valbelle, 1995b, p. 32; Carrez-Maratray, 1999b, p. 197-198, no. 387, and p. 428. For Egyptian sundials, cf. Graefe, Erhart, s.v. Sennenuhr, in LÄ, V, 1984, col. 1105-1106.

<sup>3592</sup> Clédat, 1923b, p. 154, n. 1. Griffith, 1888, p. 107, however, did not notice any trace of Arab occupation.

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During the Israeli northern Sinai survey in 1972 Oren explored the site of Tell Abu Seifa (T1). The surface material included a few sherds of the late Saite period, but the city was apparently founded during the Persian period - Oren apparently refers to both the 5th and the 4th century BC - and flourished in the Graeco-Roman period. The city was surrounded by a massive wall<sup>3593</sup>.

In 1993-1994 Abd el-Maksoud started the excavations of the mud brick fortress, for which both a Ptolemaic (ca. 200 x 125 m) and a smaller Roman structure (ca. 160 x 100 m) can be distinguished<sup>3594</sup>. On the corners and against the walls round towers were built. The fortress will be partially restored and opened to the public. It is surrounded by a number of habitation sites and very straight and symmetrical roads, apparently built in the Ptolemaic period. East of the town, parallel to perhaps a former Pelousiac branch or a canal<sup>3595</sup>, the ancient harbour was discovered with spaces for moorings built in stone. Crocodile bones have been found and a lot of (unpublished) amphora stamps. An unpublished bronze fragment found in a Ptolemaic context mentions Horos lord of Mesen<sup>3596</sup>. The full publication of the excavations will no doubt inform us about the relation between the Ptolemaic fortress and the Saite and Persian material found by Oren. From the scanty evidence now published one gets the impression that the settlement was created at the western bank of the Pelousiac branch or of a canal in the 5th or 4th century BC, and that the Ptolemaic fortress was added afterwards.

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<sup>3593</sup> Oren, 1980b, p. 120.124 (Hebrew); 1982a, p. 24; 1984, p. 9.35; 1987, p. 113, n. 3; 1993, p. 1394-1395; cf. Ahituv, 1996a, p. 220, n. 6.

<sup>3594</sup> Cf. Wagner, 1993a, p. 8; BIA, 1994, IX-X, p. 82-83 (Roman: 200 x 195 m; Persian: 400 x 350); Carrez-Maratray, 1995, p. 150; DAI Rundbrief, 1995, p. 3-4 (160 x 100 m); Jahresbericht, 1995, p. 820 (160 x 100 m); Leclant, 1995, p. 246 ('660 pieds sur 412 pieds'); Nibbi, 1995a, p. 5 and a photo p. 6; Leclant, 1996, p. 258; Valbelle, 1996, p. 65 (photo); Hoffmeier, 1997, p. 167.183; Abd el-Maksoud, 1997, p. 221-226, with fig. 1-2 and pl. 31-32 (160,2 m x 99,7 m (east) / 101,2 m (west)); Leclant, 1997, p. 244, n. 95; Abd el-Maksoud, 1998a, p. 66-65, with fig. 55; DAI Rundbrief, 1998, p. 14-15; Leclant, 1998, p. 334; Leclant, 1999, p. 337. The first fortress is sometimes ascribed as Persian, but according to Valbelle, 2000a, p. 80, n. 343 it was definitely Hellenistic. Hoffmeier, 2003, p. 172 and n. 13, relying on personal communications by the excavators, stresses that only remains of the Graeco-Roman period have been documented. With the kind permission of Mohammed Abd el-Maksoud I was able to visit the site in May 1996.

<sup>3595</sup> For the identification with the Pelousiac branch, cf. Nibbi, 1995a, p. 5. Hoffmeier, 1997, p. 167 and Redford, 1998, p. 48-49, n. 19, on the other hand, identify the water with the alleged eastern border canal. If the Pelousiac branch indeed ran next to Tell Abu Seifa, the recent map of Bietak, 1997, p. 88, where the Pelousiac branch runs quite a lot north of Tell Abu Seifa, has to be adjusted.

<sup>3596</sup> Abd el-Maksoud, 2005, p. 22, n. 61.

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Between Tell Abu Seifa and el-Qantara a large cemetery extended, which is dated by Chabân to the Ptolemaic and Roman periods<sup>3597</sup>. In 1860 French engineers noticed a lot of tombs with steles and limestone sarcophagi<sup>3598</sup>, containing corpses with funerary masks, which were sometimes gilded. The numerous coffins of terra cotta, consisting of two large pots, were dated by Chester, Griffith and Edgar to the Roman period. Chabân, who did some excavations in 1911, also distinguished collective burials in trenches, stone sarcophagi with a stone lid and gilded corpses (without funerary masks), and stone sarcophagi with a plaster lid, whose corpses often had a funerary mask or were completely covered with a painted layer of plaster. The funerary masks were dated by Edgar to the 1st and 2nd centuries AD. In one case a brick tomb contained six mummies without a sarcophagus, but most interesting are the four brick tombs that contained limestone sarcophagi, three of which are inscribed and are possibly to be dated to the Ptolemaic period. The sarcophagus of Peteamenophis (P3-di-Imn-(m)-Ip.t) son of Henyt (Hnyt?) and T3-n.t-imm.t-iy.ty(?) (3)<sup>3599</sup> is found in a tomb together with two sarcophagi without inscriptions. Peteamenophis' titles are often mentioned in a lot of variants. He bears the priestly titles 'ḥ3-ꜥ and nb m3ꜥ-ḥrw, is first prophet of Horos lord of Mesen [ḥm-nṯr tp n Ḥr nb Msn], first prophet and prophet of the goddess Nebet-Hetepet [ḥm-nṯr tp ḥm-nṯr Nb-ḥtp], hereditary noble, great prince in (the nome) Khenty-Iabtet [rpꜥ ḥ3ty-ꜥ wr m Ḥnty-i3bt.t] and chief of the gates of the Great Green [mr '3.w w3ḏ wr]. The gates of the Great Green have been identified by Daressy as sluices on the canal that goes to the Red Sea, or as constructions on a Nile branch to protect against an invasion from the Mediterranean, but because the expression the Great Green in general apparently

<sup>3597</sup> Cf. Clédat, 1909b, p. 113-117 and 1916b, p. 21-22, quoting letters of the period 1860-1862; Lepsius, 1867, p. 291 (cf. Kütthmann, 1911, p. 45); Chester, 1880, p. 147; Griffith, 1888, p. 99; Chabân, 1912, p. 69-76 and fig. 1-7 (including a note of Edgar, who thinks that the whole cemetery is Roman, although he does not make explicit mention of the inscribed sarcophagi); Spencer, 1979, p. 53.57; Valbelle, 1995b, p. 32; Carrez-Maratray, 1999b, p. 287. For Málek, Jaromir, s.v. Nekropolen. Late Period, in LÄ, IV, 1982, col. 443 some of the burials in the necropolis probably date to the Late Period, but he does not give any details.

<sup>3598</sup> A letter of 1860 mentions granite sarcophagi at the site (cf. Clédat, 1909b, p. 114 and 1916b, p. 22), but Clédat did not notice any trace of them and he supposes that the letter is mistaken about the material used (cf. De Wachter, 1982, p. 226).

<sup>3599</sup> Cairo Museum CG 29318; cf. Chabân, 1912, p. 70-71; Daressy, 1912c, p. 190-192; Daressy, 1914, p. 29-34, no. 1-2 and p. 35; Gardiner, 1918a, p. 244; Gardiner, 1920, p. 115; Clédat, 1923a, p. 99-100, n. 5 and p. 182-187; Gauthier, 1925, I, p. 174; 1925, II, p. 86; PM, 1934, IV, p. 7; Maspero, 1939, p. 115-126, with fig. 10 and pl. 34-36, no. 29318; Sauneron, 1954, p. 58, n. 1; PP, 1956, III, no. 5520.5723; Gutbub, 1962, p. 46 and 1964, p. 39.49.58-60; Vandier, 1964, p. 108 and 1965, p. 100.170; Mysliwiec, 1978, p. 197-204 with p. 162, fig. 104 and p. 288-290, pl. 48-49a; Vernus, 1978, p. 310, nr. 279c; PP, 1981, IX, p. 75.99; Cauville, 1987, I, p. 225.226.228; Valbelle, 1994, p. 381.386; Abd el-Maksoud, 1998a, p. 64-65, with fig. 54.

refers to flooded grounds in the Delta and not to the Mediterranean<sup>3600</sup>, the function of 'chief of the gates of the Great Green' is possibly related with the water control of the swampy area near the Pelousiac mouth. In a prayer of Peteamenophis the 'Ways-of-Horos in Mesen' [W3.wt-Ḥr m Msn] are mentioned. His father Henyt bears the priestly titles nb m3<sup>c</sup>-ḥrw and imy-ḥt and he is hereditary noble, prince [rp<sup>c</sup> ḥ3ty-<sup>c</sup>], temple scribe [sš ḥw.t-nṯr], third prophet [ḥm-nṯr 3.nw], prophet of the lord of Mesen [ḥm-nṯr nb Msn] and master of the secrets [ḥry sšt3].

In a second tomb, somewhat north of the previous one, twelve sarcophagi were found, two of which with inscriptions. The first one belongs to Phimenis (Ḥp-mn) son of Taeris (T3-iry.t?) (4)<sup>3601</sup>. The father's name is not mentioned. Phimenis bears the priestly titles ḥ3-<sup>c</sup> nb and m3<sup>c</sup>-ḥrw and he is venerable(?) prophet of all the gods and goddesses in Mesen [ḥm-nṯr im3ḥ(?) n nṯr.w nṯr.wt nb.w imy.w Msn]. The second sarcophagus belongs to Henyt (Hnyt?) son of Phimenis (Ḥp-mn) and Taiasi (T3-ysy?) (5)<sup>3602</sup>. The god Horos, lord of Mesen, lord of Tcharou, great god, lord of the sky [Ḥr nb Msn nb T3rw nṯr '3 nb pt] is invoked, together with some other gods and goddesses of the eastern Delta. Henyt is ḥ3-<sup>c</sup> and nb m3<sup>c</sup>-ḥrw, and scribe of the temple [sš šḥ-nṯr], third prophet [ḥm-nṯr 3.nw], hereditary noble (?) ['tp' for 'rp<sup>c</sup>(?)], great prince in Tcharou [ḥ3ty-<sup>c</sup> wr m T3rw] and first prophet of Horos, lord of Mesen, lord of Tcharou, and of his ennead [ḥm-nṯr tp n Ḥr nb Msn nb T3rw nṯr '3 nb p.t ḥn<sup>c</sup>(?) psd.t.f]. His father Phimenis bears the same titles [mitt nn], but is also explicitly called ḥ3-<sup>c</sup> and nb m3<sup>c</sup> ḥrw, and first prophet of Horos, lord of Mesen [ḥm-nṯr tp n Ḥr nb Msn]. Because both sarcophagi are found in the same grave the possibility cannot be excluded that Phimenis of 29319 is the father of Henyt of 29320, although the titles of Phimenis do not entirely match. It has also been suggested by the authors of the PP that Henyt is identical with the homonymous father of

<sup>3600</sup> Cf. Vandersleyen, 1989, p. 243-250 and 1991, p. 345-352.

<sup>3601</sup> Cairo Museum CG 29319; cf. Chabân, 1912, p. 71-72; Daressy, 1914, p. 34, no. 4; PM, 1934, IV, p. 7; Maspero, 1939, p. 126-129, with fig. 11 and pl. 37-38, no. 29319; PP, 1956, III, no. 5853.6254; Cauville, 1987, I, p. 225.226.

<sup>3602</sup> Cairo Museum CG 29320; cf. Chabân, 1912, p. 71-73; Daressy, 1914, p. 34, no. 3; Clédat, 1923a, p. 184; Gauthier, 1925, I, p. 17 (with an obsolete reading), 1925, II, p. 86, 1927, IV, p. 179 and 1929, VI, p. 67; PM, 1934, IV, p. 7; Maspero, 1939, p. 129-131, with fig. 12 and pl. 39, no. 29320; Gardiner, 1947, II, p. 203\*; Sauneron, 1954, p. 58, n. 1 (with an obsolete reading); PP, 1956, III, no. 5521, 5852, 6052, 6253, 7522, 7622; Gutbub, 1964, p. 39; Vandier, 1965, p. 169; Cauville, 1987, I, p. 225.226. See also s.v. Tcharou.

## 9. The northwestern Sinai

Peteamenophis of 29318, who belonged to a tomb that has indeed been found in the neighbourhood, but this identification needs to be supported by new evidence.

In 1914 Clédat opened some hundred tombs and noticed similar kinds of burial as described by Chabân<sup>3603</sup>. He gathered a lot of plaster masks, plastered corpses, amulets, ushabtis, pieces of gold foil typical of the Roman period, vases in ceramic or in glass, and other small objects. He noticed some funerary steles, but they were not inscribed or the humidity had made them unreadable. Some ushabtis had barely readable hieroglyphic inscriptions. A linen cartonnage, which covered the body, was decorated with scenes and five columns of hieroglyphic text.

The Israeli northern Sinai expedition noticed clay coffins and tombs with funerary masks<sup>3604</sup> and during a survey in the period 1981-1983 Abd el-Maksoud excavated still other Roman tombs<sup>3605</sup>. In 1982 he found in the necropolis near el-Qantara an epitaph for Leontiskos son of Hermias, who died prematurely on 4 Epeiph (28 June) of the year 22 of an unnamed king (SEG XLIX, 2320) (6)<sup>3606</sup>:

1 (ἔτους) κβ, Ἐπειφ  
δ, Λεοντί-  
σκος Ἑρμ-  
ίου, ἀορε,  
5 χρηστῆ, χ-  
6 αἶρε

'Year 22, Epeiph 4th, Leontiskos son of Hermias, who died untimely, a good person, greetings.'

The text possibly belongs to the reign of Augustus, which gives the date of 28 June 8 BC. For the name Leontiskos, 'the little lion', a link has been suggested with the god Horos, who is worshipped in Tcharou as a lion, or with one of the two cities of Leonton Polis in the Delta, but this Greek name is quite common in Egypt.

There is some discussion whether this large cemetery belongs (only) to the site of Tell Abu Seifa or (also) to a contemporary site in the immediate neighbourhood of el-Qantara<sup>3607</sup>, but as long as such a site has not been discovered, I am inclined to suppose that it are the inhabitants of the ancient city at Tell Abu Seifa that are buried

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<sup>3603</sup> Clédat, 1916b, p. 24-31 and fig. 3-5; cf. Clédat, 1920, p. 110; Gaillard, 1988, p. 196.199.202; Clédat, 1991, p. 6.

<sup>3604</sup> Oren, 1982a, p. 20.

<sup>3605</sup> Leclant, 1983, p. 473 and 1985, p. 349 with fig. 15-16; cf. Abd el-Maksoud, 1992b, p. 7; Haikal, 1995, p. 186.

<sup>3606</sup> Carrez-Maratray, 1985, p. 165 and p. 175, no. 9; Carrez-Maratray, 1989, p. 53.56-57; Abd el-Maksoud, 1992a, p. 85.88; Wagner, 1993b, p. 104; Carrez-Maratray, 1994, p. 162, n. 13; Carrez-Maratray, 1995, p. 146; Valbelle, 1995b, p. 32; Hussein, 1996, p. 210; Abd el-Maksoud, 1998b, p. 28; Carrez-Maratray, 1999b, p. 206-209, no. 391 (with drawing) (cf. p. 351); BE, 2000, p. 574, no. 700; SEG XLIX, 1999 [= 2002], p. 704, no. 2320. The C of χρηστῆ (XPH\_TE) is partially written in a ligature with the H, so there is no reason to read χρητέ, as in SEG.

<sup>3607</sup> Cf. Couyat-Barthoux, 1913, p. 458 (who supposes that the necropolis belongs to the site of el-Qantara) and Bietak, 1975, p. 133-134, n. 583.

there. Griffith did discover a nameless site some 6 km northwest of el-Qantara, where he found a late Ptolemaic coin and two Roman, double corn-grinder stones<sup>3608</sup>, but this place is too distant to come into account. Clédat, on the other hand, in January 1910 visited a site at 'km 43' on the Suez Canal, probably some 2 km north of el-Qantara, where he noticed Roman pottery and a lot of human and animal bones<sup>3609</sup>, which might be a continuation of the same cemetery or might belong to an unknown site<sup>3610</sup>.

### **Identifications**<sup>3611</sup>

At the latest from 1912 on Tell Abu Seifa has also been named Tell el-Ahmar or 'Red hill'. Because this name is also used for the railway station some 5 km northeast of el-Qantara and for the site of Tell Habwa, some scholars incorrectly mix up Tell Abu Seifa with those other places<sup>3612</sup>.

Griffith is apparently one of the first to locate the Greek Sele in Tell Abu Seifa<sup>3613</sup> and indeed there are some convincing arguments. The *Itinerarium Antonini* places Sele 36 km south of Pelousion. Tell Abu Seifa in fact lies some 28 km south of Tell el-Farama, but because on that track in the *Itinerarium* the distances are somewhat high and because no other site south of Tell Abu Seifa has yielded important Roman remains, an identification is very likely. Also the fact that both Tell Abu Seifa and Sele hosted a cavalry unit is an important argument: the former place accommodated the Ala I Thracum Mauretana in 288 AD, the latter the Ala I Aegyptiorum about 425-430 AD. Because the name Sele is apparently the Greek transcription of the Egyptian toponym Tcharou, also the identification of Tell Abu Seifa with that place seems evident. Tcharou is indeed the only toponym mentioned among the titles on the Ptolemaic (?) sarcophagus of Henyt, which is found in the necropolis of Tell Abu Seifa. Tcharou, however, was also an important place in the

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<sup>3608</sup> Griffith, 1888, p. 102 with n. 2 and pl. 51.

<sup>3609</sup> Valbelle, 1999a, p. 72. For 'km 45', cf. Paoletti, 1903, map.

<sup>3610</sup> It is not clear whether the 'ruins' indicated on Clédat, 1922, p. 186, fig. 1 on both sides of the Suez Canal refer to this cemetery or to some other site in the neighbourhood.

<sup>3611</sup> See also s.v. Tcharou for a lot of other toponyms that are identified with Tcharou and so also located at Tell Abu Seifa.

<sup>3612</sup> Cf. Ball, 1942, p. 142 (see also Fontaine, 1955, p. 53; Calderini, 1986, IV 3, p. 280); Oren, 1975, p. 77; Baumgarten, 1990, p. 301. See s.v. Tell el-Ahmar.

<sup>3613</sup> Griffith, 1888, p. 98.102.106. On the map of Ritt, 1869, pl. 4 Sele is located at some nameless ruins east of el-Qantara, probably referring to the site of Tell Abu Seifa.



New Kingdom, and except for the Ramesside inscriptions no archaeological remains antedating the Saite period have been found in Tell Abu Seifa. Because there is gap in the sources about Tcharou between the 21st dynasty and the late 4th century BC, it is a plausible hypothesis that the name Tcharou of the New Kingdom settlement was reused for a new foundation, which can be located at Tell Abu Seifa. The New Kingdom Tcharou most likely has to be looked for in the nearby Habwa I<sup>3614</sup>. The earliest archaeological evidence for Tell Abu Seifa is scanty (a few Saite sherds, more (surface) material from the 5th and 4th centuries BC, a Ptolemaic fortress) and it is difficult to decide whether the place was created round a military settlement, which has not yet been found, or whether the fortress is only added in the Ptolemaic period.

Tell Abu Seifa has been identified with Migdol / Magdolos, but the latter place is situated some 18 km south of Pelousion (Tell el-Farama) in the *Itinerarium Antonini*, far too north to come into account<sup>3615</sup>.

Daressy locates the toponym Iblil, which is usually linked in Coptic and Arab lists with the place San (Tanis), in Tell Abu Seifa (which he does not identify with Tcharou), on the sole basis of the fact that the names Iblil and (lake) Ballah are supposedly derived from the same root, which means 'to make wet'<sup>3616</sup>. This kind of identifications is unacceptable.

The road station el-Qusair, known in the 13th-15th centuries AD, has been located in Tell Abu Seifa<sup>3617</sup>. The figures in the itineraries indeed point out a location in the el-Qantara region, and perhaps the traces of the Arab period noticed by Clédat on Tell Abu Seifa belong to el-Qusair, but further evidence for an identification is lacking.

## EL-QANTARA

### Topographical situation

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<sup>3614</sup> Cf. Abd el-Maksoud, 1989b, p. 188-191; BIA, 1992, V, p. 47; BIA, 1992, VI, p. 27-28; Abd el-Maksoud, 1993, p. 21; Chartier-Raymond, 1993, p. 69, n. 91-92; Leclant, 1994, p. 366; Hoffmeier, 1997, p. 183-187.224; Redford, 1998, p. 45, n. 3. See s.v. Tcharou, s.v. Sele and s.v. Habwa I-V.

<sup>3615</sup> Prisse, 1847, p. 4 in Brugsch, 1879, p. 301-302 and Griffith, 1888, p. 103, n. 3; Langlois, 1852, p. 40-41 in Carrez-Maratray, 1999b, p. 268; cf. Chester, 1880, p. 147. See s.v. Migdol / Magdolos.

<sup>3616</sup> Daressy, 1933, p. 185-186; previously Daressy, 1930, p. 111 had identified Iblil with Tell Belim in the eastern Delta.

<sup>3617</sup> Clédat, 1923b, p. 153 and p. 154 with n. 1. See s.v. el-Qusair.

## 9. The northwestern Sinai

About 1800 AD el-Qantara does not seem to have been a real settlement, but rather the name of two or three consecutive bridges crossing the canals that cut the small isthmus between lake Menzala in the north and lake Ballah in the south<sup>3618</sup>. During the construction of the Suez Canal French engineers built there some houses and a hospital, which were deserted shortly afterwards. Because of this canal el-Qantara was split into a western and an eastern settlement, which both became prosperous villages. In the beginning of the 20th century a railway bridge crossed the canal at el-Qantara, but this has been dismantled before 1921, while a smaller wooden bridge disappeared before 1924<sup>3619</sup>; now the two sides of the canal are connected with a ferry. The eastern village was abandoned during the Israeli occupation, but was afterwards inhabited again, although some of the war damage is still visible. Some 5 km northeast of el-Qantara a new living quarter is being built in the desert<sup>3620</sup>.

That the environmental changes in the area with regard to the position of the lakes and marshes are considerable, is clearly shown by the fact that Griffith in 1886 could hardly recognize the situation as shown of the maps of the *Description*<sup>3621</sup>.

### Archaeological finds

A bronze sword with the name of Sethos II (1214-1204 BC) was found in the Suez Canal at el-Qantara<sup>3622</sup>.

One of the bridges of el-Qantara apparently consisted of three brick arches and was 15,6 m long; it was destroyed during the construction the Suez Canal<sup>3623</sup>. Clédat supposes that it was a Roman bridge, but this is impossible to prove.

### Identifications

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<sup>3618</sup> For a list of travellers passing by the el-Qantara region between 1599 and 1917, cf. Schur, 1987, p. ix-xxxvi and especially p. xxvi. Engelbach, 1931, p. 26 locates el-Qantara at 30° 52' north latitude and 32° 20' eastern longitude.

<sup>3619</sup> Dalman, 1924, p. 44.

<sup>3620</sup> Cf. Wagner, 1993a, p. 8 and the maps Valbelle, 1992, p. 16 and 1996, p. 60 with the indication 'New Qantara'.

<sup>3621</sup> Cf. Griffith, 1888, p. 101.

<sup>3622</sup> Cf. Budge, 1892, p. 88 and pl. 1, 2; Burchardt, 1912, p. 62 and pl. 5, 5; Helck, Wolfgang, s.v. Schwert, in LÄ, V, 1984, col. 765.

<sup>3623</sup> De la Jonquière, 1904, IV, p. 52 in Clédat, 1920, p. 109 and Daressy, 1929, p. 301.

## 9. The northwestern Sinai

The small canal, which was crossed by the bridge of el-Qantara, as shown on the maps of the *Description*, has often been identified with 'The dividing canal' (T3 dni.t), mentioned on the Karnak relief of Sethos I<sup>3624</sup>, but this is not based on any evidence. The environmental conditions in the area changed so often, that it is quite absurd to suppose that a canal in a marshy area would have had the same course in 1306 BC as in 1800 AD.

Brugsch looks for an (unacceptable) etymological parallel between the Egyptian toponym Ḥṭyn mentioned in P.Anastasi I, the second element of the Arabic toponym Qantara el-Khazna ('Bridge of the treasure'), and the name Kasion. According to Gauthier Brugsch actually identified the three toponyms and located them north of lake Serbonis, but he apparently misinterpreted Brugsch phrasing, who does not seem to imply an actual identification of Qantara el-Khazna and Kasion<sup>3625</sup>.

The Arab road station el-Qusair, known in the 13th-15th centuries AD, has been identified with el-Qantara<sup>3626</sup> and indeed the distances given in the itineraries possibly locate el-Qusair somewhat east of the present-day Suez Canal, in the area of el-Qantara. Because this location, however, cannot be confirmed by archaeological data, the exact identification for el-Qusair remains hazardous.

Daressy also identifies el-Qantara with the Arab road station el-Qasera, which for him corresponds with el-Qusair, while he even supposes that the toponym Djisir el-Qanatir in the *Description* is a mere mistake for the latter name. None of this is acceptable<sup>3627</sup>.

Because the Arab road station el-Aqula is located near an arched bridge, Hartmann suggests an identification with el-Qantara<sup>3628</sup>. Bridges, however, were probably quite common in that swampy area and because el-Aqula in fact seems to be situated northeast of Habwa, I remain rather sceptical about the identification.

Gaspar tentatively identifies the place 'Gantia' mentioned in the account of van Ghistele (1482 AD) between el-Salhiya and Bilbeis with el-Qantara<sup>3629</sup>, but no doubt the road station el-Khanqah is referred to.

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<sup>3624</sup> For the first time, as far as I know, by Clédat, 1916b, p. 22. Gardiner, 1920, p. 105 is aware of the changing conditions, but considers the situation of 1800 'a most striking explanation of the facts indicated by the sculptures'. For T3 dni.t, see s.v. Itineraries.

<sup>3625</sup> Brugsch, 1879, p. 915 and 1880, p. 1274; Gauthier, 1927, IV, p. 23. See s.v. Kasion.

<sup>3626</sup> Cf. Daressy, 1914, p. 38 and 1929, p. 321; Popper, 1955, I, map 4. See s.v. el-Qusair.

<sup>3627</sup> Daressy, 1914, p. 38 and n. 1. See the discussion s.v. Tcharou.

<sup>3628</sup> Hartmann, 1916a, p. 511; followed by Dalman, 1924, p. 45. See s.v. el-Aqula.

<sup>3629</sup> Gaspar, 1998, p. 226, n. 17.

## Etymology

According to the *Description* the name of the place is Djisr el-Qanatir, translated as 'Pont du Trésor'<sup>3630</sup>. Most likely the area of the bridges was indicated to the scholars of the *Description* as 'el-Qanatir', 'The bridges', which they misinterpreted as the homonymous word for 'treasures'. The name Qantara el-Khazna, 'Bridge of the treasure', only mentioned later in the 19th century AD, seems to be a reinterpretation of the French 'Pont du Trésor'. The name el-Qantara, 'The bridge', is connected by the locals with Ibrahim Pasha's expedition to Egypt in the first half of the 19th century AD<sup>3631</sup>.

Daressy supposes that the authors of the *Description* made a mistake and that Qantara el-Khazna is the original name. Because 'khazna' means as well 'treasure' as 'reservoir', he suggests the translation 'Bridge of the reservoir', referring to the water of the nearby lake Ballah<sup>3632</sup>. Since, however, there is no reason to suppose that lake Ballah was considered a water reservoir in the 18th century AD, it is more likely that the place was named after the bridges on the spot.

## Homonyms

In the southeastern Delta another el-Qantara is referred to by e.g. Eutybios and Abu Salih, as the place where Amr ibn el-As ca. 642 AD dug a canal leading to the Red Sea<sup>3633</sup>. Fontaine probably rightly identifies the toponym 'Catara' on a map of 1672 with el-Qantara, but he incorrectly places it in the northern Sinai, since a parallel (?) map makes it clear that this 'Catara' was situated in the eastern Delta, between el-

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<sup>3630</sup> *Description*, 1809, *État moderne*, I, pl. 10; *Description*, 1822, Atlas (in Gardiner, 1920, p. 105 and Bietak, 1975, pl. 46); *Description*, Jacotin, 1824, XVII, p. 566; *Description*, 1830, XVIII, p. 172; cf. Ebers, 1881, p. 72. Gardiner, 1920, p. 105 translates Djisr el-Qanatir as 'The crossing of the bridges', Kees, 1977, p. 105 as 'Brückenübergang', Bietak, Manfred, s.v. Isthmus von Qantara, in *LÄ*, III, 1980, col. 205 as 'der Damm von Qanâter'; cf. Schlott-Schwab, 1981, p. 97; Gomaà, Farouk, s.v. Sile, in *LÄ*, V, 1984, col. 946. For the Arabic words 'djisr' and 'qantara', cf. Wehr, 1979, p. 149, s.v. jîsr, 'bridge' and p. 927, s.v. qanṭara 1-2, 'arched bridge' and 'accumulated riches'. There is no reason to follow Trumbull, 1895, p. 339.362, who accepts the translation of the *Description* and looks for a link with store houses or grain magazines in the neighbourhood.

<sup>3631</sup> Griffith, 1888, p. 101.

<sup>3632</sup> Daressy, 1929, p. 301 and n. 4; for the Arabic word 'khazna', cf. Wehr, 1979, p. 275-276.

<sup>3633</sup> Eutybios, *Annales* (Antiochian version) (10th-13th centuries AD?) (translated in Pirone, 1987, p. 345); Abu Salih (translated in Evetts, 1895, p. 86 and p. 172) (before 1260); cf. the so-called Islam map in Miller, 1986, p. 53 and pl. 4-5 [9, 3]. For this el-Qantara, which apparently still existed in 1903, cf. Nibbi, 1999, p. 81 and n. 11.

## 9. *The northwestern Sinai*

Salhiya and Bilbeis<sup>3634</sup>. This el-Qantara is probably the place that Cristides identifies with the city of Bilbeis itself<sup>3635</sup>.

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<sup>3634</sup> Fontaine, 1955, p. 67; for the map of Duval of 1672, cf. Munier, 1929, p. 216, no. 2416; for the other map, who is not dated, cf. Baines, 1981 [= 1980], inner cover.

<sup>3635</sup> Cristides, V., s.v. Miṣr (D.1), in *EncIslam(2)*, VII, 1993, p. 155.

## *The area south of lake Ballah*

### **HITTIN - HATEIN**

#### **Topographical situation**

According to Yaqut (1), who wrote in the early 13th century AD, Hittin is a lake between el-Farama and Tennis, famous for its fish that is sold in the neighbouring regions. Maqrizi (2) mentions in the early 15th century AD the ruins of the city of Hatein, which is possibly linked to the Hittin of Yaqut. Maqrizi, however, not only gives three different locations in the northern Sinai for Hatein - between Habwa and el-Aqula; between Qatia and el-Arish; about 2 km west of Bir Abu el-Uruq, i.e. east of lake Ballah, some 14 km south of Tell Abu Seifa -, but also confuses the place with the homonymous Hittin (or Hattin) in Syria, so nothing is really certain. Yaqut's description and Maqrizi's first location are to some extent compatible with a position near Bir Abu el-Uruq<sup>3636</sup>, but the location between Qatia and el-Arish seems unacceptable, while there is also no reason to suppose that a second Hatein in the northern Sinai is referred to.

#### **Etymology**

According to Maqrizi (2) Hatein is named after a certain Hatein or after another Hatti ben el-Melek Abu Gad el-Madiani, but further information about these men is lacking.

#### **Analysis of the sources**

In the early 13th century AD Yaqut (1) knows Hittin, a small lake between el-Farama and Tennis, where el-Hittini fish are caught, pickled and sold into the neighbouring regions. Yaqut met one of these merchants in Qatia<sup>3637</sup>.

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<sup>3636</sup> On the map of Description, 1822, Atlas, pl. 31 in Bietak, 1975, pl. 46 (cf. Fontaine, 1955, p. 92-94) lies indeed a nameless 'ruin' at the eastern shore of lake Ballah.

<sup>3637</sup> Yaqut, *Mu'qam al-buldan* (Wüstenfeld, 1867, II, p. 292; translated in Toussoun, 1926, I, p. 104-105); cf. Wüstenfeld, 1864, p. 467. See s.v. Qatia.

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In the 15th century AD Maqrizi (2) locates the ruins of the city of Hatein between Habwa and el-Aqula, on the territory of the latter, in the region between Qatia and el-Arish. This information is contradictory because the former two places are situated in the western part of the northern Sinai, while Qatia and el-Arish lie more to the east<sup>3638</sup>. About one mile (ca. 2 km) east of Hatein, Maqrizi continues, lies the fresh water well of Bir Abu el-Aruq. This place is most likely identical with Bir Abu el-Uruq mentioned on modern maps some 14 km south of Tell Abu Seifa, on the eastern shore of the present-day lake Ballah<sup>3639</sup>. Maqrizi's further account remains obscure: the inhabitants of Qatia call the region [?] land of Hatein and land of Djifar. The place Hatein is named after a certain Hatein or 'according to others' after Hatti ben el-Melek Abu Gad el-Madiani, who apparently originated from the Madian region on the Sinai peninsula on the eastern shore of the Gulf of Suez<sup>3640</sup>. The former ruled over Egypt after his father's death; he was very warlike and stayed in a citadel in the mountains of Jordan near Tiberias. It is clear that Maqrizi's last remarks refer to the city of Hittin or Hattin in Syria<sup>3641</sup>. Maqrizi apparently mixes up a lot of information about different sites from several sources. Perhaps there was indeed near lake Ballah or near el-Aqula a city called Hatein that existed in the 13th-14th centuries AD, but even that is uncertain.

### **BIR ABU HELEFY**

Bir Abu Helefy lies on the eastern shore of lake Ballah, immediately opposite Tell Abu Seifa<sup>3642</sup>.

### **BIR CHENAN**

Bir Chenan lies some 9 km south of Bir Hedeua, on a desert track east of lake Ballah<sup>3643</sup> and possibly some 7 km north of Bir Abu Reida.

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<sup>3638</sup> Maqrizi (translated in Bouriant, 1900, p. 672).

<sup>3639</sup> See s.v. Bir Abu el-Uruq.

<sup>3640</sup> For Madian, cf. Maqrizi (translated in Bouriant, 1900, p. 673).

<sup>3641</sup> Cf. Buhl, Fr. - Cahen, Cl., s.v. *Ḥiṭṭīn*, in *EncIslam*(2), 1971, III, p. 528.

<sup>3642</sup> Cf. the map Clédat, 1922, p. 186.

<sup>3643</sup> Cf. Paoletti, 1903, map; Fischer, 1910, pl. 7.

## **BIR ABU REIDA**

Bir Abu Reida lies some 14 km south of Tell Habwa and probably some 7 km south from Bir Chenan, somewhat east of lake Ballah<sup>3644</sup>.

## **RAS EL-MOYEH**

### **Topographical situation**

Ras el-Moyeh (i.e. 'Cape of the lakes'), which is also called Ras el-Ballah (i.e. 'Cape of (lake) Ballah'), is the southern end of lake Ballah, some 2 km northwest of Bir Abu el-Uruq<sup>3645</sup>.

### **Identifications**

Hazlitt identifies Ras el-Moyeh with Magdolos, but the former place lies far too south to come into account<sup>3646</sup>.

## **BIR ABU EL-URUQ**

### **Topographical situation**

Bir Abu el-Uruq lies some 18 km south of Tell Habwa, some 14 km south of Tell Abu Seifa and some 4 km south of Bir Abu Reida, east of lake Ballah<sup>3647</sup>. There is a small palmgrove and two wells guarded by a Beduin family<sup>3648</sup>. According to Maqrizi (1) the place lies about 2 km east of the former city of Hatein.

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<sup>3644</sup> Cf. Bietak, 1975, pl. 4 and s.v. Isthmus von Qantara, in LÄ, III, 1980, col. 207-208.

<sup>3645</sup> Cf. Description, Le Père, 1822, XI, p. 332 and the maps Description, 1809, État moderne, I, pl. 10 and Description, 1826, Atlas, pl. 31.

<sup>3646</sup> Hazlitt, 1851, p. 212. See s.v. Migdol - Magdolos.

<sup>3647</sup> Cf. Bietak, 1975, pl. 4 and s.v. Isthmus von Qantara, in LÄ, III, 1980, col. 207-208. Fischer, 1910, pl. 7 locates the place only tentatively somewhat more south. Ritt, 1869, pl. 4 distinguishes the well Abu el-Uruq and the 'bas fonds' of that place at the eastern shore of lake Ballah, northeast of the well.

<sup>3648</sup> Fontaine, 1955, p. 31, n. 3.



### **Analysis of the sources**

In the 15th century AD Maqrizi (1) locates the city of Hatein about one mile (ca. 2 km) west of the fresh water well of Abu el-Aruq<sup>3649</sup>. This place is most likely identical with the Bir Abu el-Uruq mentioned on modern maps, although Maqrizi's geographical information with regard to Hatein is admittedly very confused.

## **BIR EL-HODA**

### **Topographical situation**

Bir el-Hoda lies some 22 km south of Tell Habwa, some 5 km south of Bir Abu el-Uruq and some 5 km southeast of lake Ballah<sup>3650</sup>.

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<sup>3649</sup> Maqrizi (translated in Bouriant, 1900, p. 672).

<sup>3650</sup> Cf. Berg, 1973, map 5; Bietak, 1975, pl. 4 and s.v. Isthmus von Qantara, in LÄ, III, 1980, col. 207-208.

## 10. Pelousion and the Pelousiac plain [partim]

### *Summary*

#### *Late and Graeco-Roman periods*

**Sha-amile - Si'nu / Sa'nu - Sin - Senou (Snw) / Sounou (Swnw) - Senos**

**Stratopeda - Ptolemais in Pelousion - Lychnos - Thylax**

#### *Modern period*

**The alleged eastern border canal**

**Tell el-Musallem - Tell Abiad - Tell el-Luli - Tell Zemurt - Tell of the skull (?) -**

**Tell el-Fadda (west) - Tell el-Gharza**

### *Summary*<sup>3651</sup>

From about 6000 BC on the coastline ran along a sandy ridge that started in the neighbourhood of Mahammediya and crossed the present-day Suez Canal some 6 km north of el-Qantara. Probably from the 1st millennium BC on, however, the deposits of the Pelousiac Nile branch created a plain to the west of that ridge, which gradually gained land on the sea. In the early Roman period the coastline probably ran immediately north of Tell el-Farama, but in the following centuries the plain continued to extend especially at its western side till it reached the position of present-day Port Said.

At the southwestern edge of that new plain, king Psammetichos I in the 7th century BC located his Ionian and Carian mercenaries in an area on both sides of the Pelousiac branch, perhaps in the neighbourhood of Daphnai, some 14 km west of el-Qantara. At this place called Stratopeda, 'Camps', the mercenaries were living, probably as a kind of klerouchoi, till king Amasis had them removed to Memphis.

Probably in the 5th, but certainly in the 4th century BC Pelousion (Tell el-Farama), at the mouth of the then Pelousiac branch, became the major stronghold of the region. There is a lot of discussion about the earliest history of this city, and several toponyms in Assyrian, biblical and Egyptian sources have been identified with Pelousion. The city of Sha-amile, however, attested in 674/673 AD, probably has to be looked for in Mesopotamia and not in Egypt. During the Assyrian occupation of Egypt in 671-664 BC the city of Si'nu is often mentioned; it actually seems to be a mere variant of Sa'nu, the Assyrian name of the Delta town of Tanis. Sin, 'the bastion

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<sup>3651</sup> I am still working at the chapters on Pelousion (el-Farama) and the neighbouring sites, which will be published in the next edition of this gazetteer.

## 10. Pelousion and the Pelousiac plain

of Egypt', mentioned by Ezechiel in the beginning of the 6th century BC, most likely refers to Egypt's capital Sais and not to Pelousion. The wine region Senou / Sounou, attested in Egyptian texts from the Old Kingdom till the Graeco-Roman period, has to be looked for in the northeastern Delta, but its precise position is uncertain. Little is known about Senos, an Egyptian city attested in the 6th-5th centuries BC, so an identification with Pelousion is a mere hypothesis.

From the Ptolemaic period on the region was apparently prosperous, and certainly economic possibilities were created by the harbour of Pelousion. In 146 BC 'Ptolemais in Pelousion' is attested in a papyrus, a place probably situated within or near the city of Pelousion, but further information is lacking.

In the Graeco-Roman and Byzantine periods, in the plain formed by the deposits of the Pelousiac branch, some settlements as Tell el-Musallem, Tell el-Luli, Tell el-Fadda (west) and Tell el-Gharza came into being. Pelousion had become a huge metropolis and according to the *Itinerarium provinciarum Antonini Augusti* three roads were leaving from the city: one heading west, towards Herakleous Polis Parva, probably following (part of) the Pelousiac branch; the second one heading southwest, towards Daphnai, possibly along the sandy ridge between the Pelousiac plain and the lagunas east of it; and the third one, heading south, towards Magdolos, Sele and further on to Klyisma, possibly along the eastern side of the lagunas and lake Ballah. Near Pelousion lay the villages Lychnos (mentioned for 359 AD) and Thylax (attested in the 5th or 6th century AD), but it is impossible to identify them with any of the sites in the neighbourhood.

Little is known about the area in the early Arab period and most of the sites seem to have been abandoned. At the latest in the 13th century AD the former Pelousiac plain was covered by the 'lake of Tennis', which corresponds with the present-day lake Menzala, while the city of el-Farama, the former Pelousion, was sacked by the crusaders and gradually lost every importance.

## Late and Graeco-Roman periods

### SHA-AMILE

#### Topographical situation

The Assarhaddon Chronicle (1) mentions an expedition of Assarhaddon to Sha-amile in 673 AD, but does not give any indication about the position of the city.

#### Identifications

It has sometimes been argued that Sha-amile was situated in Egypt, but in all likelihood the city in southern Babylonia is referred to<sup>3652</sup>.

Scholars locating Sha-amile in Egypt identified the place with Pelousion<sup>3653</sup> or Tcharou<sup>3654</sup> on the eastern border or - because the name Sha-amile has been translated as 'the city of men'<sup>3655</sup> - with Andron Polis in the western Delta<sup>3656</sup>.

#### Analysis of the sources

The *Assarhaddon Chronicle* (1) mentions an expedition to Sha-amile in the seventh year of the Assyrian king Assarhaddon, i.e. in 674/673 BC<sup>3657</sup>:

'The seventh year: On the eighth day of the month Adar (XII) the army of Assyria [marched] to Sha-amile.'

The *Babylonian Chronicle* on the other hand mentioned for the same year and month an expedition to Egypt<sup>3658</sup>:

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<sup>3652</sup> Landsberger, 1927, p. 78; von Zeissl, 1944, p. 36; Dietrich, 1970, p. 56, n. 1; Parpola, 1970, p. 328; Spalinger, 1974a, p. 300-301; Grayson, 1975, p. 12.30-31.126.219.262; Grayson, 1991, p. 124.134; Onasch, 1994, I, p. 22-23.28 and p. 39, n. 172. For the Chaldaean city of Sha-amile, cf. Luckenbill, 1924, p. 53; Unger, Eckhard, s.v. Bît-Amukkâni, in RdA, II, 1938, p. 35; Dietrich, 1970, p. 55-57 (about the circumstances of 673 BC); Parpola, 1970, p. 328.

<sup>3653</sup> Smith, 1924, p. 10-11.

<sup>3654</sup> Peet, 1925, p. 117; Fecht, 1958, p. 116-119 (who saw phonetic links between 'Sha-amile' and 'Sile'); Kitchen, 1986 [= 1973], p. 391, § 352, n. 870; Gomaà, Farouk, s.v. Sile, in LÄ, V, 1984, col. 946; Rogerson, 1985, p. 34; TAVO Register, 1994, p. 1379.1469; cf. the position of the battlefield of 674 BC on the map of Manley, 1996, p. 119.

<sup>3655</sup> Cf. Smith, 1924, p. 10-11; Peet, 1925, p. 117; Fecht, 1958, p. 116.

<sup>3656</sup> Smith, 1929, p. 85 (against his previous proposal); Hall, 1929, p. 280.

<sup>3657</sup> *Assarhaddon Chronicle* ('Chronicle 14'), 20 (Grayson, 1975, p. 126).

<sup>3658</sup> *Babylonian Chronicle* ('Chronicle 1'), IV, 16 (Grayson, 1975, p. 84).

## 10. Pelousion and the Pelousiac plain

'The seventh year: On the fifth day of the month Adar (XII) the army of Assyria was defeated in Egypt.'

From the first edition of the *Assarhaddon Chronicle* on scholars were convinced that those two texts dealt with the same events and situated Sha-amile in Egypt. One should consider in that case a defeat of the Assyrian army somewhere in Egypt in the early spring of 673 BC<sup>3659</sup> and three days later for unknown reasons this defeated army would have marched to the city of Sha-amile. This scenario offers more questions than answers. If Sha-amile is an Egyptian border town, the first battle must have taken place somewhere in the northern Sinai, three days east of the city<sup>3660</sup>, but this would be an odd spot for the Egyptians to put up a defence line. Also if Sha-amile would have been situated somewhere in the Delta, it is hard to imagine why the defeated army should have gone there, and even harder to figure out what was so important about it that the Assyrian scribes took special notice of it.

Landsberger on the other hand pointed out that probably the known city of Sha-amile in southern Babylonia is meant. As the *Assarhaddon Chronicle* has a definite bias in favour of Assarhaddon<sup>3661</sup>, it is not surprising that the Assyrian defeat in Egypt has been left out and replaced by another military expedition.

As there are no indications at all about the place where the Egyptians beat the Assyrians in 674/673 BC, the suggestion that the expedition was stopped at one of the border fortresses in the eastern Delta, possibly at Pelousion<sup>3662</sup>, has little to recommend it.

### **SI'NU - SA'NU** Topographical situation

The Assyrian sources give no geographical information about the toponyms Si'nu and Sa'nu, but most likely they refer both to the well-known city of Tanis in the eastern Delta. At least from 671 till 667 BC the city was reigned by king Sharruludari under Assyrian supervision (2-3). After a revolt against the Assyrians Sharruludari was probably succeeded by king Putubishti (Petoubastis II) (4).

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<sup>3659</sup> Cf. Dietrich, 1970, p. 55-57 and Spalinger, 1974a, p. 300. Year 7 equals 674/673 and Adar is the last month of the year, which starts about 21 March (cf. Hunger, H., s.v. Kalender, in RdA, V, 1976-1980, p. 298-299), so it should be placed in 673. The date of 674 in Grayson, 1991, p. 124 is probably a mistake, for he himself mentions that only two (and not three) years elapsed before the next attack on Egypt.

<sup>3660</sup> Cf. Fecht, 1958, p. 116-119.

<sup>3661</sup> Cf. Grayson, 1975, p. 12.29.30.

<sup>3662</sup> Cf. Onasch, 1994, I, p. 28.167.

## Identifications

Almost everybody agrees that the city of Sa'nu is to be identified with the Egyptian  $\text{D}'\text{nt}$ , the Greek Tanis, and that both names are phonetically related<sup>3663</sup>. Opinions disagree about the city of Si'nu. The most likely option is to consider it a variant rendering of the name  $\text{D}'\text{nt}$ <sup>3664</sup> and therefore to identify it also with Tanis<sup>3665</sup>. It has, however, been maintained that Si'nu and Sa'nu are mentioned as two different cities in the same list (3-4) and cannot therefore be related<sup>3666</sup>. Si'nu is then sometimes connected with the Hebrew word 'sin', 'mud', and therefore identified with the Egyptian place Imet (Im.t) in the eastern Delta, a name with a similar meaning<sup>3667</sup>, or equated with the Egyptian Sin or Senou / Sounou<sup>3668</sup>, a place sometimes identified with Pelousion<sup>3669</sup>, sometimes with Tcharou<sup>3670</sup>. According to Steindorff, however, there are no phonetic links between Si'nu ( $\text{uru}\text{ši}'\text{-nu}$ ) and the Egyptian word 'sin'

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<sup>3663</sup> Haigh, 1871, p. 114; Dümichen, 1879, p. 71; Delitzsch, 1881, p. 315-316; Steindorff, 1890, p. 598-600; Ranke, 1910, p. 34; Spiegelberg, 1911, p. 83; Streck, 1916, I, p. 277; Weissbach, F. H., s.v. Aššurbânapi, in RdA, I, 1928, p. 204; Gauthier, 1929, VI, p. 111; Hall, 1929, p. 281-282; Vycichl, 1940, p. 91-93; Alt, 1945, p. 229, n. 2; Kitchen, 1986 [= 1973], p. 396, § 357; Osing, 1976, p. 377; Helck, s.v. Gaue, in LÄ, II, 1977, col. 401; Römer, Malte, s.v. Tanis, in LÄ, VI, 1986, col. 194; Lloyd, 1988, III, p. 189; Onasch, 1994, p. 36.52.119.152; Borger, 1996, p. 213.214. Parpola, 1970, p. 297.320.321.405 apparently identifies Si'nu and Sa'nu and sets them both in Pelousion, but as there is an inconsequence in the three (!) lemmata he used, it is not impossible that he just made a mistake.

<sup>3664</sup> Cf. Steindorff, 1890, p. 599-600, arguing that the stressed Egyptian 'a' by Assyrians sometimes is rendered as 'a', sometimes as 'i'. Ranke, 1910, p. 71, n. 3 on the other hand thinks that the variation in rendering a short stressed vowel only seldom occurs, but is willing to accept it in the case of Si'nu / Sa'nu. Spalinger, 1974b, p. 319, n. 25 states the form Si'nu could not have been derived from  $\text{D}'\text{nt}$ , but he does not enfeeble Steindorff's point of view, nor does he give any argumentation of his own.

<sup>3665</sup> Haigh, 1868, p. 82; Dümichen, 1879, p. 71; Delitzsch, 1881, p. 315-316; Steindorff, 1890, p. 598-600; Ranke, 1910, p. 34; Streck, 1916, I, p. 277; Weissbach, F. H., s.v. Aššurbânapi, in RdA, I, 1928, p. 204; Vycichl, 1940, p. 91 (in doubt); Wüst, 1975, p. 35, n. 120; Osing, 1976, p. 377; Römer, Malte, s.v. Tanis, in LÄ, VI, 1986, col. 194; Lloyd, 1988, III, p. 189.

<sup>3666</sup> Spalinger, 1974b, p. 318, n. 25 and p. 319, n. 25 considers Si'nu as different from Sa'nu and does apparently not agree with the identification with Pelousion, but he does not offer any positive identification of his own.

<sup>3667</sup> Smith, Brugsch, Wiedemann and Tiele in Steindorff, 1890, p. 599.

<sup>3668</sup> See s.v. Sin and s.v. Senou.

<sup>3669</sup> Haigh, 1871, p. 113; Spiegelberg, 1911, p. 83; Gauthier, 1928, V, p. 15; Hall, 1929, p. 282; Kees, Hermann, s.v. Pelousion, in RE, XIX 1, 1937, col. 408; Abel, 1939, p. 227, n. 1; Alt, 1945, p. 229, n. 2; Parpola, 1970, p. 405 and the map p. 409; Helck, Wolfgang, s.v. Pelousion, in KP, IV, 1972, col. 610; Kitchen, 1986 [= 1973], p. 393, § 353 with n. 877 and p. 397, § 357; Zibelius, 1978, p. 211-212; Gomaà, Farouk, s.v. Sile, in LÄ, V, 1984, col. 946 (while Gomaà, 1974, p. 108-109 left the choice open between Pelousion and Tcharou); James, 1991, p. 700; Onasch, 1994, I, p. 38-41.52; Borger, 1996, p. 213.214; Carrez-Maratray, 1996a, p. 34.

<sup>3670</sup> Helck, 1974, p. 27.188 (with a map p. 29.209) and s.v. Gaue, in LÄ, II, 1977, col. 399.407-408 (Helck apparently changed his mind since 1972). See s.v. Tcharou.

## 10. *Pelousion and the Pelousiac plain*

(*śin*)<sup>3671</sup>, which enfeebles the identifications suggested for Si'nu. Also the Assyrian texts themselves seem to mix up the names Si'nu and Sa'nu, as there is at least one case in which one version of a text gives Sa'nu and the parallel version Si'nu (5; cf. also possibly 1). With regard to the double mention of Si'nu and Sa'nu in the same list (3-4), I hope to have shown elsewhere that the author of that text most likely created a doublet by mingling two different lists<sup>3672</sup>.

### Analysis of the sources

Shortly after his accession to the throne in 669 BC Assurbanipal was confronted with an attack on Egypt by the Ethiopian king Taharqa. Possibly in 667 BC Assurbanipal's troops entered Egypt to protect the kings, governors and regents<sup>3673</sup> whom Assarhaddon had appointed there in 671 BC and who were apparently still in command<sup>3674</sup>. Two classes of prisms preserve the list of the Egyptian kings. Prism C (2), written ca. 647 BC, mentions six kinglets ruling over seven cities<sup>3675</sup>:

(C, 85) Necho, king of Memphis and Sais

(C, 86) Sharruludari, king of Si'nu

(C, 87) Pishanhuru (P3-sn-(n)-Ḫr), king of Natho

(C, 88) Pakruru (P3-qrr), king of Pishaptu (Pr-Spdw)

(C, 89) [ Jau, king of Athribis

(C, 90) Nahke (Nḫ-k3 - (P3)-nhq), king of Hininshi (Herakleous Polis Magna)

There is no clear geographical order among these cities. Necho is apparently mentioned first because of his importance and also Sharruludari of Si'nu was probably one of the more influential leaders in Egypt<sup>3676</sup>.

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<sup>3671</sup> Steindorff, 1890, p. 599-600; Ranke, 1910, p. 71, n. 3; Vycichl, 1940, p. 92; Osing, 1976, p. 376-379. Spiegelberg, 1911, p. 83 disposed of this problem by considering it a false cuneiform transcription. Kitchen, 1986 [= 1973], p. 393, § 353, n. 877 considered the variation in sibilant an assimilation by the scribe. Neither suggestion is not very convincing.

<sup>3672</sup> Verreth, 1999b, p. 234-235.239-244.

<sup>3673</sup> For these different functions, cf. Spalinger, 1974a, p. 307-316.

<sup>3674</sup> Cf. Assurbanipal, Prism B = Prism D, I, 57-58.68-69.87-91 (Borger, 1996, p. 17-21.94.212-213).

<sup>3675</sup> Assurbanipal, Prism C, II, 85-90 (Borger, 1996, p. 20.147.213). Knudsen, 1967, p. 53 proposed the name Pasharau (P3-sr-ʿ3?) in l. 89 (cf. also Borger, 1979, I, p. 90; Onasch, 1994, I, p. 42 and II, p. 107), but Borger 1996, p. 20.213 only read  $I_x-[ ]-EZEN^?-a-u$  and considered the name not clear. For the name Pishanhuru, cf. Leahy, 1983, p. 37-48. For the name Nahke, cf. Kitchen, 1986 [= 1973], p. 460, § 428 and Onasch, 1994, I, p. 52.

<sup>3676</sup> Cf. Spalinger, 1974b, p. 322, n. 43.

## 10. Pelousion and the Pelousiac plain

Prism A and the Rassam Prism (3-4), written shortly after 643 BC, give the same list, although with some differences<sup>3677</sup>. In Prism C the king of Athribis is called [ ]au (C, 89), in the other Prisms Bukkunanni'pi [B3k-n-nf] (A, 94). Besides the seven cities already mentioned (A, 90-95), another fourteen kings and cities are listed, geographically ranging from the Delta to Thebes (A, 96-109). The first names in this addendum are Putubishti [P3-di-B3st.t - Petoubastis II], king of Sa'nu (A, 96), and Unamunu [Wn-Imn], king of Natho (A, 97); they represent a possible doublet with the Si'nu (A, 91) and Natho (A, 92) mentioned before. One gets the impression that in Prism A two lists were joined<sup>3678</sup>, the first one listing the kings instated by Assarhaddon in 671 BC, the second one listing the kings installed or confirmed by Assurbanipal after his first (or second) campaign in Egypt ca. 667-664 BC. In the period between the two lists the rule of Si'nu and Natho apparently had changed hands and the scribe probably mentioned the two places again because he did not recognize the names of the previous kings.

The troops of Taharqa were beaten by the Assyrians and the Ethiopian king left Memphis for Thebes, pursued by the Assyrian army. In the meantime<sup>3679</sup> the kinglets Necho, Sharruludari and Pakruru made a deal with Taharqa against the Assyrians<sup>3680</sup>. The enemy got to know of it and took action. Sharruludari and Necho were arrested. Assurbanipal later took pity only of Necho; he sent him back and reinstated him in Sais<sup>3681</sup>. Prism B explicitly states that also Sharruludari was brought to Assyria<sup>3682</sup>. Pakruru was still king of Pr-Spdw in 664 BC and therefore for unknown reasons was probably not punished.

According to Prism B (1) the Assyrian army conquered the cities of Sais, Bintiti (Mendes) and Sa'nu and slaughtered the inhabitants, and the account continues with king Sharruludari being brought to Assyria<sup>3683</sup>. Sais was punished because of Necho, but neither Bintiti nor its king Pujama have been mentioned before among the

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<sup>3677</sup> Assurbanipal, Prism A, I, 90-109 (Borger, 1996, p. 20-21.213).

<sup>3678</sup> Cf. Wüst, 1975, p. 35, n. 120.

<sup>3679</sup> If the oracle question edited in Klauber, 1913, p. 58-59, no. 13 (cf. Streck, 1916, I, p. 276, n. 2) really belongs to the reign of Assarhaddon and not to that of Assurbanipal, it is possible that Necho and Sharruludari already revolted somewhere between 671 and 669. This could have serious implications for the chronology of the first Egyptian expedition of Assurbanipal as outlined by Spalinger, 1974b, p. 316-328, but the text is too fragmentary to draw any conclusion.

<sup>3680</sup> Assurbanipal, Prism E, Fragment 11, 2-50 (Borger, 1996, p. 178-180.211-212); cf. British Museum fragment '82-5-22, 10', 3-9 (Bauer, 1933, II, p. 56).

<sup>3681</sup> Assurbanipal, Harran Tablets, Ro 33-65 (Streck, 1916, II, p. 160-165); cf. also Prism C and Prism A (Borger, 1996, p. 23-24.147.215), where only Necho is nominatim mentioned.

<sup>3682</sup> Assurbanipal, Prism B = Prism D, II, 3-6 (Borger, 1996, p. 23.94.214).

<sup>3683</sup> Assurbanipal, Prism B = Prism D, I, 95b - II, 6 (Borger, 1996, p. 23.94.214).



rebels, and we do not know why the city was sacked. The possibility cannot be ruled out that king Putubishti of Sa'nu is another rebel that has not been mentioned before, but it is tempting to link the punishment of Sa'nu with the account about king Sharruludari in the next line, which would imply that Sa'nu and Si'nu are actually identical<sup>3684</sup>.

Prism A and the Rassam prism (5) also mention the massacre in these three cities adding 'all the other towns which had associated with them to plot', but while Prism A speaks of Sa'nu, the Rassam Prism speaks of Si'nu<sup>3685</sup>. Again the names of Si'nu and Sa'nu seem interchangeable.

## SIN

### Topographical situation

In the beginning of the 6th century BC Ezechiel (1-2) mentions Sin, 'the bastion of Egypt', together with Noph (Memphis), Patros (probably the region south of Memphis), Zoan (Tanis), No (Thebes), On (Heliou Polis), Pi-Beset (Boubastis) and Tahpanhes (Daphnai). No further information is given, but since most places listed are situated in Lower Egypt, it is not impossible that also Sin belonged to that region.

The term 'bastion' (מְצוּדָה, m'ouz) is also used for e.g. Sidon and Tyros (*Isaias*, 23, 4.11.14), for 'the bastion of the king of the north' (sc. Antiocheia in 246 BC; *Daniel*, 11, 7) and for 'the bastion of the king of the south' (sc. Pelousion in 219 BC; *Daniel*, 11, 10). The words 'bastion' (1) and 'strength' (ἡ ἰσχύς in the Septuaginta (3), 'robur' in the *Vulgata* (10)) might indeed refer to a fortress or fortified city, but this does not necessarily imply that Sin was a major strongpoint at the Egyptian (eastern)

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<sup>3684</sup> A third option would be to consider the form Sa'nu here as a scribal error for Si'nu (cf. Spalinger, 1974b, p. 319, n. 25), but there is no reason to correct Prism B, which represents an older tradition than Prism C and Prism A.

<sup>3685</sup> Assurbanipal, Prism A, I, 128b - II, 5 (Borger, 1996, p. 23.214). Assurbanipal, Prism A, I, 134 gives Sa'nu, while Rassam Prism, I, 134 gives Si'nu in the same passage (Streck, 1916, II, p. 12 and n. o and Borger, 1979, I, p. 91.141); this variant, though, is not mentioned in the editions of Onasch, 1994, I, p. 39.120-121 and II, p. 121 and Borger, 1996, p. 22, but since according to Onasch the line breaks of immediately before the toponym, the text now may be damaged at this spot. Oppenheim in Pritchard, 1969 [= 1950], p. 295, n. 7 prefers the reading Sa'nu of Prism A because of the parallel in Prism B.

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border<sup>3686</sup>. Hieronymus (15) and Theodoretos (19), on the other hand, stress the economical and political, not the military importance of the place.

### Identifications

The name Sin (שֵׁן) has been interpreted differently by the ancient sources. In the Septuaginta it is rendered both as Sais (3; cf. 13-14) and Syene (4; cf. 6), and also Eusebios (5), Hieronymus (7, 8) and Theodoretos (19) link Sin with the city of Sais, the capital of the 26th dynasty. In his Latin bible translation Hieronymus actualizes the toponyms that were less familiar in his time, and so renders No as Alexandria and Sin as Pelousion (9-10, 11-12, 15-16), an identification also followed by later authors (20-25; 26).

The name Sais (S3w, Sa el-Hagar) is apparently not mentioned elsewhere in the bible<sup>3687</sup>. The identification of Sin and Sais is not surprising at all, since one actually expects the name of the capital of the 26th, Saites dynasty to be in Ezechiel's list of important Egyptian cities of the early 6th century<sup>3688</sup>. Sais with its royal palace can also rightly be considered the bastion or strength of Egypt. If one does not accept this identification, it is difficult to explain why the name Sin is rendered in the Septuaginta as Sain and not as Sin, and why the later authors identify this place with Sais. One certainly does not have to suppose that the Septuaginta rendered the name Sin as Sais because they did not recognize Sin as the old name of Pelousion but did remember the old fame of Sais<sup>3689</sup>; it would indeed be odd if they would know more about Sais, which in the Ptolemaic period was only one of the many provincial capitals, than about Pelousion, which in that time was an important military stronghold and harbour. The main objection against the identification of Sin and Sais, however, has always been that it is difficult to explain why the Egyptian name Saou in Hebrew would be rendered as Sin with the remarkable final 'n'. The similarity

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<sup>3686</sup> Against Lagier, C., s.v. Péluse, in DB, 5, 1, 1912, col. 28; Plessis, 1912, p. 35; Carrez-Maratray, 1999b, p. 24 and p. 80, n. 56.

<sup>3687</sup> The passage 'to So, king of Egypt' in 2 *Regum*, 17, 4 was corrected as 'to Sais, <to> the king of Egypt' by Goedicke, 1963a, p. 64-66 (cf. Albright, 1963, p. 66; Odelain, 1978, p. 325), who suggests that Hoshea, the king of Israel, in 726/725 BC sent an envoy to Tefnakht, the king of Sais. Kitchen, 1986 [= 1973], p. 372-375, § 333-334, however, convincingly argued that So is Osorkon IV, the king of Tanis and Boubastis, and so every link with the city of Sais disappears.

<sup>3688</sup> Cf. Zimmerli, 1969, p. 736 (cf. 1983, p. 133); Hossfeld, 1977, p. 212; Boadt, 1980, p. 78-79 (who incorrectly tangles up Sais in the western and Senou in the northeastern Delta).

<sup>3689</sup> Against Lipiński, Édouard, s.v. Péluse, Sîn, and s.v. Saïs, in Bogaert, 1987, p. 998.1158.

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between the Hebrew letter 'vav' (ו, 'ou') and the 'nun' at the end of a word (ן, 'n') may have caused a scribal error, so that the original Hebrew name was not Sin (שׁינ), but \*Siou (שׁיו), but this is a mere hypothesis. Anyway, despite this palaeographic or philological problem, the identification of Sin and Sais, which is confirmed by several sources, seems most likely.

Syene (Swnw, שׁוּנָה [Swnh], Assuan) occurs twice in the bible in the expression 'from Migdol till Syene', mentioned only a few verses earlier in *Ezekiel*, 29, 10 and 30, 6<sup>3690</sup>. It is not clear why the Septuaginta in 30, 16 rendered Sin as Syene, and several explanations can be suggested. First, since some manuscripts and the Latin translation of the Septuaginta in the work of Hieronymus (14) list the name as Sais and not as Syene, one might suggest a textcritical correction in 30, 16, writing 'Sais' instead of 'Syene'. Secondly, because the letters 'i' and 'ou' are often switched, one might suggest that Syene is the correct reading and emendate the Hebrew text in 30, 16 to Soun / Swn (שׁוּן)<sup>3691</sup>. In 30, 15 such an emendation is less likely because Syene can hardly be considered 'the bastion of Egypt'. It has to be stressed, however, that the biblical name of Syene is not Swn, but Swnh, which makes such an emendation less likely. A third solution is to consider the translation of Sin as Syene as a deliberate variation in the text<sup>3692</sup>, for which the translator chose the name Syene because it was still fresh in his memory.

Because the *Vulgata* (9-10) rendered Sin as Pelousion, the identification of both places has been accepted by most scholars<sup>3693</sup>. Since, however, Hieronymus' link between Sin and Pelousion is completely gratuitous (and even in contradiction with other passages by that same author), there are no reasons to assume that Sin is the 6th-century name of Pelousion<sup>3694</sup>.

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<sup>3690</sup> Cf. s.v. Migdol - Magdolos. Also the toponym Sinim / Sounim in *Isaias*, 49, 12 probably refers to Syene ('Look! Here they (sc. the exiled Israelites) come from far away, look, these from the north and the west, those from the land of Sinim' - the name is omitted in the Septuaginta and the *Vulgata*), although also an identification with Sin (and even China) has been suggested; cf. Hastings, 1909, p. 863; Buhl, 1915, p. 542; Odelain, 1978, p. 365; Boadt, 1980, p. 79; Lipiński, Édouard, s.v. Péluse, Sîn, s.v. Sînîm and s.v. Syène, in Bogaert, 1987, p. 998.1212.1226; Barthélemy, 1992, p. 249.

<sup>3691</sup> Cf. Buhl, 1915, p. 542; Zimmerli, 1969, p. 724.734.737 (cf. 1983, p. 126.131.133); Boadt, 1980, p. 79; Barthélemy, 1992, p. 247 (with further references).

<sup>3692</sup> Cf. Allen, 1990, p. 113, n. 15a.

<sup>3693</sup> Cf. e.g. already Schultens (1732) and D'Anville (1766) quoted by Carrez-Maratray, 1999b, p. 24.26. Dümichen, 1879, p. 71 gratuitously suggests that the name Sin as such survived in the Arabic (Qal'at) el-Tina, a place immediately northwest of Tell el-Farama / Pelousion.

<sup>3694</sup> Cf. already Müller, W. Max, s.v. Sin, in *Encyclopaedia biblica*, 1914, col. 4628-4629 (followed by Cooke, 1936, p. 333-334.337), and Cheshire, 1985, p. 20-24, who both suggest for Sin a location in the

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Many scholars also linked Sin on purely phonetic or etymological grounds with the Assyrian Si'nu and the Egyptian Senou, which therefore were also identified with Pelousion<sup>3695</sup>. Si'nu, however, is no doubt identical with Tanis. Senou was probably a place in the northern or eastern Delta, but nothing is known about its position in the 6th century that might allow the epithet 'the bastion of Egypt'.

In the demotic so-called Gnostic papyrus from Leiden, written in the 3rd century AD, Brugsch read the toponym S3n(w), which he translated as Sin and tentatively identified with Pelousion<sup>3696</sup>, but the reading of the name has been corrected in N(wt), 'Thebes'<sup>3697</sup>.

Burchardt and Budge identify Tjouna (Twn3), a place in the Delta attested in two New Kingdom texts, with Sin / Pelousion, apparently just because of the vague phonetic similarity. This identification has rightly been rejected by Gauthier<sup>3698</sup>.

Helck identifies Sin with the city of Tcharou at the eastern border<sup>3699</sup>, but there are no indications that this place could be considered 'the bastion of Egypt' in the 6th century.

For Kraeling Sin is the Egyptian name of the Migdol of the prophets, which he both identifies with Pelousion, but he does not give any argument for this very doubtful suggestion<sup>3700</sup>.

### Etymology

In my opinion the Hebrew Sin incorrectly renders the Egyptian name S3w / Sais.

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eastern Delta other than Pelousion; cf. the doubts expressed by Griffith, Francis Llewellyn, s.v. Sin, in Hastings, 1902, IV, p. 536; Lagier, C., s.v. Péluse, in DB, 5, 1, 1912, col. 30-31, Buhl, 1915, p. 541; Helck, 1974, p. 188 and MacDonald, 1979, p. 264. Figueras, 1988a, p. 54, 1999, p. 212 and 2000, p. 6.35.214 suggests that the fortress of Sin was situated near the spot where the city of Pelousion later developed (see, however, the doubt expressed in 2000, p. 32), but this cannot be confirmed by any archaeological finds.

<sup>3695</sup> See s.v. Si'nu and s.v. Senou. The identification of Sin and Si'nu is first made by Haigh, 1871, p. 113, the identification of Sin and Senou by Spiegelberg, 1910, p. 48, n. 11 and 1911, p. 83-84.

<sup>3696</sup> Brugsch, 1884, p. 19; cf. Gauthier, 1928, V, p. 5, s.v. san(ou).

<sup>3697</sup> Gnostic papyrus from Leiden, 21, 2 (Griffith, 1904, p. 134-135); cf. Spiegelberg, 1911, p. 81, n. 4.

<sup>3698</sup> Burchardt, 1910, II, p. 58, no. 1154; Budge, 1920, p. 1059. For Tjouna, cf. Gauthier, 1929, VI, p. 72; Gardiner, 1941, p. 58 and n. 2; Caminos, 1954, p. 282.292.

<sup>3699</sup> Helck, 1974, p. 188 and s.v. Gaue, in LÄ, II, 1977, col. 407-408. See s.v. Si'nu, Senou and Tcharou.

<sup>3700</sup> Kraeling, 1953, p. 21.118; cf. Bresciani, 1960, p. 15, n. 2. See s.v. Migdol - Magdolos.

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Some scholars link the Hebrew name Sin with the Aramaic and the Egyptian 'sin', 'mud', which is compared with the etymology of the name Pelousion, also derived from the Greek πηλός, 'mud'<sup>3701</sup>.

### Homonyms

During their exodus the people of Israel crossed the Sea of reeds, passed by Marah and Elim and entered the desert of Sin (שִׁן), which lies between Elim and Sinai<sup>3702</sup>. Here the miracle of the manna and the quails happened. The two names are written identically, but there are no further links between the desert of Sin and Sin the bastion of Egypt.

### Analysis of the sources

Ezechiel probably stayed in Babylon between 593 and 571 BC. In this period he prophesied against Egypt (1-2)<sup>3703</sup>:

'(13) I shall destroy the foul idols and take the false gods away from Noph. Egypt will be left without a ruler. I shall spread fear through Egypt. (14) I shall lay Patros waste, set Zoan on fire, inflict my punishments on No. (15) I shall vent my fury on Sin, the bastion of Egypt; I shall wipe out the throngs of No. (16) I shall set fire to Egypt; Sin will be seized with convulsions; a breach will be opened at No and Noph will be in fear during daytime. (17) The young men of On and Pi-Beset will fall by the sword and the cities themselves go into captivity. (18) At Tahpanhes day will turn to darkness when I shatter the sceptres of Egypt there, when the pride of her strength ceases.'

There is little doubt about the identification of the Egyptian toponyms Noph (Mn-nfr, Memphis), Patros (P3-t3-rsy, 'The land of the south', probably the region south of Memphis), Zoan (D'nt, Tanis), No (Nwt, Thebes, Dios Polis Megale), On (Iwnw, Heliou Polis), Pi-Beset (Pr-Wb3st.t, Boubastis) and Tahpanhes (\*T3-ḥy-(n)p3-nḥs, Daphnai), most of them being mentioned several times in the bible and showing a clear etymological link with the original Egyptian name. Only the toponym

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<sup>3701</sup> Cf. D'Anville, 1766, p. 97; Brugsch, 1880, p. 1091; Steindorff, 1890, p. 559; Griffith, Francis Llewellyn, s.v. Sin, in Hastings, 1902, IV, p. 536; Spiegelberg, 1910, p. 48, n. 11; Spiegelberg, 1911, p. 83-84 and n. 1 (rejecting the Aramaic origin); Lagier, C., s.v. Péluse, in DB, 5, 1, 1912, col. 28-29; Plessis, 1912, p. 35; Miller, 1916, col. 814; Gardiner, 1918a, p. 254; Chuvin, 1986, p. 44; see, on the other hand, the doubts expressed by Cooke, 1936, p. 334.337.

<sup>3702</sup> *Exodus*, 16, 1; 17, 1; *Numeri*, 33, 11-12; the Septuaginta translates εἰς τὴν ἔρημον Σίν ('to the desert Sin'); the *Vulgata* has in desertum Sin; cf. Odelain, 1978, p. 360; Du Buit, Michel, s.v. Sîn 2, in Bogaert, 1987, p. 1209.

<sup>3703</sup> *Ezechiel*, 30, 13-18 (for the Hebrew text, cf. Kittel, 1909, p. 793-794). For the differences in the translation of several clauses and for the general interpretation of the passage, cf. Plessis, 1912, p. 33-39; Cooke, 1936, p. 331-337; Zimmerli, 1969, p. 723-740 (cf. 1983, p. 122-135); Hossfeld, 1977, p. 184-229; Boadt, 1980, p. 76-84.177; Allen, 1990, p. 112-117; Barthélemy, 1992, p. 247-250.

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Sin (סִן), 'the bastion (מְצוּדָה, m'ouz<sup>3704</sup>) of Egypt', is not mentioned elsewhere in the bible, and its identification is not evident.

In the Septuaginta two remarkable changes are found with regard to the toponyms (3-4)<sup>3705</sup>:

(13) καὶ ἀπολῶ μεγιστᾶνας ἀπὸ Μέμφεως καὶ ἄρχοντας ἐκ γῆς Αἰγύπτου, καὶ οὐκ ἔσονται ἔτι. (14) καὶ ἀπολῶ γῆν Παθουρήσ και δώσω πῦρ ἐπὶ Τάνιν και ποιήσω ἐκδίκησιν ἐν Διοσπόλει (15) καὶ ἐκχεῶ τὸν θυμὸν μου ἐπὶ Σάιν τὴν ἰσχύν Αἰγύπτου και ἀπολῶ τὸ πλῆθος Μέμφεως· (16) καὶ δώσω πῦρ ἐπ' Αἴγυπτον, και παραχῆ παραχθήσεται Συήνη, και ἐν Διοσπόλει ἔσται ἔκρηγμα και διαχυθήσεται ὕδατα. (17) νεανίσκοι Ἡλιουπόλεως και Βουβάστου ἐν μαχαίρα πεσοῦνται, και αἱ γυναῖκες ἐν αἰχμάλωσία πορεύσονται. (18) και ἐν Ταφνας συσκοτάσει ἡ ἡμέρα ἐν τῷ συντρίψαι με ἐκεῖ τὰ σκῆπτρα Αἰγύπτου, και ἀπολεῖται ἐκεῖ ἡ ὕβρις τῆς ἰσχύος αὐτῆς.

'(13) And I shall destroy the great ones from Memphis and the leaders out of the land of Egypt, and they will no longer be there. (14) And I shall destroy the land of Pathoure, and I shall set fire to Tanis, and I shall inflict my punishment in Dios Polis, (15) and I shall vent my fury on Sais, the strength of Egypt, and I shall destroy the crowd of Memphis. (16) And I shall set fire to Egypt; and Syene will be stirred up by troubles, and in Dios Polis a breach will be opened and the waters will be poured out. (17) The young men of Heliou Polis and Boubastos will fall by the sword, and the women will go into captivity. (18) And in Taphnas the day will turn to darkness when I shatter the sceptres of Egypt there, and there the pride of her strength will be destroyed.'

First, the name 'No' in 30, 15 is not rendered as 'Dios Polis' (as in 30, 14.16), but as 'Memphis'<sup>3706</sup>, while the clause 'Noph will be in fear during daytime' in 30, 16 is omitted. Secondly, the toponym Sin is rendered in 30, 15 as Sais<sup>3707</sup> (3), but in 30, 16 as Syene (4)<sup>3708</sup>. This gives the following scheme:

|              |                                    |
|--------------|------------------------------------|
| Bible:       | (13) Noph                          |
|              | (14) Patros - Zoan - No            |
|              | (15) Sin - No                      |
|              | (16) Sin - No - Noph               |
|              | (17) On - Pi-Beset                 |
|              | (18) Tahpanhes                     |
| Septuaginta: | (13) Memphis                       |
|              | (14) Pathoure - Tanis - Dios Polis |
|              | (15) Sais - Memphis                |

<sup>3704</sup> Cf. Zorell, 1940-1954, p. 454-455; Baumgartner, 1974, II, p. 577.

<sup>3705</sup> Septuaginta, *Ezechiel*, 30, 13-18 (Ziegler, 1952, p. 232-233); cf. Carrez-Maratray, 1999b, p. 80, no. 118. See also the Latin translation of the Septuaginta in Hieronymus, *Commentarii in Hiezechielem*, 9, 30, 1-19 (Glorie, 1964a, p. 420) (13-14): *super Sain robur Aegypti* ('on Sais, the strength of Egypt') and *conturbatione conturbabitur Sais* ('Sais will be stirred up by troubles').

<sup>3706</sup> This was already noticed in Hieronymus, *Commentarii in Hiezechielem*, 9, 30, 1-19 (Glorie, 1964a, p. 422); cf. Origenes, *Hexapla, Ezechiel*, 30, 15 (Field, 1875, p. 852). On the basis of this Septuaginta passage Zimmerli, 1969, p. 724.727.736 (cf. 1983, p. 126.133) suggests an emendation of the Hebrew text of 30, 15 to Noph / Memphis, but he does not explain the absence of this city in 30, 16.

<sup>3707</sup> 'Sain' (ἐπὶ Σάιν) is rather the accusative of the toponym Sais than a mere rendering of the biblical word Sin, as has sometimes been maintained; otherwise one would expect the name to be written as Σίν, just as in the homonym 'desert of Sin' (see § Homonyms).

<sup>3708</sup> In the apparatus criticus for 30, 15 instead of Σάιν also the toponym Τάνιν occurs (cf. 30, 14) and the adjective πᾶσαν ('on the whole strength of Egypt'); for 30, 16 instead of Συήνη also the toponym Σάις is attested. Hieronymus, *Translatio homiliarum Origenis in Ieremiam*, 2, 1 (Husson, 1977, p. 340-341), who translates the Greek text of Origenes, lists Syene (in Syene; Syenem) among some of the cities of Egypt mentioned in the Septuaginta version of *Ezechiel*, 30, 13-18 (6); the absence of Sais in this list, however, is not really significant, since also Tanis, Patros and Heliou Polis are omitted.

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- (16) Syene - Dios Polis - (no toponym)
- (17) Heliou Polis - Boubastos
- (18) Taphnas

*Vulgata:* (13) Memphis  
(14) Fature - Tafnae - Alexandria  
(15) Pelusium - Alexandria  
(16) Pelusium - Alexandria - Memphis  
(17) Eliupolis - Bubastis  
(18) Tafnae

One cannot exclude the possibility that the differences in the Septuaginta are due to another version of the Hebrew text, but I rather get the impression that the translator wanted to avoid the triple occurrence of the city of No in 30, 14-16 and so instead transferred the mention of Noph / Memphis from 30, 16 to the middle verse<sup>3709</sup>. Also the opposition Sais - Syene might be the result of such a deliberate 'variatio'.

Eusebios knows Sais as an Egyptian city, but unfortunately the remainder of the lemma is lost in a lacuna (5)<sup>3710</sup>:

Σάις. πόλις Αἰγύπτου \* \* \*  
'Sais. A city of Egypt \* \* \*'

The passage has been translated by Hieronymus, who states that the Egyptian city of Sais is mentioned in *Ezechiel*, and that the Saites nome is named after that city (7)<sup>3711</sup>:

Sais civitas Aegypti, cuius meminit Iezechiel. a qua et Saites pagus  
'Sais, a city of Egypt, which Ezechiel mentions. After this (place) also the Saites district (is named).'

Because of the reference to the Saites nome it is clear that the place in the western Delta is meant by both authors.

In the 5th century AD Theodoretos paraphrases the Septuaginta. Tanis and Dios Polis will be destroyed; the very powerful city of the Sais will be in great trouble; even Syene, which lies more inland, will be disturbed (19)<sup>3712</sup>:

καὶ φόβος ἅπασιν ἐπιπεσεῖται τοῖς Αἰγυπτίοις, τῆς Τάνεως μὲν ἐμπιπραμένης, Διοσπόλεως δὲ πανωλεθρίαν ὑπομένουσῃς· τῆς δὲ δυνατωτάτης Σαιτῶν πόλεως χαλεπωτάταις περιπεσοῦσῃς συμφοραῖς· καὶ ἀπαξαπλῶς πυρὸς δίκην τῶν πολεμίων ἅπασαν κατανεμομένων τὴν Αἴγυπτον, ὡς καὶ τὴν ἐνδοτάτω κειμένην Συήνην τὸν ἐκ τούτων ὑποδέξασθαι θόρυβον.

'And fear will fall upon all the Egyptians, when Tanis is set on fire, when Dios Polis undergoes total destruction; when the very powerful city of the Saitai will suffer the harshest calamities; and in general (he will inflict) the punishment of fire, while the enemies plunder the whole of Egypt, so that also Syene, which is situated the most inland, will participate in the turmoil caused by them.'

<sup>3709</sup> Also in *Ieremias*, 44, 1 Noph / Memphis has been omitted in a list of four Egyptian cities, but this might be a mere mistake in the manuscript tradition. In other bible passages (*Hosea*, 9, 6; *Isaias*, 19, 13; *Ieremias*, 2, 16; 46, 14.19) Moph / Noph is correctly rendered as Memphis.

<sup>3710</sup> Eusebios, *Onomasticon*, s.v. Σάις (Klostermann, 1904, p. 162).

<sup>3711</sup> Hieronymus, *Liber de situ et nominibus locorum Hebraicorum*, s.v. Sais (Klostermann, 1904, p. 163); cf. the (inaccurate) translation of Freeman-Grenville, 2003, p. 89.

<sup>3712</sup> Theodoretos, *Interpretatio in Ezechielem*, 12, 30, 13-16 (Migne, PG 81, 1859, col. 1116).

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The expression 'city of the Saitai', which can only refer to the Delta city Sais, is apparently an addition from Theodoretos. Also the remark about the position of Syene in the south illustrates that he was familiar with the geography of Egypt.

The *Vulgata* (9-10) closely follows the disposition of the Hebrew text, but incorrectly identifies the city of Tanis and Tahpanhes / Taphnas, and renders No as Alexandria, and Sin as Pelousion<sup>3713</sup>:

(13) et disperdam simulacra et cessare faciam idola de Memphis et dux de terra Aegypti non erit amplius et dabo terrorem in terra Aegypti (14) et disperdam terram Fatures et dabo ignem in Tafnis et faciam iudicia in Alexandriam (15) et effundam indignationem meam super Pelusium robor Aegypti et interficiam multitudinem Alexandriae (16) et dabo ignem in Aegypto quasi parturiens dolebit Pelusium et Alexandria erit dissipata et in Memphis angustiae cotidiana (17) iuvenes Eliupoleos et Bubasti gladio cadent et ipsae captivae ducentur (18) et in Tafnis nigrescet dies cum contrivero ibi sceptrum Aegypti et defecerit in ea superbia potentiae eius.

'(13) And I shall destroy the statues and I shall make the idols from Memphis idle; and there shall no longer be a ruler for the land of Egypt and I shall spread fear through the land of Egypt; (14) and I shall destroy the land of Fature, and I shall set fire to Tafnae, and I shall inflict my punishments on Alexandria; (15) and I shall vent my indignation on Pelusium, the strength of Egypt; and I shall wipe out the crowd of Alexandria; (16) and I shall set fire to Egypt; Pelusium will suffer as if in labour, and Alexandria will be wrecked, and in Memphis will be fear during daytime; (17) the young men of Eliupolis and Bubastis will fall by the sword and the (cities) themselves will go into captivity; (18) and at Tafnae day will turn to darkness when I shall there shatter the sceptres of Egypt and when the pride of her strength ceases in that (place).'

Hieronymus, commenting upon his own translation, states that Alexandria is the modern name for No, while he does not know [!] why the Septuaginta rendered that name as Diospolis, which in his days was only an insignificant place. He explicitly states that he prefers the name Alexandria instead of No as a kind of prolepsis<sup>3714</sup>.

*faciamque, ait, iudicia in 'Alexandria', quae hodie sic vocatur; ceterum pristinum nomen habet 'No', quod Aquila, Symmachus et Theodotio sicut in hebraeo positum est transtulerunt; pro quo nescio quid volentes Septuaginta dixere 'Diospolis' quae Aegypti parva civitas est; nos autem pro 'No' 'Alexandriam' posuimus - per 'anticipationem' quae Graece πρόληψις appellatur, iuxta illud Vergilianum: *Laviniaque venit littora*: non quo eo tempore, quando venit Aeneas in Latium, Lavinia dicerentur, sed quae postea Lavinia nuncupata sunt, ut manifestior locus fieret lectoris intelligentiae.*

'And I shall inflict my punishments', he says, 'on "Alexandria"', which is called this way today; for that matter, it has the old name of 'No', which Aquila, Symmachus and Theodotio translated just as it was written in Hebrew; for some unknown reason the Septuaginta said 'Diospolis', which is a small city in Egypt; we, however, wrote instead of 'No' 'Alexandria' - as an 'anticipation', which in

<sup>3713</sup> Hieronymus, *Vulgata, Ezechiel*, 30, 13-18 (Weber, 1975, p. 1309); cf. Hieronymus, *Commentarii in Hiezechielem*, 9, 30, 1-19 (Glorie, 1964a, p. 418) (11-12). Almost the entire passage of Hieronymus (Glorie, 1964a, p. 417-429) (11-12, 15-18) has been quite closely copied in Rabanus Maurus, *Commentarii in Ezechielem*, 11, 30 (Migne, PL 110, 1852, col. 804-810) (20-25). Willelmus Tyrensis, *Chronicon*, 19, 14 (Huygens, 1986, p. 883) (26) apparently refers to the *Vulgata*, when he mentions 'Pelousion, which is often (sic) mentioned in the prophets' (Pelusium, cuius frequens memoria est in prophetis).

<sup>3714</sup> Hieronymus, *Commentarii in Hiezechielem*, 9, 30, 1-19 (Glorie, 1964a, p. 421-422); cf. Zimmerli, 1969, p. 727.736 (cf. 1983, p. 126.132).



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Greek is called 'prolepsis', like that verse of Vergilius [*Aeneis*, 1, 2-3]: 'and he came to the shores of Lavinium': they were not called 'of Lavinium' at the time when Aeneas came to Latium, but they were later called 'of Lavinium', and the place would thus be more obvious to the reader's understanding.'

Hieronymus was clearly not familiar with the historical topography of Egypt, and nobody will follow his identification of Alexandria and Thebes<sup>3715</sup>.

Hieronymus apparently followed a similar line of argument for the translation of 'Sais' in *Ezechiel*, 30, 15, which he discusses next (15)<sup>3716</sup>:

*et effundam, inquit, indignationem meam super 'Sain', quam nos in 'Pelusium' vertimus et robur appellatur Aegypti eo quod portum habeat tutissimum et negotiationes maris ibi vel maxime exercentur - unde et poeta Pelusiacam appellat lentem, non quo ibi genus hoc leguminis gignatur, vel maxime, sed quo de Thebaide et omni Aegypto per rivum Nili illuc plurimum deferatur.*

'and I shall vent', he says, 'my indignation on "Sais"', which we translated as Pelusium, and it is called the strength of Egypt because it has a very safe harbour and because there is a particular busy trade over sea - that is also why the poet mentions the bean of Pelusium, not because this kind of vegetable particularly grows there, but because it is very often brought there from the Thebais and from the whole of Egypt along the course of the Nile.'

According to Hieronymus Pelousion is called 'the strength of Egypt' because it has a very safe harbour and because there is a lot of trade going over sea; an example of an export product is the so-called bean of Pelousion, mentioned by Vergilius<sup>3717</sup>, which does not grow in the Pelousion region itself, but is transported there from all over Egypt along the Pelousiac branch. That the expression 'robur Aegypti' is exclusively linked with the economic importance of the harbour of Pelousion, might be an indication that the reputation of the city in the early 5th century AD was no longer based on its military capacities, as it was in the 4th-1st centuries BC.

In his commentary on *Ezechiel*, 30, 16 Hieronymus again identifies 'Sain' and Pelousion (16)<sup>3718</sup>:

*quasi parturiens dolebit 'Sain', id est 'Pelusium' (sive turbatione turbabitur), ...*

'Sain', which means 'Pelusium', 'will suffer as if in labour' (or 'will be stirred up by troubles'), ...

Hieronymus does not further explain why he identified Sin and Pelousion, which both in some way could be called 'the strength of Egypt'. Because of his lack of

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<sup>3715</sup> See also Hieronymus, *Epistula* 108, 14 (Labourt, 1955, p. 175): *et urbem Noo, quae postea versa est in Alexandriam* ('la ville de Noo, qui devint plus tard Alexandria'). For a similar identification of Alexandria and No, cf. *Pesikta rabbati*, 17, 4 (Hebrew) (translated in Braude, 1968, I, p. 367) (6th-12th centuries AD?).

<sup>3716</sup> Hieronymus, *Commentarii in Hiezechielem*, 9, 30, 1-19 (Glorie, 1964a, p. 422); cf. Carrez-Maratray, 1999b, p. 81, no. 119.

<sup>3717</sup> Vergilius, *Georgica*, 1, 228.

<sup>3718</sup> Hieronymus, *Commentarii in Hiezechielem*, 9, 30, 1-19 (Glorie, 1964a, p. 422). Hieronymus in his works inconsequentially uses the indeclinable form 'Sain' (16-17), which is a direct transliteration of the Septuaginta Σάιν, and a nominative Sais (7; 8; 14), but there are no further indications that he saw any link with the city of Sais in the western Delta, as he did in the already mentioned *Liber de situ et nominibus locorum Hebraicorum* (7).

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geographical precision in the identification of No and Alexandria, one might also doubt his rendering of Sin as Pelousion.

Hieronymus also provides an allegorical interpretation for *Ezechiel*, 30, 14-15, but every geographical information is missing. The name Patros means 'disdain for bread', Tanis 'an unworthy mission', Dios Polis 'idleness', and Sain 'temptation'. These 'keys' lead him to the following interpretation of the two verses: in all these places heretics and liars despise the bread of the church, follow an unworthy mission that does not lead to heaven, dwell in luxury and idleness, and yield for temptations (17)<sup>3719</sup>:

de cuius urbibus dicitur: *et disperdam terram Phatures, et dabo ignem in Taphnis (sive in Tanis), et faciam iudicia in 'No' (quam Septuaginta 'Diospolim' transtulerunt); et effundam indignationem meam super Sain robor Aegypti*; 'Phatures' interpretatur 'panis conculcatio', 'Tanis' 'mandatum humile', 'Diospolis' - pro qua in hebraeo posita est 'No' - 'requies', 'Sain' 'tentatio', quibus nominibus diversa haereticorum et omnium mendaciorum conciliabula demonstrantur, qui conculcant panem ecclesiasticum atque contemnunt, et sequuntur mandatum humile et ad caelestia non perducens, et deliciis vacant, et sunt in requie - qualem in evangelio legimus divitem purpuratum -, et tentationibus inserviunt - quorum unus expetivit a Domino ut tentandi Iob haberet potestatem -.

'About its cities is said: 'and I shall destroy the land Phatures (sic), and I shall set fire to Taphnai' (or 'to Tanis'), 'and I shall inflict my punishments on "No"' (which the Septuaginta translated as 'Diospolis'); 'and I shall vent my indignation on Sain, the strength of Egypt'. 'Phatures' means 'disdain for bread', 'Tanis' means 'unworthy mission', 'Diospolis', instead of which in Hebrew is written 'No', means 'idleness', 'Sain' means 'temptation'; with these names the several meeting places of heretics and all liars are referred to, who disdain and condemn the bread of the church, and who follow an unworthy mission, which does not lead to heaven; they have time for pleasures and live in idleness - in the gospel we read that the rich man who dressed in purple was like that [cf. *Lucas*, 16, 19-31] - and they indulge to temptations - one of them asked the Lord to have the power to tempt Iob [cf. *Iob*, 1, 9-12; 2, 4-6] -.'

## SENOU (SNW) - SOUNOU (SWNW)

### Topographical situation

In offering lists from the Old Kingdom on the place Senou or Sounou is linked with other wine regions from Lower Egypt as Imet in the eastern and Hamou in the western Delta (1-2; 3; 7, 9-10; 16). In the Middle Kingdom Imet and Senou are once listed together (4). In some New Kingdom texts Senou occurs alone (5, 11) or with

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<sup>3719</sup> Hieronymus, *Commentarii in Hiezechielem*, 9, 30, 1-19 (Glorie, 1964a, p. 428); see also *dolebit universa tentatio* ('the universal temptation [sc. Sain] will suffer') (Glorie, 1964a, p. 428-429) (18), referring to *Ezechiel*, 30, 16, and Hieronymus, *Liber interpretationis Hebraicorum nominum*, s.v. Sais (De Lagarde, 1959, p. 132) (8): Sais tentatio ('Sais (means) temptation').

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only a selection of the traditional wines (6). In other lists the wine regions Hor-seba-chenty-pet (probably in the Kharga oasis) (8, 12-13), Setjet (Syria and Palestine) (8) or (the oasis?) Oubaret(?) ([12]-13) are added. From the Third Intermediate period on also the oasis toponyms Ouhaty (14, 17; 43), Djesdjes (15; 18, 22-26, 29, 32, 34, 36-37, 39, 41) or Kenmet (15; 18, 22-25, 29-30, 32, 36, 39, 41) occur in the list of wine regions, and in the Graeco-Roman period Hout-ihet (18-19, 25, 27, 29-30, 32, 36-37, 39-41), Imaou (20) (both in the western Delta), the oases Wadjty (27) and Shefet (37) and the unknown Senkeret (37, 39) show up in the same lists.

None of these texts provides any geographical information about Senou, and it is not even clear whether the name refers to a city, a village, an estate or a region<sup>3720</sup>. In some texts, however, Senou seems to be closely linked with Imet<sup>3721</sup>: the wine of Imet and Senou is listed together (4, 21, 28, 32, 35), the god Horos is called 'lord of Imet and Senou' (31), and the king, who is 'lord of Imet and Senou', collects tribute in 'the foreign countries', probably referring to the countries east of Egypt (33). Therefore Senou was no doubt situated in the eastern Delta, probably somewhere near Imet, the capital of the 18th, later the 19th nome of Lower Egypt with the Greek name of Bouto (Pr-W3dyt). It is now located at Tell Nebesha / Tell Fara'un, some 10 km northeast of Qantir and was probably situated along the Pelousiac branch of the Nile. Such a location can be confirmed by the only text I know where Senou is not explicitly listed as a wine region. In a demotic story from the cycle of Petoubastis a message is sent 'to the nomes of Egypt from Yb / Elephantine to Soun [ ]' (42). Soun is apparently considered the most northern point of Egypt, a position which was held by many other places in the Delta, including Imet<sup>3722</sup>, but also (Sm3-)Bḥdt / Dios Polis Kato (Tell el-Balamun), Ḥw.t-wr.t / Auaris - Pr-R<sup>c</sup>-ms-sw (Tell el-Dab'a - Qantir), the New Kingdom Tcharou (Habwa I), the Saite Migdol / Magdolos (Tell Kedwa) and the Graeco-Roman Alexandria<sup>3723</sup>.

### Identifications

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<sup>3720</sup> The description of Clédat, 1922, p. 199, that Senou is 'un hameau agricole' with 'autour du village, des champs de céréales, des vignobles' is mere fantasy.

<sup>3721</sup> Cf. already Sethe, 1928, p. 180.

<sup>3722</sup> Cf. Zibelius, 1978, p. 37.

<sup>3723</sup> For the most northern point of Egypt, cf. Schlott-Schwab, 1981, p. 82-88; Van 't Dack, 1989, p. 102, n. 43. See also s.v. Tcharou and s.v. Migdol / Magdolos.

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For Cheshire Senou is a place in the northeastern Delta, which has not been localized<sup>3724</sup>, and I agree with that. Her description of Senou, however, as a major border town is not confirmed by the sources, which do not say anything about the nature or the size of the place nor about its alleged location near the eastern border.

Brugsch prefers to locate Senou in Lower Egypt, but he does not want to rule out the possibility that Senou is identical with Sounou / Syene in Upper Egypt<sup>3725</sup>. Also other scholars identify Senou and Syene<sup>3726</sup>. The region of Syene was indeed known for its vineyards, but only from the Ptolemaic period on<sup>3727</sup>, and there are no further arguments to assume that Senou and Syene are identical.

In the Boubastis inscription (15) the Hamy and Souny wines are mentioned side by side. This is probably why Breasted also locates 'the city Souny' (sic) in the western Delta, not far from 'the city Hamy' (sic)<sup>3728</sup>, but he clearly does not take into account the later texts, which favour a location in the eastern Delta.

Spiegelberg's identification of Senou and Pelousion<sup>3729</sup>, followed by most scholars, was mainly based upon a phonetic similarity with the Assyrian Si'nu and the biblical Sin, both on insufficient grounds identified with Pelousion<sup>3730</sup>. The link becomes even less plausible if one considers that Pelousion is only attested from the 5th century BC on, while the history of Senou goes back to the Old Kingdom, and that Pelousion was never known as especially famous for its wine<sup>3731</sup>. Finally, Tell el-Farama (Pelousion) lies some 65 km from Tell Nebesha (Imet), which hardly fits the proximity of Imet and Senou as implied by the sources.

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<sup>3724</sup> Cheshire, 1985, p. 20.22; followed by Carrez-Maratray, 1999b, p. 31.343.

<sup>3725</sup> Brugsch, 1879, p. 665 (cf. Spiegelberg, 1911, p. 81, n. 3).

<sup>3726</sup> Dümichen, 1884, I, p. 41; Maspero, 1894, p. 367; Budge, 1909a, p. 137.265.268; 1909b, I p. 135; II, p. 100; see also Gauthier, 1927, IV, p. 51, who misinterprets Sounou in (30).

<sup>3727</sup> For the vineyards in the region of Elephantine and Syene, cf. Gauthier, 1925, I, p. 93; Meyer, Christine, s.v. Wein, in LÄ, 1986, VI, col. 1169 and n. 8.

<sup>3728</sup> Breasted, 1906, IV, p. 364, § 734, n. d.

<sup>3729</sup> Spiegelberg, 1910, p. 48-49.80 and 1911, p. 81-84.

<sup>3730</sup> See s.v. Si'nu - Sa'nu and s.v. Sin. Cf. the doubt expressed in Vandersleyen, 1995, p. 53.

<sup>3731</sup> Cf. Gardiner, 1918a, p. 260. Sethe, 1928, p. 180 is wrong stating that the wine of Pelousion was famous in the classical authors. Kees, 1933, p. 51 and 1977, p. 41.108, Wilson, 1955, p. 225 and Abd el-Maksoud, 1981, p. 40-41 mention wine in the region of Pelousion, but they actually refer to the wine of Senou. P.Oxy. 1692, 21, a lease of 188 AD about a vineyard, perhaps mentions wine of Pelousion (καὶ φυράσι τὸν Πηλοῦσι[ακὸν οἶνον?], 'and he will mix the [wine?] of Pelousi[on?]',) but the restoration is doubtful; cf. Carrez-Maratray, 1995, p. 143, n. 19 and 1999b, p. 183, no. 362 and p. 430-431.

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Helck identifies Senou with the city of Tcharou at the eastern border<sup>3732</sup>. Tcharou was indeed known for its wine<sup>3733</sup>, but the place itself is only attested from the Middle Kingdom on.

### Orthographic variants<sup>3734</sup>

The name Sen(ou) [Sn(w)] in Old Kingdom (**1-2**), Middle Kingdom (**3-4**), New Kingdom (**5, 7-8, 11**) and occasionally later texts (**16**) is usually written with the s (S29, but also O34) and the nw-bowl (W24), but also the sn-arrow-head (T22-T23) or other variants occur. Sometimes several kinds of bowls and jars (W6 a.o.) or the vine (M43) are added as determinatives. In no instance, however, the spelling Soun(ou) can be inferred.

From the 18-19th dynasty on (**9-10**; cf. **6, 12-13**), but especially in most later texts the name is spelled as Soun(ou) [Swn(w)]<sup>3735</sup> with the s and the wn-hare (E34) or occasionally the wn-flower (M42) (**23, 33, 35-37, 40**)<sup>3736</sup> and possibly the sw-arrow (T11) (**12** - in the parallel **13** incorrectly replaced by the similar bh-tooth (F18)). Sometimes the sn-bread (X5) (**23**) and the horn (F16) with the exceptional value of the 'w' (**27**) are added to the name. Because of the context there is no doubt that the same wine region in Lower Egypt is referred to. Clédat wonders whether the spelling Sounou might be due to a confusion with Sounou / Syene<sup>3737</sup>, but in the New Kingdom the latter city was probably not important enough to cause such a confusion.

In the Graeco-Roman period the city-determinative (O49) is often added to the name (**18-19, 22-25, 27-30, 32, 34, 36-39, 41**; also the demotic **42?**), but also the water-determinative (N35a) (**18**), the water channel-determinative (N36) (**23, 41**) and the hill country-determinative (N25) (**20-21, 31, 33, 35, 40**) occur. The water-related determinatives are possibly due to the homonym noun sw.n.w, which can be translated

<sup>3732</sup> Helck, 1974, p. 188, followed by Gomaà, 1974, p. 109 (cf. however 1987, II, p. 229); Meyer, Christine, s.v. Wein, in LÄ, VI, 1986, p. 1172 and n. 68. See s.v. Sin, Si'nu and Tcharou.

<sup>3733</sup> Cf. Björkman, 1974, p. 49; Kees, 1977, p. 108.

<sup>3734</sup> Brugsch, 1879, p. 664, Budge, 1920, p. 1031, Clédat, 1923b, p. 168 and Wb, 1930, IV, p. 69.155 mention several other variants for the name Senou, but when they did not add any further references, it seemed more prudent not to take them into account.

<sup>3735</sup> The name is also rendered as Sun, Sunnu (Brugsch, 1879, p. 664-665). Some scholars transcribe the name as Suan (Breasted, 1906, I, p. 237, § 493) or Sw'n (Bresciani, 1964, p. 42.136); this form, however, is only attested for Sounou / Syene (cf. Budge, 1920, p. 1030), not for Sounou in the Delta.

<sup>3736</sup> According to Wb, 1930, IV, p. 69.155 the spelling with the wn-flower occurs already in the Middle Kingdom, but this is not attested in any of the texts mentioned in Belegstelle, p. 27 or in Gomaà, 1987, II, p. 227-229.

<sup>3737</sup> Cf. Clédat, 1923b, p. 168, n. 3.

as 'water surface, lake, dike'<sup>3738</sup>. The hill country-determinative might be an indication that Sounou for some writers was considered a region outside Egypt *stricto sensu*, just as the wine regions in the oases.

The nisbe form Souny [Swny], 'of Sounou'<sup>3739</sup>, is sometimes written without any determinative (6, 12-13), but also the determinatives of the booth (O22) and the seated god (A40) (14), the book roll (Y1) (15) and the city-determinative (17) occur.

### Etymology

None of the etymologies suggested for the name Senou is really convincing.

Brugsch links the name Soun(ou) with the already mentioned noun *swn.w*, 'water surface'<sup>3740</sup>, but this etymology cannot account for the older spelling Senou.

The same objection can be made for the link with the verb *swn*, 'to trade', suggested by Breasted for both the name of Soun(ou) at the eastern border (which he confusingly also translates as Syene) and that of Sounou / Syene at the southern border<sup>3741</sup>.

Spiegelberg, who argues that Senou (*Snw*) has to be read as Sounou (*Swnw*) or Sinou (*Sinw*), tentatively compares the name with the noun *swn.w*, 'stronghold'<sup>3742</sup>. In order to establish a link with the biblical Sin he also prefers to read the latter noun as *sin.w*, although there is no unambiguous example for this spelling. One can object, however, that the form Sinou is not attested<sup>3743</sup>, and - even if the name is read as Sounou<sup>3744</sup> -, one wonders whether a name as 'stronghold' is really adequate for a place that is only mentioned as a wine region.

<sup>3738</sup> For *swn.w*, 'Gewässer', cf. Wb, 1930, IV, p. 69.

<sup>3739</sup> The name is also rendered as Sunî (Brugsch, 1879, p. 664).

<sup>3740</sup> Brugsch, 1879, p. 664-665; cf. Spiegelberg, 1910, p. 48, n. 11 and 1911, p. 83, n. 1.

<sup>3741</sup> Breasted, 1906, I, p. 237, § 493, n. i and IV, p. 364, § 734 and n. d. For *swn*, 'Handel treiben', cf. Wb, 1930, IV, p. 68.

<sup>3742</sup> Spiegelberg, 1911, p. 82-84; followed by Gardiner, 1918a, p. 253 ['S(i)nw']; Gauthier, 1928, V, p. 14-15 ['S(i)n']; Kalt, 1931, II, p. 329 ['Sjn']; Ward, 1969, p. 215, n. 2 [Sinw?]; Martin, 1971, p. 124 [Sinw]; Helck, Wolfgang, s.v. Pelusion, in KP, IV, 1972, col. 610 and 1974, p. 188; Thissen, Heinz-Jozef, s.v. Pelusium, in LÄ, IV, 1982, col. 925 [Sjn]; Lipiński, Édouard, s.v. Péluse, Sîn, in Bogaert, 1987, p. 998 [Sîn]; Onasch, 1994, I, p. 38 [Sjn; S(j)wn]. The arguments of Zimmerli, 1969, p. 737 (cf. 1983, p. 133) against this etymology are not conclusive. For *swn.w*, 'Festung', cf. Wb, 1930, IV, p. 69.

<sup>3743</sup> The hieroglyphic form Sin(w), given by Gauthier, 1928, V, p. 5, is actually not attested. Also other scholars (e.g. Meyer, Christine, s.v. Wein, in LÄ, 1986, VI, col. 1172 and n. 68-69) often quote the hypothetical form Sinw as if it was the real name. The name Sinou in the New Kingdom Sokar litany probably refers to Sounou / Syene (see § Analysis of the sources).

<sup>3744</sup> Cf. Bonnet, 1952, p. 585; Gomaà, 1974, p. 109 and 1987, II, p. 228.

## 10. Pelousion and the Pelousiac plain

Because the name Pelousion is probably derived from the Greek noun πηλός, 'mud', Spiegelberg suggests that the name Sinou, 'stronghold', by some popular etymology was misinterpreted as derived from the Egyptian noun sin, 'clay, loam, mud' and was accordingly rendered in Greek as Pelousion<sup>3745</sup>. Clédat, however, simplifies the matter and considers the spelling Senou a mere variant of that noun<sup>3746</sup>. On the other hand, the link between Senou and 'mud' is entirely based upon its identification with Pelousion and is not confirmed by the spelling of Senou / Sounou as found in the sources<sup>3747</sup>.

### Homonyms

The city of Sounou [Swnw], called Syene in Greek texts, is situated in nowadays Assuan. It appeared for the first time in texts of the 20th dynasty and attained its importance only in the Persian period<sup>3748</sup>. The name Sounou - as already mentioned - is apparently derived from the verb swn, 'to trade' and is sometimes translated as 'marketplace'<sup>3749</sup>.

### Analysis of the sources<sup>3750</sup>

*Senou / Sounou in the Old Kingdom*

*Senou / Sounou in the Middle Kingdom*

*Senou / Sounou in the New Kingdom*

*Senou / Sounou in the Third Intermediate and Late periods*

*Senou / Sounou in the Graeco-Roman period*

### *Senou / Sounou in the Old Kingdom*

Among the offerings mentioned in the 5th dynasty pyramid text of king Ounas two jars or bowls of five kinds of wine are listed: wine of Lower Egypt [irp Mḥw], abesh wine [‘bš], Imet wine [Im.t], (Ne)hamou wine [(N)ḥ3mw], and Senou wine

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<sup>3745</sup> Spiegelberg, 1911, p. 83-84; cf. Gauthier, 1928, V, p. 15; Kees, Hermann, s.v. Pelousion, in RE, XIX 1, 1937, col. 408; Gomaà, 1987, II, p. 228. For sin, 'der Ton', cf. Wb, 1930, IV, p. 37.

<sup>3746</sup> Clédat, 1923b, p. 167-168; cf. Zibelius, 1978, p. 211-212; Meshorer, 1988, p. 57.

<sup>3747</sup> Cf. Cheshire, 1985, p. 20-22.

<sup>3748</sup> Cf. Habachi, Labib, s.v. Assuan, in LÄ, 1975, I, col. 495.

<sup>3749</sup> For this etymology, cf. Erman in Steindorff, 1884, p. 5 (non vidi); Breasted, 1906, I, p. 237, § 493, n. i; Spiegelberg, 1911, p. 84 and n. 5; Gauthier, 1928, V, p. 18; Habachi, Labib, s.v. Assuan, in LÄ, 1975, I, col. 496, n. 1.

<sup>3750</sup> No attempt has been made to give an exhaustive list of all the references to the wine region Senou in religious texts.

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[Snw] (1)<sup>3751</sup>. The abesh wine is apparently named after the characteristic abesh jars<sup>3752</sup>. The city of Imet is situated in the northeastern Delta<sup>3753</sup>. Hamou or Nehamou is possibly located in the Mareotis region at the western end of the Delta<sup>3754</sup>. There is no geographical information about the wine region Senou, but because at least three other wines in the list come from Lower Egypt, it is possible that also this region has to be looked for in that area.

Senou wine is also mentioned in at least four, possibly five, similar offering lists of the 5th dynasty<sup>3755</sup>, and in at least 38 pyramid texts and offering lists of the 6th dynasty (2)<sup>3756</sup>. In all instances the name Sen(ou) [Sn(w)] is written with the determinatives of the vine (M43) or of several kinds of bowls and jars (W6; W24).

### *Senou / Sounou in the Middle Kingdom*

In at least eight offering lists of the Middle Kingdom the same five wines are listed (3)<sup>3757</sup>, but in P.Ramesseum only the wine of Imet and Senou is mentioned (4)<sup>3758</sup>.

Senou has also often been linked with three other Middle Kingdom documents, though their interpretation is most doubtful.

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<sup>3751</sup> Pyramid texts, Utterance 153-157 (§ 92b-94b) (Sethe, 1908, I, p. 55-56; Faulkner, 1969, p. 30); cf. Barta, 1963, p.62.75. For Senou in Old Kingdom texts, cf. Spiegelberg, 1911, p. 82; Hassan, 1948, VI 2, p. 400.409-410; Zibelius, 1978, p. 211-212.

<sup>3752</sup> For abesh wine, cf. Hassan, 1948, VI 2, p. 400.403-406; Meyer, Christine, s.v. Wein, in LÄ, 1986, VI, col. 1173 and n. 71.

<sup>3753</sup> For Imet, cf. Gauthier, 1925, I, p. 73-74; Hassan, 1948, VI 2, p. 400.406-407; Zibelius, 1978, p. 36-37; Martin, Karl, s.v. Imet, in LÄ, 1980, III, col. 140-141; Meyer, Christine, s.v. Wein, in LÄ, 1986, VI, col. 1172 and n. 67; Gomaà, 1987, II, p. 210-212; Aufrère, 2000a, p. 411.

<sup>3754</sup> For Hamou, cf. Breasted, 1906, IV, p. 364, § 734, n. d; Gauthier, 1926, III, p. 97 and 1927, IV, p. 29; Hassan, 1948, VI 2, p. 400.407-408; Kees, 1977, p. 41; Zibelius, 1978, p. 148; Meyer, Christine, s.v. Wein, in LÄ, 1986, VI, col. 1172 and n. 65; Gomaà, 1987, II, p. 120-122; Aufrère, 2000a, p. 411 and n. 171.

<sup>3755</sup> Cf. Hassan, 1948, VI 2, p. 409, and pl. 55.63 with lists no. 64, 67 H, [68](?), 69, 70 (with a faulty writing).

<sup>3756</sup> Cf. Hassan, 1948, VI 2, p. 409-410 (37 lists mentioned). To the list of Hassan can be added Cairo CG 1693, a fragment of an Old Kingdom offering list of unknown origin (Borchardt, 1937, II, p. 138).

<sup>3757</sup> Cf. the sarcophagus of Mentouhotep from Deir el-Bahari (Lacau, 1904, CG 28027, p. 72, 18); Grave no. 2 of Imny in Beni Hasan (Newberry, 1893, pl. 17; cf. p. 33); Grave no. 4 of Wh-htp in Meir (Blackman, 1915, pl. 21.25 (non vidi) quoted in Gomaà, 1987, II, p. 120.210.227); Grave no. 2 of Nh3 in el-Qatta (Chassinat, 1906, p. 57, 25); the stele of Snwsrt-‘nh-tify-pn (Lange, 1902, CG 20390, c, p. 386); the sarcophagus of S3t-ḥd-ḥtp from el-Bersha (Lacau, 1904, CG 28086, p. 233, 81); the alabaster table of offerings of Ptah-neferou, the daughter of Amenemhat III, from Hawara (Petrie, 1890, pl. 5; cf. p. 15.17); Tomb no. 1 in Siut (Griffith, 1889b, pl. 1; cf. p. 9). Cf. Gomaà, 1987, II, p. 227-229.

<sup>3758</sup> P.Ramesseum B, 70-71 (Sethe, 1928, p. 177-178 and pl. 17, 71).



## 10. *Pelousion and the Pelousiac plain*

In Beni Hasan, in the grave of Chnoumhotep I, the nomarchos of the 16th nome of Upper Egypt, a fragmentary text relates how he went on expedition together with king Amenemhat I of the 12th dynasty. In this context Ward, following the edition of Newberry, wants to restore the name Senou<sup>3759</sup>:

'I went down with his majesty to Imet [r Im(t)?] (in) twenty ships of 'š-wood. Then he came to Senou [hr Snw[ ]?] and expelled him (sc. the enemy) (from) the Double-Banks-of-Horos (sc. Egypt).'

Some remarks can be made. The identification of the enemy is not evident: for Breasted it is one of Amenemhat's rivals for the crown; for Ward, who looks for a setting in the eastern Delta, it are foreign tribes who had settled in the region. Also the two toponyms are damaged or distorted. The second starts with Sn(w) and has the irrigation canal-determinative (N23) at the end, but at least two signs in between are missing. Ward identifies the place with Senou of the offering lists, but leaves the canal-determinative unexplained<sup>3760</sup>, which casts a serious doubt on his identification with Senou. The first toponym reads Im - without any determinatives -, and Ward tentatively suggests an identification with Imet, mainly because this name also occurs in the offering lists together with Senou. There is, however, no reason to assume that the names of two wine regions should also be mentioned together in an historical context, and also this identification is very doubtful. Even more, in the edition of Sethe the first toponym is tentatively read as Šm'w, 'Upper Egypt', and the second one as Sg[ ], so that the link with Senou disappears.

In the story of Sinouhe, set in the reign of Sesostris I, Sinouhe fled from Egypt through the northern Sinai and travelled to Byblos (Kpny)<sup>3761</sup>. In another interpretation, however, which is no longer accepted, the name of the latter city was read as Soun [Swn] or Souny [Swny] and identified with a trading post on the Asiatic frontier (Breasted) or with 'the district of Pelousion' (Budge)<sup>3762</sup>.

A scarab, which can be dated to the late 12th or early 13th dynasty, was first noticed in a private collection in Cairo, and no place of origin is known. Sn-bby is

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<sup>3759</sup> Beni Hasan, Grave no. 14 (Newberry, 1893, pl. 44, 5); cf. Newberry, 1893, p. 84 (who does not read the toponyms); Breasted, 1906, I, p. 224-225, § 463-465 (who does not read the toponyms); Sethe, 1935, p. 12; Ward, 1969, p. 215-216 and 1971, p. 65-66 (who does not accept the readings of Sethe); Gomaà, 1987, II, p. 224.227-228; Vandersleyen, 1995, p. 52-53; Aufrère, 1997, p. 294.

<sup>3760</sup> Water-related determinatives only occur for Senou in the Ptolemaic period, but then the name is spelled Soun(ou) and the determinatives are probably influenced by the homonym noun swn.w; see § Orthographic variants and § Etymology.

<sup>3761</sup> *The story of Sinouhe*, B29 (Koch, 1990, p. 23); cf. Gauthier, 1928, V, p. 197-198; Lichtheim, 1973, I, p. 224.

<sup>3762</sup> Breasted, 1906, I, p. 237, § 493, n. i (see also § Etymology); Budge, 1920, p. 1031; cf. Gauthier, 1928, V, p. 17.

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'steward of divine offerings, overseer of the office / storehouse of (Hout?)-Senou' [imy-r<sup>c</sup> pr n ḥtpw-nṯr, imy-r<sup>c</sup> st (Ḥw.t?)-Snw]<sup>3763</sup>. The name Senou, which Newberry identifies with the Senou of the offering lists, is written within a fortified enclosure, which is unparalleled for the wine region Senou. There is no geographical context that can corroborate any identification. In two Old Kingdom tombs, on the other hand, the domains Hout-Seni [Ḥw.t-Sni / Ḥw.t-Sn] and Hout-Senet [Ḥw.t-Snt] occur, with Seni / Senet written within the enclosure-sign (O6); Hout-Seni is possibly situated in the 9th nome of Lower Egypt, the Greek Bousirites<sup>3764</sup>, Hout-Senet possibly in the 5th nome, the Greek Saites<sup>3765</sup>, but they have also been considered identical by some scholars. The identification of the (Hout?)-Senou of the scarab with one of these places remains a mere hypothesis, but cannot be excluded.

### *Senou / Sounou in the New Kingdom*

The wine of Senou is also often attested during the New Kingdom, but a lot of variations occur on the traditional list of five wines.

In the temple of Hatshepsout in Deir el-Bahari (18th dynasty) the wine of Senou [irp Snw] is mentioned in an offering list by itself, without the four other wines (5)<sup>3766</sup>.

In the tomb of Rehmire in Thebes (Thoutmosis III - Amenhotep II, 18th dynasty) twice the indication 'wine' [irp] in general occurs, followed by Imty wine, Hamou wine, Souny wine [irp Swny] and - only further in the list - wine of Lower Egypt (6)<sup>3767</sup>. The name Souny is written with the wn-hare and without any determinative. From the context it is clear that Souny is the adjectival form of Senou and that Senou and Sounou are mere variants.

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<sup>3763</sup> Newberry, 1932, p. 141, with fig. 1; Martin, 1971, p. 124, no. 1610, with pl. 22, 11; cf. Ward, 1969, p. 215 and n. 4; Gomaà, 1987, II, p. 227-228.

<sup>3764</sup> For Hout-Seni, cf. Gauthier, 1927, IV, p. 127; Junker, 1939, p. 68 and n. 1; Gödecken, 1976, p. 98 and 154-155, n. 130; Helck, 1976, p. 128; Zibelius, 1978, p. 165.

<sup>3765</sup> For Hout-Senet, cf. Breasted, 1906, I, p. 77, § 172; Gauthier, 1927, IV, p. 127 and 1928, V, p. 41; Helck, 1976, p. 128.

<sup>3766</sup> Temple of Hatshepsout (Navelle, 1901, IV, pl. 110).

<sup>3767</sup> Tomb of Rehmire (Davies, 1943, II, pl. 108); cf. Barta, 1963, p. 120.

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In the tomb of Chaemhet in Thebes (Amenhotep III, 18th dynasty) after the general indication of 'wine' the traditional list follows with the wines of Lower Egypt, Imet, Senou [irp Snw], Hamou and the abesh wine (7)<sup>3768</sup>.

In the hall of Nefertem and Ptah-Sokar in the temple of Sethos I in Abydos (19th dynasty) six wines are listed. The first four, the wine from Lower Egypt, Imet, Hamou and Senou [irp Snw], are known from the older lists, but the wine of Hor-seba-chenty-pet [irp Hr-sb3-ḥnty-pt] and of Setjet [irp St.t] are added (8)<sup>3769</sup>. The estate Hor-seba-chenty-pet, 'Star of Horos pre-eminent in heaven', is perhaps situated in the oasis of Kharga or in the western Delta<sup>3770</sup>, and Setjet can be identified with Syria and Palestine<sup>3771</sup>.

In the chapel of king Sethos I in that same temple, on the other hand, in two scenes the five traditional wines are listed, preceded by the general indication 'wine': wine of Lower Egypt, Imet, Soun [irp Swn], Hamou and abesh wine (9-10)<sup>3772</sup>. The toponym Soun is twice written with the wn-hare, without any determinative.

In the tomb of Sethos I an offering list mentions three jars of wine of Senou [Snw], omitting the other wines (11)<sup>3773</sup>.

Two parallel stelae of Ramses II and Merenptah from Silsila list Imty wine, Hamy wine, Souny wine [irp Swny] and the wines of Hor-seba-chenty-pet and (the oasis?) Oubaret(?) [Wb3rt(?)] (12-13)<sup>3774</sup>. In the first stele the damaged name Souny is possibly written with the sw-n-arrow (T11). In the second stele this arrow has incorrectly been replaced by the similar bh-tooth (F18) but is followed by the 'n', which secures the reading. No determinatives are added.

<sup>3768</sup> Tomb of Chaemhet (Barta, 1963, p. 121); cf. Loret, 1889, p. 117-119 (non vidi); Wreszinski, 1923, I, pl. 212.

<sup>3769</sup> Temple of Sethos I in Abydos, hall of Nefertem and Ptah-Sokar (Kees, 1933, fig. 49); cf. Mariette, 1869, I, pl. 35a; Petrie in Caulfeild, 1902, pl. 17, 1 (cf. p. 17) [in PM, 1939, VI, p. 23 (209-210) incorrectly ascribed to the upper register]; Wb, Belegstelle, 1930, IV, p. 27 (p. 155, n. 8-9) [incorrectly giving a separate reference to both Caulfeild and Mariette]; Kees, 1933, p. 50-51 and 1977, p. 41; Meyer, Christine, s.v. Wein, in LÄ, 1986, VI, col. 1172 and n. 69-70; Meshorer, 1988, p. 57.

<sup>3770</sup> For Hor-seba-chenty-pet, cf. Petrie in Caulfeild, 1902, p. 17; Gauthier, 1928, V, p. 20; Kees, 1933, p. 50 and 1977, p. 41; Meyer, Christine, s.v. Wein, in LÄ, 1986, VI, col. 1172 and n. 70; Poo, 1995, p. 19.

<sup>3771</sup> For Setjet, cf. Gauthier, 1928, V, p. 95; Meyer, Christine, s.v. Wein, in LÄ, 1986, VI, col. 1172 and n. 70.

<sup>3772</sup> Temple of Sethos I in Abydos, chapel of king Sethos I (Calverley, 1935, II, pl. 32.35); cf. Barta, 1963, p. 120-123.

<sup>3773</sup> Tomb of Sethos I (Barta, 1963, p. 131); cf. Lefébure, 1886, III, pl. 13 (non vidi); Schiaparelli, 1890, II, pl. 70 (non vidi).

<sup>3774</sup> Stelae of Ramses II and Merenptah from Silsila (Kitchen, 1975, I, p. 94, 9-13); see also Kitchen, 1993, I, p. 79, col. 9; cf. Meyer, Christine, s.v. Wein, in LÄ, 1986, VI, col. 1179, n. 70.

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In the New Kingdom 'Litany of offerings to Sokar in all his names', which is known in several versions, the city of Sinou is linked with the god Sokar [n Skr m Sinw, 'to Sokar in Sinou']<sup>3775</sup>. Gauthier tentatively identifies the place with Senou<sup>3776</sup>, but Gaballa rather suggests an identification with Swnw / Syene, because this name occurs in the contemporary litany for Osiris in the Book of the dead<sup>3777</sup>. The former identification is also enfeebled by the fact that in the hall of Nefertem and Ptah-Sokar in Abydos the 'wine of Senou' and 'Sokar in Sinou' are mentioned in two different registers on the same wall, with both toponyms written differently.

### *Senou / Sounou in the Third Intermediate and Late periods*

On the sarcophagus of Bw-th3y-Imn (early 21st dynasty) abesh wine, Ouhaty or oasis wine [irp Wh3ty]<sup>3778</sup>, and the wines of Lower Egypt, Imet, Hamou and Souny [irp Swny] are listed (14)<sup>3779</sup>. The name Souny is written with the unparalleled determinatives of the booth (O22) and the seated god (A40). The same list of six wines occurs in the papyrus of the woman S3ys from possibly the 2nd century AD (43)<sup>3780</sup>.

An inscription from the small temple in the Delta city Boubastis is dated to the fourth year of Osorkon I (22nd dynasty, ca. 920 BC). In a list of temple-gifts wine is offered to an unknown god: 'His tribute is (the oases) of Djesdjes and Kenmet'<sup>3781</sup>,

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<sup>3775</sup> See (a.o.) the tomb of Tjanefer in Dra Abu'l-Naga (Seele, 1959, pl. 4) [<S>inw]; the temple of Sethos I in Abydos (Mariette, 1869, I, pl. 48a, no. 18) [Sinw]; Medinet Habu (Nelson, 1940, pl. 196c [= Gaballa, 1969, pl. 1] and pl. 221) [Sinw]; for parallel lists, cf. Gaballa, 1969, p. 4, n. 2.

<sup>3776</sup> Gauthier, 1928, V, p. 15.

<sup>3777</sup> Gaballa, 1969, p. 4-5. Brovarski, Edward, s.v. Sokar, in LÄ, 1984, V, col. 1065 and n. 214 is in doubt. The litany for Osiris in the Book of the dead, § 141-142 does not list Sinou, but Sounou [Swnw] / Syene (cf. Lepsius, 1842, pl. 59, 7; Naville, 1886, II, p. 367, 64; Hornung, 1979, p. 275, 41).

<sup>3778</sup> For Ouhat (probably referring to both the Dachla and the Kharga oases), cf. Gauthier, 1925, I, p. 202-203; Aufrère, 2000b, p. 87.

<sup>3779</sup> Sarcophagus of Bw-th3y-Imn (Budge, 1909b, I, p. 135; II, p. 100.124-125); cf. Schiaparelli, 1890, II, p. 314- and pl. 14 (non vidi); Barta, 1963, p. 124.

<sup>3780</sup> P.Louvre N 3155 of the woman S3ys (Barta, 1963, p. 124); cf. Schiaparelli, 1890, II, p. 314- and pl. 39-43 (non vidi).

<sup>3781</sup> For Djesdjes / Desdes (the Bahriya oasis), cf. Gauthier, 1929, VI, p. 98.134; Fakhry, Ahmed, s.v. Bahrija, in LÄ, 1975, I, col. 601; Aufrère, 2000b, p. 88.105. For Kenmet (the Dachla oasis, in some periods probably also including the Kharga oasis), cf. Gauthier, 1928, V, p. 204-205; Fakhry, Ahmed, s.v. Charga Oase - s.v. Dachla Oase, in LÄ, 1975, I, col. 907.976; Aufrère, 2000b, p. 86-88.

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being wine and shedeh-wine [Dsds Knmt m irp šdh]<sup>3782</sup>; Hamy wine, and Souny wine likewise [H3my Swny mitt irp], in order to maintain [ ] his house according to the word thereof' (15)<sup>3783</sup>. The name Souny is written with the unparalleled determinative of the book roll (Y1).

In the tomb of Petamenophis of the 25th-26th dynasty in Thebes the traditional list of wine of Lower Egypt, abesh wine, and wine of Imet, Hamou and Senou [irp Snw] occurs (16)<sup>3784</sup>. The list is clearly copied from an older example, since the name is still spelled Senou and not Sounou, as it was more common in this period.

The demotic story 'The battle for the armour of prince Inaros', belonging to the cycle of Petoubastis, is copied in 137-138 AD, but apparently describes events of the 7th century BC. A message is sent 'to the nomes of Egypt from Yb (Elephantine)<sup>3785</sup> to Soun [ ]' [hn n3 tš.w 'n' Kmy n-t Yb š' Sw'n [ ]] (42)<sup>3786</sup>. Soun was apparently considered the northern point of Egypt, a position which was held by many other places in the Delta, the southern point often being Elephantine or Sounou / Syene. If this Soun can be linked with the wine region Sounou - which remains a hypothesis<sup>3787</sup> -, the latter might be situated in the northern or the eastern Delta.

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<sup>3782</sup> For shedeh-wine, cf. Wb, 1930, IV, p. 568.

<sup>3783</sup> Small temple of Boubastis (Naville, 1891, pl. 51 (G 1, 5) (cf. p. 61) [with the reading Nwny]); cf. Breasted, 1906, IV, p. 364, § 734 and n. d [with the corrected reading Swny]; Gauthier, 1928, V, p. 17 [incorrectly omitting the determinative of the book roll and incorrectly ascribing the inscription to Ramses II]; Poo, 1995, p. 20.

<sup>3784</sup> Tomb of Petamenophis (Budge, 1909a, p. 134-137.249-250); cf. Dümichen, 1884, I, p. 41 and pl. 25 no. 102; Schiaparelli, 1890, II, p. 314- (non vidi).

<sup>3785</sup> For Abou / Elephantine, cf. Gauthier, 1925, I, p. 3.16.63; Habachi, Labib, s.v. Elephantine, in LÄ, 1975, I, col. 217. For the demotic Yb, cf. Erichsen, 1954, p. 49.

<sup>3786</sup> P.Krall, 8, 7 (Hoffmann, 1996, p. 197 and pl. 8); cf. Bresciani, 1964, p. 42-43.136. A similar phrasing has been restored in 5, 24 (Hoffmann, 1996, p. 170 and pl. 5: [n-t Y] 'b' š' [p3? tš? Sw'nw] 'n', '[from Y]b till [the(?) region(?) of(?) Sou]n'), but the passage is so fragmentary that the restoration is rather *exempli gratia*. For a demotic facsimile, cf. Erichsen, 1954, p. 415 and Hoffmann, 1996, p. 197.441. The first two signs 's' and 'wn' are clear, but there is some doubt about the three following signs and the exact reading of the name; cf. Spiegelberg, 1910, p. 48-49 with n. 11 and p. 80 [with the reading 'Sw'n' and the determinatives of the water channel (N36), the house (01) (?) and the hill-country (N25) combined with the throw-stick (T14)]; Spiegelberg, 1911, p. 82-83 [with a question mark added also to the water channel, the house (?) and the city-determinative (O49) instead of the hill-country]; Bresciani, 1964, p. 42 [the reading Sw'n, but no comment about the signs]; Hoffmann, 1996, p. 197, n. 1000 [the reading Sw'n'w'n, with s / wn / n'w' / n / geographical determinative].

<sup>3787</sup> Because there are no clear parallels for the place Soun, and because the toponym might be a graphical variant of the name Sounou / Syene, one might even wonder whether the expression 'from Yb to Sw'n' can be the result of some confusion between the common expressions 'from X to Sw'nw' and 'from Yb to X'. On the other hand, Soun(ou) / Syene in P.Krall, 24, 14 ((Hoffmann, 1996, p. 382 and

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In room XIII of the temple of Hibis in the Kharga Oasis, decorated under Dareios I (522-486 BC), abesh wine, Ouhaty or oasis wine and the wines of Lower Egypt, Imet, Hamy and Souny [Swny] are listed (17)<sup>3788</sup>, in a sequence similar to the one on the sarcophagus of Bw-th3y-Imn (14). The name Souny is written with the city-determinative.

### *Senou / Sounou in the Graeco-Roman period*

In a demotic topographical list, which can be dated to the 4th-2nd centuries BC, the toponyms Soun [Swn], Dyḥ, P3-k3m-[ ] and T3-... [ ] are listed one after the other (3, 27-30)<sup>3789</sup>. This group is mentioned between the three countries Syria, Kush and Arabia, which are adjacent to Egypt on the one hand (3, 24-26), and probably four mythical countries on the other hand (3, 31-34). Because the list often consists of groups of four toponyms, arranged south - north - east - west (cf. 4, 5-8), Dyḥ might be identical with D3hy, Palestine, situated north of Egypt, and Swn therefore should be looked for in the south. Nothing is known about the names P3-k3m-[ ] (in the east?) and T3-... [ ] (in the west?). There is some discussion about the damaged ending of the word Swn, which is considered a channel- or (more likely) a city-determinative<sup>3790</sup>, but the spelling seems identical with the well-known demotic name of Sounou / Syene<sup>3791</sup> and - although most scholars place Soun in the eastern Delta<sup>3792</sup>

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pl. 24; cf. Bresciani, 1964, p. 106-107.136) is written with the signs 's', 'wn', the water channel- (?) and the city-determinative, which differs from the spelling of Soun in 8, 7, so the two places are not to be identified.

<sup>3788</sup> Temple of Hibis in the Kharga Oasis (Brugsch, 1878, pl. 17, 11 - cf. p. 91, n. 13); cf. Brugsch, 1879, p. 664; Spiegelberg, 1911, p. 81. For the date, cf. PM, 1951, VII, p. 288 (134).

<sup>3789</sup> P.Cairo dem. 31169, 3, 27-30 (Spiegelberg, 1908, p. 273 and pl. 109, but incorrectly numbered as '3, 26-29'); cf. DBL, 2005, p. 135-136. See s.v. Itineraries.

<sup>3790</sup> For a demotic facsimile, cf. Erichsen, 1954, p. 415 and Cheshire, 1985, p. 21 (s / w / n / damaged determinative). There are several interpretations, cf. Spiegelberg, 1908, p. 273 (with the water channel-determinative (N36) and tentatively suggesting a missing city-determinative (O49)); Spiegelberg, 1911, p. 81 (without the city-determinative) and p. 83 (without the question mark after the city-determinative); Cheshire, 1985, p. 21 and p. 24, n. 23 (with the water channel-determinative); Zauzich, 1987a, p. 88 with n. 24, and handout (with the city-determinative instead of the channel).

<sup>3791</sup> For the demotic name of Syene, cf. Erichsen, 1954, p. 414 and Smith, 1988, p. 78-80.

<sup>3792</sup> Cf. Spiegelberg, 1908, p. 273, n. 3 (identifying with Senou); Spiegelberg, 1910, p. 48, n. 11 and 1911, p. 81-83 (identifying with Senou and Pelousion) [followed by Gardiner, 1918a, p. 253; Gauthier, 1928, V, p. 14; Montet, 1957, I, p. 199 and 1959a, p. 52; Zibelius, 1978, p. 211; Thissen, Heinz-Jozef, s.v. Pelusium, in LÄ, IV, 1982, col. 925-926, n. 2; Gomaà, 1987, II, p. 228]; Cheshire, 1985, p. 21 (locating the place in the northeastern Delta, but refuting the identification with Pelousion) [followed by Carrez-Maratray, 1999b, p. 31.343].

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-, Zauzich is no doubt right stating that in this list Syene and not the Delta region Sounou is referred to.

In a scene on the so-called Bab el-Abd, the gate of the Montou temenos in Karnak, Ptolemaios III (246-222 BC) offers two jars of wine to the gods Re-Harachte and Mout: 'Kenmet and Djesdjes, Soun [Swn], Hamou, Hout-ihet [Hw.t-ih̄t], together with Imet, I tax them for you' **(18)**<sup>3793</sup>. Hout-ihet, 'Castle of the cow', is a place in the western Delta<sup>3794</sup>. The name Soun is written with the three waves of the water-determinative (N35a), and with the city-determinative.

In a scene on the so-called Bab el-Amara, the gate to the Chonsou temple in Karnak also decorated by Ptolemaios III, the wines of Imet, Soun [Swn], and Hout-ihet are listed **(19)**<sup>3795</sup>. The name Soun is written with the city-determinative.

In the temple texts of Edfu, carved between 234 and 57 BC, the name Soun(ou) occurs several times. In a wine-offering scene in the hall of offerings, decorated under Ptolemaios IV (222-204 BC), the god Horos refers to Soun [Swn] and Imaou [Im3w]<sup>3796</sup>, a place in the western Delta **(20)**<sup>3797</sup>. The name Soun is written with the hill country-determinative (N25).

In another context in the same hall wine from Imet and Soun [irp n Im.t Swn] is mentioned **(21)**<sup>3798</sup>. The name Soun is again written with the hill-determinative.

In the so-called laboratory decorated under Ptolemaios VI (181-145 BC) wine is offered from Kenmet and Djesdjes on the one hand and from Hamou, Imet and Sounou [Swnw] on the other **(22)**<sup>3799</sup>. The name Sounou is written with the city-determinative.

In a scene on the exterior of the naos decorated under Ptolemaios VIII (145-116 BC) Sounou [Swnw], Kenmet and Djesdjes are mentioned side by side **(23)**<sup>3800</sup>.

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<sup>3793</sup> Karnak, Bab el-Abd (Aufrère, 2000a, p. 407 and p. 408, fig. 72); cf. Spiegelberg, 1911, p. 81.

<sup>3794</sup> For Hout-ihet, cf. Gauthier, 1927, IV, p. 51; Montet, 1957, I, p. 58-60; Meyer, Christine, s.v. Wein, in LÄ, 1986, VI, col. 1172 and n. 66; Aufrère, 2000a, p. 411.

<sup>3795</sup> Karnak, Bab el-Amara (Firchow, 1957, p. 47, no. 58); cf. Poo, 1995, p. 90.

<sup>3796</sup> For Imaou, cf. Gauthier, 1925, I, p. 70; Meyer, Christine, s.v. Wein, in LÄ, 1986, VI, col. 1176 and n. 138-139; Aufrère, 2000a, p. 411.

<sup>3797</sup> Temple of Edfu (Chassinat, 1987, I 4, p. 461, 15); cf. Spiegelberg, 1911, p. 81.

<sup>3798</sup> Temple of Edfu (Chassinat, 1987, I 4, p. 466, 16); cf. Spiegelberg, 1911, p. 81.

<sup>3799</sup> Temple of Edfu (Chassinat, 1990, II 2, p. 218, 12); cf. Dümichen, 1867, I, pl. 73; Spiegelberg, 1911, p. 81.

<sup>3800</sup> Temple of Edfu (Chassinat, 1929, IV, p. 113, 13).

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The name Sounou is written with the wn-flower (M42), the sn-bread (X5) and the water channel- (N36) and the city-determinative.

In a scene on the forecourt decorated under Ptolemaios IX (116-107 BC) the wine regions Kenmet, Djesdjes, Imet, Soun [Swn[ ]] and Hamou are mentioned (24)<sup>3801</sup>. The name Soun is partially damaged, but certainly has the city-determinative.

In a scene on the interior girdle wall decorated under Ptolemaios IX the wine regions Kenmet, Djesdjes, Soun [Swn], Ham, Hout-ihet and Imet are mentioned (25)<sup>3802</sup>. The name Soun has the city-determinative.

In a scene with Ptolemaios IX on the exterior girdle wall wine is offered from Djesdjes, Imet and Sounou [Swn[w?]] (26)<sup>3803</sup>. The name Sounou is damaged and none of the determinatives is preserved.

In a scene on the same wall decorated under Ptolemaios IX the 'eye-of-Horos' wine of Imet and Soun [Swn] is referred to (28)<sup>3804</sup>. Soun is written with a city-determinative.

In another scene on the same wall decorated under Ptolemaios IX the wines of Kenmet, Djesdjes, Imet, Sounou [Swnw], Hout-ihet and Hamou are listed (29)<sup>3805</sup>. Sounou is again written with a city-determinative.

In another scene on the same wall but decorated under Ptolemaios X (107-88 BC) the wines of Wadjty [W3dty] - which is possibly a name indicating both the northern and southern oasis as a whole<sup>3806</sup> -, and of Imet, Sounou [Swnw], Hamou and Hout-ihet are listed (27)<sup>3807</sup>. The final 'w' of Sounou is spelled with the sign of the horn (F16), and the name ends with the city-determinative.

In a scene on the pylon of Ptolemaios XII (80-58 BC) the king makes an offering: '[he brings you Kenmet with] (its) green-eye-of-Horos<sup>3808</sup>, Hout-ihet (and) Sounou [Swnw] because of their products' (30)<sup>3809</sup>. The name Sounou is written with the city-determinative.

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<sup>3801</sup> Temple of Edfu (Chassinat, 1930, V, p. 52, 1); cf. Poo, 1995, p. 112-113.

<sup>3802</sup> Temple of Edfu (Chassinat, 1929, VI, p. 252, 12); cf. Poo, 1995, p. 128-129 (who incorrectly refers to 'IV, p. 252').

<sup>3803</sup> Temple of Edfu (Chassinat, 1930, VII, p. 75, 12-13); cf. Kurth, 2004, II, p. 128.

<sup>3804</sup> Temple of Edfu (Chassinat, 1930, VII, p. 115, 1); cf. Kurth, 2004, II, p. 204.

<sup>3805</sup> Temple of Edfu (Chassinat, 1930, VII, p. 117, 2-5); cf. Kurth, 2004, II, p. 208.

<sup>3806</sup> For Wadjty, cf. Osing, 1998, p. 1445-1147.

<sup>3807</sup> Temple of Edfu (Chassinat, 1930, VII, p. 89, 16-17); cf. Kurth, 2004, II, p. 154.

<sup>3808</sup> For the 'green-eye-of-Horos' [ir.t-Ḥr-w3d.t], a kind of wine, cf. Wb, 1926, I, p. 107.

<sup>3809</sup> Temple of Edfu (Chassinat, 1933, VIII, p. 71, 5); cf. Gauthier, 1927, IV, p. 51 (who incorrectly identifies Sounou with Syene); Montet, 1957, I, p. 59 (who incorrectly reads W3.wt-Ḥr, 'Ways-of-Horos', instead of ir.t-Ḥr-w3d.t); Kurth, 1998, I, p. 130.



## 10. Pelousion and the Pelousiac plain

In the temple texts of Dendera, written between 54 BC and 180 AD, Soun(ou) is often mentioned. In a wine-offering scene in the 'couloir mystérieux' the king invokes Horos, 'whose wine jars are numerous, the lord of Imet and of Sounou [ḥq3 Im.t Swnw]' (31)<sup>3810</sup>. Sounou, written with the hill-determinative, is apparently closely linked with the city of Imet.

In the south-east room the king makes an offering to the goddess Hathor: 'He brings you Kenmet (and) Djesdjes with their shedeh-wine, Imet (and) Sounou [Swnw] with (?) their wine, Neham / Hamou together with Hout-ihet with the green-eye-of-Horos that comes from them' (32)<sup>3811</sup>. The same expression occurs in the vestibule (35)<sup>3812</sup>. In the first text the name Sounou is written with the city-determinative, in the second one with the wn-flower and the hill-determinative. The six wines are apparently geographically grouped: Kenmet and Djesdjes refer to the oases, Hamou and Hout-ihet were situated in the western Delta, and so the wines of Imet and Sounou perhaps came from the eastern Delta.

In the sanctuary of Hathor the goddess 'Meret of the north' pronounces in a wine-offering scene: 'As long as the king of Upper and Lower Egypt (empty cartouche) is on the throne and rejoices the heart of his mistress, he is the lord of Imet and Sounou [nb Im.t Swnw], who collects tribute in the foreign countries [ḥb inw m t3wy ḥ3swt]' (33)<sup>3813</sup>. The name Sounou, which has the hill-determinative, is written with the wn-flower. Sounou is again linked with Imet and was apparently located near 'the foreign countries', probably referring to the countries east of Egypt.

In a wine-offering scene in the south-west room in the back of the temple 'Sounou with its good vine [Swnw ḥr š3 nfr] and the green-eye-of-Horos of Djesdjes' are referred to (34)<sup>3814</sup>. The name Sounou has the city-determinative.

In a scene in a crypt the king offers to the god Harsomtous. In the accompanying title the oases Kenmet and Djesdjes are mentioned, and 'Sounou

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<sup>3810</sup> Temple of Dendera (Chassinat, 1934, II, p. 44, 13); cf. Cauville, 1999, II, p. 76-77.647.

<sup>3811</sup> Temple of Dendera (Chassinat, 1934, II, p. 200, 15); cf. Cauville, 1999, II, p. 302-303.647.

<sup>3812</sup> Temple of Dendera (Chassinat, 1935, IV, p. 46, 9); cf. Cauville, 2001, IV, p. 100-101.815.

<sup>3813</sup> Temple of Dendera (Chassinat, 1935, III, p. 59, 1); cf. Mariette, 1870, II, pl. 66a; Spiegelberg, 1911, p. 81; Cauville, 2000, III, p. 124-125.593.

<sup>3814</sup> Temple of Dendera (Chassinat, 1935, IV, p. 30, 2); cf. Cauville, 2001, IV, p. 76-77.815.

## 10. Pelousion and the Pelousiac plain

[Swnw] and Hout-ihet with their tribute' (36)<sup>3815</sup>. The name Sounou is written with the wn-flower and the city-determinative.

In another scene in the same crypt the green-eye-of-Horos of Djesdjes and the wine of Senkeret [Snkr.t] (?), Imet, the oasis Shefet [Šft] (?)<sup>3816</sup>, Sounou [Swnw] and Hout-ihet are mentioned as tribute (37)<sup>3817</sup>. Sounou is again written with the wn-flower and the city-determinative.

In a wine-offering scene in another crypt the king describes Horos of Behdet as the one 'who collects the revenues of Nehamou and Sounou [Swnw]' (38)<sup>3818</sup>. The name Sounou has the city-determinative.

On the frieze of the western exterior wall the wine of Kenmet, Djesdjes, Hamou, Hout-ihet, Senkeret and Sounou [Swnw] is listed (39)<sup>3819</sup>. Sounou is written with the city-determinative.

In an unpublished wine offering scene on the eastern exterior wall of the naos (second register, first scene) Hout-ihet and Soun [Swn] are mentioned together (40)<sup>3820</sup>. Soun is written with the wn-flower and the hill-determinative.

In a scene possibly from the temple of Philai or Dendera the wine of Kenmet, Djesdjes, Imet, Sounou [Swnw], Nehamou and Hout-ihet is listed (41)<sup>3821</sup>. The name Sounou is written with both the water channel- and the city-determinative.

## SENOS

### Topographical situation

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<sup>3815</sup> Temple of Dendera (Chassinat, 1952, V 1, p. 62, 5); cf. Mariette, 1871, III, pl. 16c; Spiegelberg, 1911, p. 81; Cauville, 2004, V-VI 1, p. 146-147 and V-VI 2, p. 428.

<sup>3816</sup> For Shefet (possibly part of the Djesdjes (Bahriya) oasis), cf. Brugsch, 1878, p. 92; Gauthier, 1928, V, p. 132-133; Wb, 1930, IV, p. 459. Poo, 1995, p. 116 reads Knmt instead of Šft; it is not clear why Cauville, 2004, V-VI 1, p. 156 omits this toponym.

<sup>3817</sup> Temple of Dendera (Chassinat, 1952, V 1, p. 71, 6); cf. Mariette, 1871, III, pl. 21, x; Spiegelberg, 1911, p. 81; Poo, 1995, p. 116-117; Cauville, 2004, V-VI 1, p. 156-157 and V-VI 2, p. 428.

<sup>3818</sup> Temple of Dendera (Chassinat, 1965, VI, p. 123, 7); cf. Cauville, 2004, V-VI 1, p. 416-417 and V-VI 2, p. 428.

<sup>3819</sup> Temple of Dendera (Dümichen, 1877, pl. 17, 1-2); cf. Dümichen, 1866, pl. 79, c, 3; Brugsch, 1878, p. 91, n. 6; Spiegelberg, 1911, p. 81 (where incorrectly Swn is written); for the position of the inscription, cf. PM, 1939, VI, p. 78 (237-256).

<sup>3820</sup> Temple of Dendera (unpublished scene, pointed out to me by René Preys).

<sup>3821</sup> Temple of Philai or Dendera (?) (Dümichen, 1866, II, pl. 79, c, 1-2) (the text is not discussed in Dümichen, 1885, III.2, p. 48, and I did not manage to identify or localize the passage); cf. Brugsch, 1878, p. 91, n. 10; Spiegelberg, 1911, p. 81.

## 10. Pelousion and the Pelousiac plain

Senos is a city in Egypt (1), situated 'on an island' (3) and known for its taricheiai or factories of salting fish (5), probably in the 6th-5th centuries BC<sup>3822</sup>. Senos probably lies in the Delta, perhaps near the coast of the Mediterranean, but further information is lacking.

### Identifications

For the moment it is impossible to identify Senos with any known place in the Delta.

Some scholars identify Senos with Pelousion<sup>3823</sup>, stressing that both Senos (5) and Pelousion were indeed known for their taricheiai, and that the name Senos phonetically resembles the biblical toponym Sin, which was identified with Pelousion by ancient authors from the 4th century AD on. Once, however, the identification of Sin and Pelousion is rejected<sup>3824</sup>, the link between Senos and Pelousion is hazardous.

Senos might be identical with the Egyptian Senou, attested in the sources from the Old Kingdom till the Roman period, which was situated in the northern or eastern Delta<sup>3825</sup>. One can object, however, that the name Senou in the Late and Graeco-Roman periods was usually spelled Sounou, which makes an identification less likely.

### Homonyms

The name Senos is also known for a river in Hibernia Britannica<sup>3826</sup>.

### Analysis of the sources

Quoting Hekataios' *Periegesis* (1), which is written about 500 BC, Stephanos of Byzantion mentions the Egyptian city of Senos (4)<sup>3827</sup>:

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<sup>3822</sup> For taricheiai in Egypt and abroad, cf. Lloyd, 1976, II, p. 79-80. The name has nothing to do with the embalming of bodies, as Pape, 1911, p. 1489 supposes.

<sup>3823</sup> Chuvin, 1986, p. 42, n. 8; van Minnen, 1991, p. 170, n. 8; Carrez-Maratray, 1996a, p. 34, n. 7 and 1999b, p. 353 (cf. 2001, p. 95).

<sup>3824</sup> See s.v. Sin.

<sup>3825</sup> See s.v. Senou.

<sup>3826</sup> Ptolemaios, 2, 2, 3 (Müller, 1883, I 1, p. 76): Σήνου ποταμοῦ ἐκβολαί, '(the) mouths of (the) Senos river'; cf. Pape, 1911, p. 1376.

## 10. Pelousion and the Pelousiac plain

Σῆνος, πόλις Αἰγύπτου. Ἑκαταῖος ἐν αὐτῆς Περιηγήσει. ὁ πολίτης Σηνικός.  
'Senos, a city of Egypt. Hekataios in (his) *Periegesis* of this (country). The citizen (is called) Senikos.'

Senos is mentioned together with the city of Polis in another lemma of Stephanos (3)<sup>3828</sup>:

Πῶλις καὶ Σῆνος, πόλεις <Αἰγύπτου> ἐν νήσοις. ὁ μὲν Πωλίτης, ὁ δὲ Σηνικός.  
'Polis and Senos, cities <in Egypt> on islands. The one (citizen) (is called) Polites, the other Senikos.'

The location 'on islands' probably refers to the plots of land between the Nile branches and canals, possibly in the Delta. Since the city of Polis is not known elsewhere, it is not clear why it is linked with Senos.

Stephanos mentions the taricheiai or factories of salting fish of Mendes, Senos and Kanopos (5)<sup>3829</sup>:

Ταριχέαι πόλεις πολλαί, αἱ μὲν Μενδήσiai αἱ δὲ Σηνικαί αἱ δὲ Κανωβικαί. οἱ πολῖται ταριχευταί. ...  
'Taricheiai, a lot of cities, those of Mendes, those of Senos, those of Kanobos. The citizens (are called) taricheutai. ...'

It is remarkable that the taricheiai themselves are called cities, but this is most likely Stephanos' mistake. The presence of taricheiai near Kanopos is confirmed by Herodotos<sup>3830</sup>. The taricheiai were most likely near the coast of the Mediterranean, but this does not necessarily imply that also Senos itself was situated near the sea: also the taricheiai of Mendes probably lay near the mouth of the Mendesian Nile branch, while the city of Mendes itself lay more inland. Senos is listed between Mendes and Kanopos, but Stephanos' order is not always geographical. That the taricheiai of Pelousion<sup>3831</sup> were not listed by Stephanos can hardly be used to prove that Senos and Pelousion are identical.

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<sup>3827</sup> Stephanos of Byzantion, *Ethnica*, s.v. Σῆνος (Meineke, 1849, p. 562); Hekataios, FGrHist no. 1, F 311; possibly via Herodianos, *De prosodia catholica*, 7 (Lentz, 1867, I, p. 176, 9-10) [Σῆνος πόλις Αἰγύπτου. Ἑκαταῖος ἐν αὐτῆς Περιηγήσει] (2); cf. Carrez-Maratray, 1999b, p. 81, no. 121.

<sup>3828</sup> Stephanos of Byzantion, *Ethnica*, s.v. Πῶλις καὶ Σῆνος (Meineke, 1849, p. 541); cf. Carrez-Maratray, 1999b, p. 81, no. 120. <Αἰγύπτου> is added on the basis of the previous lemma (against Ziegler, Konrat, s.v. Polis 2, in RE, XXI 2, 1952, col. 1396, who incorrectly states that <Αἰγύπτου> is deleted by Meineke; cf. Jacoby, FGrHist no. 1, 1.a, 1957, p. 370). Meineke also suggests the supplement: ἐν νήσοις <ὁμωνύμοις?>, 'on <homonymous?> islands'.

<sup>3829</sup> Stephanos of Byzantion, *Ethnica*, s.v. Ταριχέαι (Meineke, 1849, p. 603); cf. Lentz, 1867, I, p. 284-285, n.; Carrez-Maratray, 1999b, p. 81, no. 122.

<sup>3830</sup> Herodotos, 2, 113, 1: ἐς τὸ νῦν Κανωβικὸν καλούμενον στόμα τοῦ Νείλου καὶ ἐς ταριχείας, '(he arrived) at the mouth of the Nile, which is now called Kanobikos, and at (the) taricheiai'.

<sup>3831</sup> Herodotos, 2, 15, 1: μέχρι ταριχηίων τῶν Πηλουσιακῶν, 'till (the) taricheiai of Pelousion!'; cf. Carrez-Maratray, 1999b, p. 44, no. 8.

## STRATOPEDA

### Topographical situation

The Stratopeda or 'Camps', which Psammetichos I granted to his Ionian and Carian mercenaries about the middle of the 7th century BC, are plots of land (χώροι) situated between Boubastis and the Mediterranean, opposite to each other at both sides of the Pelousiac Nile branch and probably near its mouth (1). Diodoros (3) apparently makes the distinction between the Stratopeda, the place (τόπος) where the mercenaries were living in the 7th-6th centuries BC, and a large area of land (χώρα πολλή) that they received as a 'kleros' near the Pelousiac mouth. It is not clear whether the name Stratopeda refers to two or more separate settlements spread over the eastern border region, each called a 'stratopedon', or rather to one area situated at both the western and the eastern side of the Nile and collectively called the 'Stratopeda'. Both views have been reflected in the identifications made for the toponym, but Herodotos' description apparently better matches the second point of view. In the 5th century BC, probably about a century after the abandonment of the Stratopeda, the slipways (?) of the ships and the ruins of the houses were still visible. There are no clear references to any military constructions.

### Administrative situation

Not much is known about the living conditions of the Greek mercenaries settled at the Egyptian northeastern border in the Saite period, but most likely their situation can be compared with the Ptolemaic klerouchoi, half colonists and half soldiers, who received an allotment of land, which provided them an income when they were not on active service. In times of war they went on campaign or manned the border garrisons<sup>3832</sup>. The crucial problem is whether the Stratopeda are to be considered the place where the mercenaries were on active or on passive duty. The name itself seems to point to a real military camp; the topographical description of Herodotos (1) and Diodoros (3), on the other hand, seems to indicate a broader region, where the mercenaries were living when not on active service. That the inhabitants of

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<sup>3832</sup> Cf. Cook, 1937, p. 235; Kienitz, 1953, p. 37; Austin, 1970, p. 18.

the Stratopeda never lost their military status, is clear from the fact that Amasis had them collectively moved to Memphis.

### Identifications

The geographical description of Herodotos (1) and Diodoros (3) being rather vague, several locations and identifications have been proposed.

On the map of the *Description* the Stratopeda are located on the western shore of the Pelousiac branch, opposite Pelousion<sup>3833</sup>, but no archaeological site of the 7th century BC is known in that area.

Naville suggests that Pelousion was built as one of the Stratopeda<sup>3834</sup>, but this unlikely hypothesis cannot archaeologically be confirmed.

Herodotos tells how Psammetichos had a garrison posted in Daphnai against the Arabs and the Assyrians<sup>3835</sup> and since Petrie's excavations in Tell Defenna (Daphnai), where Greeks seem to have settled largely outside of the central camp at both sides of the Pelousiac branch, the Stratopeda have often been located at Daphnai<sup>3836</sup>. There are, however, two major objections against this identification. First, Herodotos knows both Daphnai and Stratopeda and never links the two toponyms. Secondly, Tell Defenna was certainly also occupied in the time of Amasis, while Herodotos explicitly states that the Stratopeda were abandoned then. Lloyd suggests that the place might have been regarrisoned under Amasis and that Herodotos was ignorant of this second occupation, but such a solution is hardly convincing. The site of Daphnai itself not being acceptable, the Stratopeda have often been located in its immediate neighbourhood<sup>3837</sup>. This is indeed a plausible suggestion, but it has to be confirmed by further archaeological investigations.

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<sup>3833</sup> Cf. *Description*, 1830, XVIII, map 2.

<sup>3834</sup> Naville, 1924, p. 21; see also Graf, 1998, p. 108.

<sup>3835</sup> Herodotos, 2, 30, 2: ἐπὶ Ψαμμητίχου βασιλέος φυλακαὶ κατέστησαν ἐν τε Ἐλεφαντίνῃ πόλει πρὸς Αἰθιοπίων καὶ ἐν Δάφνησι τῆσι Πηλουσίησι ἄλλη πρὸς Ἀραβίων τε καὶ Ἀσσυρίων, καὶ ἐν Μαρῆῃ πρὸς Λιβύης ἄλλη (In the reign of Psammetichos there were garrisons posted at Elephantine on the side of Ethiopia, at Pelousian Daphnai on the side of Arabia and Assyria, and at Marea on the side of Libya').

<sup>3836</sup> Petrie, 1888, p. 48-49.51-52; Mallet, 1893, p. 69-71; Sourdille, 1910a, p. 87-88 and map; Pernigotti, 1985, p. 83 and 1993, p. 131; rightly rejected by Dümmler, 1895, p. 36, n. 2 and Rumpf, 1933, p. 60.

<sup>3837</sup> How, 1928, I, p. 175; Cook, 1937, p. 227-237; De Meulenaere, 1951, p. 36 and s.v. Daphne, in LÄ, I, 1975, col. 990; Austin, 1970, p. 20.56; Boardman, 1980, p. 117.133.

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Anyway, graves of Carian mercenaries seem to be found in Tell Nebesha<sup>3838</sup>, some 25 km west of Tell Defenna, and also this area well matches Herodotos' description<sup>3839</sup>.

With the discovery of the Saite fortress at Tell Kedwa (T21), often identified as Migdol or Magdolos, this place has also been linked with the Stratopeda<sup>3840</sup>. The same objections can be made as for Daphnai: Herodotos himself knows Magdolos as the place where Necho II beat the Babylonians in 601/600 BC<sup>3841</sup> and also this fortress was occupied till the late 6th century BC.

Carrez-Maratray identifies the Stratopeda with Tacasarta, which is mentioned in the *Itinerarium provinciarum Antonini Augusti* along the road from Pelousion to Memphis between Daphnai and Thou, possibly in the region of present-day Faqus or Qantir<sup>3842</sup>. According to Worp the name Tacasarta is a possible misspelling of the expression Τὰ Κάστρα, 'The Camps'<sup>3843</sup> and the Stratopeda might indeed have been situated in this region, but even if the suggested etymology of the name is to be trusted, there is no reason to assume, just on the basis of this common military name, that the Roman Tacasarta would be a successor of the Stratopeda abandoned in the 6th century BC.

Figueras tentatively suggests that Stratopeda later became of the Skenai ektos Gerrous, but there is little to support this identification<sup>3844</sup>.

Sometimes the Stratopeda have not been considered one area, but two separate settlements at quite a distance from each other. So for Clédat one of the Stratopeda is situated at Daphnai or in its immediate neighbourhood and the other one at Gerra; this second camp was in his view later on replaced by Chabriou Charax and Castra Alexandri; none of these identifications, however, is based upon any evidence<sup>3845</sup>. Lloyd, on the other hand, identifies the Stratopeda with both Daphnai and Magdolos<sup>3846</sup>. It is, however, not very convincing that two sites that are situated at a

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<sup>3838</sup> Cf. Petrie, 1888, p. 7.17-18, who at first identified the graves as Cypriote, but later on described them as Carian (cf. Petrie, 1931, p. 64; Lloyd, 1975, I, p. 17, n. 66).

<sup>3839</sup> Lloyd, 1975, I, p. 16-17.

<sup>3840</sup> Oren, 1979a, p. 199; 1979b, p. 191; 1982a, p. 16; 1984a, p. 38; followed by Fischer-Elfert, 1986, p. 233 and Quaegebeur, 1990, p. 261-264; rejected by Carrez-Maratray, 2000b, p. 164, n. 20. See s.v. Tell Kedwa (T21).

<sup>3841</sup> See s.v. Migdol / Magdolos.

<sup>3842</sup> *Itinerarium provinciarum Antonini Augusti*, 163, 1 (Cuntz, 1929, p. 22); cf. Carrez-Maratray, 2000b, p. 163.

<sup>3843</sup> Worp, 1991, p. 292-294.

<sup>3844</sup> Figueras, 2000, p. 245.249. See s.v. Skenai ektos Gerrous.

<sup>3845</sup> Clédat, 1923a, p. 158-159 and 1923b, p. 166.171. See s.v. Gerra, s.v. Chabriou Charax and s.v. Castra Alexandri.

<sup>3846</sup> Lloyd, 1988, III, p. 137.

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distance of some 32 km, would be described by Herodotos as being opposite to each other, and there is certainly no reason to suppose - as Clédat does - that Herodotos has made a mistake.

According to Quaegebeur the four Migdols mentioned in a demotic topographical onomasticon of the 4th-2nd centuries BC can be linked with the Stratopeda<sup>3847</sup>, but even if those Migdols were to be located at the eastern border - which they are not -, their position in the northern Sinai is not compatible with the location of the Stratopeda at the Pelousiac branch.

In the 13th century AD Bar Hebraeus describes how Dionysios of Tell el-Mahare, the patriarch of Antiocheia, in 825 AD fled to Egypt by sea, and arrived in the city of Tennis in the northeastern Delta. From there he went to 'the camp of the Persians', where the emir was staying<sup>3848</sup>. Nothing further is known about this camp, but according to Clédat the name refers to the Stratopeda at Daphnai that have been taken by the Persians in 525 BC and that have been given the new name of 'Camp of the Persians'. Clédat's suggestion cannot be confirmed by any source.

### Etymology

The Greek word στρατόπεδον, 'camp', was apparently given to the newly established settlement of the Ionian and Carian mercenaries. It does not have to be considered the Greek translation of a previous toponym as 'Migdol'<sup>3849</sup>.

### Homonyms

Herodotos knows a Stratopedon of the Tyrioi in Memphis, which is the area in the neighbourhood of the temenos of Proteus where Phoenicians from Tyros are living<sup>3850</sup>.

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<sup>3847</sup> P.Cairo dem. 31169, 3, 20-23; cf. Quaegebeur, 1990, p. 264, n. 129. See s.v. Itineraries and s.v. Migdol / Magdolos.

<sup>3848</sup> Bar Hebraeus, *Chronicon ecclesiasticum* (Abbeloos, 1872, I, kol. 259-362); translated in de Sacy, 1810, p. 501; cf. Clédat, 1923a, p. 159.

<sup>3849</sup> Against Oren, 1984a, p. 38.

<sup>3850</sup> Herodotos, 2, 112, 2: περιουκέουσι δὲ τὸ τέμενος τοῦτο Φοίνικες Τύριοι, καλέεται δὲ ὁ χώρος οὗτος ὁ συνάπας Τυρίων Στρατόπεδον ('Round the precinct dwell Phoenicians of Tyros, and the whole place is called the Stratopedon of the Tyrians'); cf. Lloyd, 1988, III, p. 44-45. For Oren, 1984a, p. 38 Phoenician troops live there, but this is not explicitly stated by Herodotos.



### Analysis of the sources

The Saite king Psammetichos I (664-610 BC) gained control over Egypt with the help of Ionian and Carian mercenaries. As a reward he gave them plots of land to live in that were called Stratopeda, 'Camps', lying opposite to each other at both sides of the Nile (1). The area is situated near the sea, north of the city of Boubastis, near the so-called Pelousiac mouth. The fact that Egyptian children were sent there to learn the Greek language, possibly implies that the Stratopeda were not an isolated military community. There the Ionians and Carians lived for many years, until king Amasis (570-526 BC) had them removed to Memphis. According to the interpretation of Amasis' policy the date of this event has been placed at the beginning of his reign or only later on<sup>3851</sup>. In the time of Herodotos the 'holkoi' of their ships<sup>3852</sup> and the ruins of their houses were still visible<sup>3853</sup>:

τοῖσι δὲ Ἴωσι καὶ τοῖσι Κάρσι τοῖσι συγκατεργασάμενοισι αὐτῷ ὁ Ψαμμήτιχος δίδωσι χώρους ἐνοικῆσαι ἀντίους ἀλλήλων τοῦ Νείλου τὸ μέσον ἔχοντος, τοῖσι οὐνόματα ἐτέθη Στρατόπεδα. τούτους τε δὴ σφί τοὺς χώρους δίδωσι καὶ τὰ ἄλλα, τὰ ὑπέσχετο, πάντα ἀπέδωκε. καὶ δὴ καὶ παῖδας παρέβαλε αὐτοῖσι Αἰγυπτίους τὴν Ἑλλάδα γλῶσσαν ἐκδιδάσκεισθαι, ἀπὸ δὲ τούτων ἐκμαθόντων τὴν γλῶσσαν οἱ νῦν ἐρμηνέες ἐν Αἰγύπτῳ γεγόνασι. οἱ δὲ Ἴωνές τε καὶ οἱ Κάρες τούτους τοὺς χώρους οἴκησαν χρόνον ἐπὶ πολλόν· εἰσὶ δὲ οὗτοι οἱ χώροι πρὸς θαλάσσης ὀλίγον ἔνερθε Βουβάστιος πόλιος ἐπὶ τῷ Πηλουσίῳ καλεομένῳ στόματι τοῦ Νείλου. τούτους μὲν δὴ χρόνῳ ὕστερον βασιλεὺς Ἄμασις ἐξαναστήσας ἐνθεῦτεν κατοίκησε ἐς Μέμφιν φυλακὴν ἑωυτοῦ ποιεύμενος πρὸς Αἰγυπτίῳν. ... ἐξ ὧν δὲ ἐξανέστησαν χώρων, ἐν τούτοισι δὴ οἱ τε ὀλκοὶ τῶν νεῶν καὶ τὰ ἐρίπια τῶν οἰκημάτων τὸ μέχρι ἐμεῦ ἦσαν.

'The Ionians and Carians who had helped him to conquer were given by Psammetichos places to dwell in called Stratopeda, opposite to each other on either side of the Nile; and besides this he paid them all he had promised. Moreover he put Egyptian boys in their hands to be taught the Greek tongue; these, learning Greek, were the ancestors of the Egyptian interpreters. The Ionians and Carians dwelt a long time in these places, which are near the sea, on the arm of the Nile called the Pelousian, a little way below the town of Boubastis. Long afterwards, king Amasis removed them thence and settled them at Memphis, to be his guard against the Egyptians. ... There still remained till my time, in the places whence the Ionians and Carians were removed, the landing engines of their ships and the ruins of their houses.'

A similar account is given by Diodoros (3), who probably quotes Hekataios of Abdera (2). Psammetichos paid the mercenaries, added important gifts, gave them the so-called Stratopeda to live in and granted them a large area not far south from the Pelousiac mouth. After many years Amasis had them established in Memphis<sup>3854</sup>:

<sup>3851</sup> Cf. Cook, 1937, p. 234-236 (late); De Meulenaere, 1951, p. 107-108 (late); Lloyd, 1975, I, p. 23 and 1988, III, p. 139 (early).

<sup>3852</sup> Those ὀλκοί are interpreted differently as slipways to pull (war?)ships in and out the water and to be used as a kind of shipyard construction (Petrie, 1888, p. 48-49.52; Wiedemann, 1890, p. 554; How, 1928, I, p. 244; Lloyd, 1988, III, p. 138-139) or as capstans, machines used for hauling ships on land (LSJ, 1940, p. 1216, s.v. ὀλκός; cf. How, 1928, I, p. 244).

<sup>3853</sup> Herodotos, 2, 154, 1-4. Sourdille, 1910a, p. 87-88 supposes that Herodotos himself actually visited the place, but this is not explicitly stated in the text.

<sup>3854</sup> Diodoros, 1, 67, 1; Hekataios of Abdera, FGrHist no. 264, F 25.

## 10. Pelousion and the Pelousiac plain

τῆς δ' ὅλης βασιλείας κυριεύσας ὁ Ψαμμήτιχος ... τοῖς δὲ μισθοφόροις χωρὶς τῶν ὀμολογημένων συντάξεων δωρεάς τε ἀξιολόγους ἀπένειμε καὶ τὰ καλούμενα Στρατόπεδα τόπον οἰκεῖν ἔδωκε καὶ χώραν πολλήν κατεκληρούχησε μικρὸν ἐπάνω τοῦ Πηλουσιακοῦ στόματος· οὗς ἐντεῦθεν Ἄμασις ὕστερον πολλοῖς ἔτεσι βασιλεύσας ἀνέστησε καὶ κατώκισεν εἰς Μέμφιν.

'After Psammetichos had established his authority over the entire kingdom ... and among the mercenaries he distributed notable gifts over and above their promised pay, gave them the place called the Stratopeda to dwell in, and apportioned to them much land in the region lying a little up the river from the Pelousiac mouth; they being subsequently removed thence by Amasis, who reigned many years later, and settled by him in Memphis.'

### **PTOLEMAIS IN PELOUSION**

#### **Topographical situation**

In 146 BC some soldiers go by ship from Herakleous Polis in Middle Egypt to 'Ptolemais in Pelousion' (1). If the reading and the interpretation of the papyrus is to be trusted, **Ptolemais is situated within or near the city of Pelousion**. One can only guess whether perhaps the (military?) harbour area of Pelousion is referred to.

#### **Identifications**

The name Ptolemais is wide spread in Egypt and abroad, but no certain parallels are known for a Ptolemais in the eastern Delta or in the northern Sinai<sup>3855</sup>.

#### **Etymology**

The name Ptolemais, attested in 146 BC, suggests that the place was created by or named after one of the kings Ptolemaios I to VI.

#### **Analysis of the sources**

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<sup>3855</sup> Helck, Wolfgang, s.v. Ptolemais 5 in RE, XXIII 2, 1959, col. 1869-1870 and s. v. Ptolemais 4 in KP, 1972, IV, col. 1234 suggests that the Red Sea canal of Ptolemaios II was called Ptolemais, but this name is not attested in the sources; cf. Diodoros, 1, 33, 11: ὁ δὲ διὰ τῆς διώρυχος ταύτης ῥέων ποταμὸς ὀνομάζεται μὲν ἀπὸ τοῦ κατασκευάσαντος Πτολεμαῖος, ἐπι δὲ τῆς ἐκβολῆς πόλιν ἔχει τὴν προσαγορευομένην Ἀρσινόην ('the river which flows through this canal is named Ptolemaios, after the builder of it, and has at its mouth the city called Arsinoe'); Plinius, *Naturalis historia*, 6, 33, 167 [= Iuba, FGrHist nr. 275, F 34]: a Ptolomaeo Philadelpho, qui primus Trogodyticen excusit, amnem qui Arsinoen praefluit Ptolomaeum appellavit ('by Ptolomaeus Philadelphus, who first thoroughly explored the Cave-dweller country and gave the name Ptolomaeus to the river on which Arsinoe stands').

## 10. Pelousion and the Pelousiac plain

In a fragmentary papyrus about military provisions, palaeographically dated to the 3rd century BC, the place 'Ptolemais that lies near the [ ]rra' (ἐκ Πτολεμαίδος τῆς πρὸς τοῖς [...].ρροῖς) is mentioned<sup>3856</sup>. In the lacuna the name 'Gerra' has sometimes been restored, referring to the military camp of Gerra, some 15 km east of Pelousion, and 'Ptolemais that lies near (the) Gerra' has been identified with 'Ptolemais in Pelousion'<sup>3857</sup>. Every geographical context in the papyrus, however, is lacking and because the lacuna is actually too long to fit the name 'Gerra', there are no sufficient arguments to link the text with the northern Sinai.

On 29 May 146 BC (1) Teres, probably the strategos of the Herakleopolites, writes to his subordinate Herakleides, possibly the person in charge of the harbour of Herakleous Polis Magna, to prepare immediately a boat for the Mysioi and the forty-one other chosen men who are sailing downstream to 'Ptolemais in Pelousion'. The order came from the king and was communicated by Demetrios, one of the 'protoi philoi' and 'grammateus' of the troops<sup>3858</sup>:

Ro  
1 Τήρης Ἡρακλείδει χαίρειν  
Vo  
2 [Τήρης Ἡρακλείδει χαίρειν.  
τρῖς καταπλέουσιν εἰς Πτολεμαίδα  
τὴν ἐν Πηλουσίῳ Μυσοῖς  
5 [καὶ] ἑτέροις ἐπιλέκτοις ἀνδράσι μα,  
καθότι γέγραφεν Δημήτριος  
τῶν πρώτων φίλων καὶ  
γραμματεὺς δυνάμεων  
προσπεταχέναι τὸν βασιλέα,  
10 παρασταθήτωι πλοῖον παραχρῆμα.  
11 ἔρρωσο. (ἔτους) λε Παχῶν γ

(Ro) 'Teres to Herakleides, greetings.'

(Vo) 'Teres to Herakleides, greetings. Prepare immediately a boat for the Mysioi who sail downstream to Ptolemais in (?) Pelousion and for the other 41 chosen men, just as Demetrios of the 'first friends' and grammateus of the troops has written that the king had ordered. Be well. Year 35, Pachon 3.'

The Mysioi are a cavalry unit, and the editor Schubert supposes that troops are sent to Pelousion to join the Syrian expedition of Ptolemaios VI Philometor<sup>3859</sup>. He stresses that it is impossible to read τὴν πρὸς or τὴν ἐπὶ Πηλουσίῳ, so Ptolemais has to be looked for within or very near Pelousion. Because, however, the expression 'Ptolemais in Pelousion' is surprising and the reading of the article τὴν is not certain, one can wonder whether 'in Pelousion' should not be linked with the Mysioi. Willy

<sup>3856</sup> P.Alex. 1, 3. For a full discussion of the text, see s.v. Gerra.

<sup>3857</sup> Cf. Daris, 1994b, p. 193; Calderini, 1996, Suppl. 2, p. 178; Schubert, P.Gen. III, 1996, p. 108; Rupprecht, SB XX, 1997, p. 672.

<sup>3858</sup> P.Gen. III, 131; cf. Schubert, 1991, p. 233-236; SB XX, 15113.

<sup>3859</sup> For this expedition, see s.v. Itineraries.

## 10. Pelousion and the Pelousiac plain

Clarysse (in a personal communication) tentatively suggests the reading τῶν and the translation 'prepare immediately a boat for the people who sail downstream to Ptolemais, Mysioi of the group in Pelousion and 41 other chosen men'. In this interpretation Ptolemais might be identical with Ptolemais Hormou, the harbour immediately north of Herakleous Polis. Some grammatical problems, however, remain with the latter construction, and it is difficult to choose between the two interpretations, none of which is really conclusive.

During the Judaeen - Syrian - Egyptian conflict of 103-101 BC Ptolemaic troops reached the city of Ptolemais at the Syrian coast. On 27 September 103 BC a demotic letter is sent 'on the bw3.t (?) of Ptolemais' (ḥr t3 bw3.t n Ptlwmys). In a Greek letter of 25 September 102 BC the writer adds: 'We are in Ptolemais' (ἔσμεν ἐν Πτολεμαίδι)<sup>3860</sup>. According to the editors twice Ptolemais in Syria is referred to. For Grzybek, however, those two letters do not mention the Syrian Ptolemais, but Ptolemais in Pelousion<sup>3861</sup>. In the demotic letter the city of Damaskos (Tmsq3) is mentioned in the same context, and since there is no reason to suppose - as Grzybek does - that an unknown place in the eastern Delta is referred to, there is little doubt that the Ptolemais in Syria is meant. In the Greek letter, however, also the editors admit that it is somewhat surprising to find Ptolemaic troops in the Syrian Ptolemais still in 102 BC<sup>3862</sup>, and the possibility cannot be ruled that another Ptolemais is meant, but the identification with Ptolemais in Pelousion remains hypothetical.

## LYCHNOS

### Topographical situation

Lychnos lies in the immediate neighbourhood of Pelousion, probably in the desert south or southeast of the city. In 359 AD some monks were living there in a 'kellion' (1-2).

<sup>3860</sup> P. War of sceptres, 3, 18 (Van 't Dack, 1989, p. 50-61) and 7, 8 (Van 't Dack, 1989, p. 75-77). For the possible meaning of bw3.t, cf. Van 't Dack, 1989, p. 58-60.

<sup>3861</sup> Grzybek, 1992, col. 753-754.

<sup>3862</sup> Van 't Dack, 1989, p. 110.

## Identifications

Sicard looks for Lychnos between Magdolos and Sele<sup>3863</sup>, i.e. some 18 to 36 km south of Pelousion, which is probably too far south. The location of Lychnos between Pelousion and Magdolos, as suggested in the *Description*, is more acceptable, but the identification with the site of Tell el-Heir is not based upon any evidence<sup>3864</sup>.

Migne's edition of the *Vita Hilarionis* incorrectly omits the reference to Pelousion in the text of Hieronymus<sup>3865</sup>. Miller therefore unacceptably locates Lychnos in the central Sinai, about halfway Palestine and the Wadi Tumilat<sup>3866</sup>. Musil, on the other hand, places Lychnos in the neighbourhood of Bitylion and even looks for a link between Lychnos and the Arabic word 'nuran', 'light', which occurs in the toponym Weli Sheikh Nuran near Kibbutz Magen in the northern Negev east of Rafah<sup>3867</sup>. With the correct reading of the text these identifications become impossible.

Migne thinks that the name Lychnos is a mistake for 'Lycos' and he identifies the place with Lykon Polis near present-day Assiut<sup>3868</sup>. Lychnos, however, has definitely to be looked for in the neighbourhood of Pelousion and the identification cannot be accepted.

Bishop Adelphios of Onouphis of Lychnoi (Ἀδελφίος Ὀνούφειος τῆς Λύχνων) participated in 362 AD at the synod of Alexandria<sup>3869</sup>. This place in the western Delta, which according to Kees is named after its lamp industry<sup>3870</sup>, cannot be identical with Lychnos near Pelousion<sup>3871</sup>.

About 384 AD Egeria knows *monasteria plurima sanctorum monachorum* ('a great many cells of holy monks') in Heroon Polis, but there are no real arguments to follow Figueras that here actually Lychnos is referred to, especially since Heroon

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<sup>3863</sup> Sicard, 1982 [= 1722], III, p. 168.

<sup>3864</sup> *Description*, 1830, XVIII, p. 174 and map 2. See s.v. Tell el-Heir.

<sup>3865</sup> Cf. Migne, PL 23, 1845, col. 44.

<sup>3866</sup> Miller, 1895, III, p. 17.

<sup>3867</sup> Musil, 1908, II 2, p. 244 (for Nuran, cf. p. 61); Figueras, 1981, p. 150 and p. 165, n. 15; Tsaferis, 1985, p. 14-15; rejected by Alt, 1926, p. 334-335 and Figueras, 2000, p. 22.30.201.

<sup>3868</sup> Migne, PL 23, 1845, col. 44, n. h.; rejected by *Acta sanctorum Octobris*, 1869, IX, p. 23.

<sup>3869</sup> Athanasios, *Tomus ad Antiochenos*, 10, 2 (Migne, PG 26, 1887, col. 808); cf. Munier, 1943, p. 8; Martin, 1996, p. 78.

<sup>3870</sup> Kees, Hermann, s.v. Onouphis, in RE, XVIII 1, 1939, col. 530.

<sup>3871</sup> Against *Acta sanctorum Octobris*, 1869, IX, p. 22-23.

## 10. Pelousion and the Pelousiac plain

Polis lies at 78 miles southwest of Pelousion according to the *Itinerarium provinciarum Antonini Augusti*<sup>3872</sup>.

### Etymology

The name Lychnos seems to be derived from the Greek word, λύχνος, 'lamp', but it is not clear whether the name e.g. refers to the spiritual enlightenment brought by the monks living on the spot or whether a more worldly explanation has to be looked for.

### Analysis of the sources

About 359 AD Hilarion, the bishop of Maiouma near Gaza, left Palestine for Egypt (1). He went from Bitylion to Pelousion in five days and visited some brothers who lived in the nearby desert in a place called Lychnos. From there he went in three days to Thaubastum (Thaubasthis), a military camp situated according to the *Itinerarium Antonini*<sup>3873</sup> some 52 miles (ca. 78 km) south of Pelousion<sup>3874</sup>:

quinto igitur die venit Pelusium, visitatisque fratribus, qui in vicina eremo erant et in loco qui dicitur Lychnos morabantur, perrexit triduo ad castrum Thaubastum ...

'On the fifth day he so reached Pelusium. He visited some brothers that lived in the nearby desert and stayed in a place called Lychnos, and went in three days to the camp of Thaubastum ...'

Bastiaensen apparently supposes that Hilarion visited two groups of monks, a first one staying in the desert and a second one residing in Lychnos<sup>3875</sup>, but the translation of Sophronios (2) makes it clear that there was only one group of brothers living in the desert in a 'kellion', a small construction, in a place that is called Lychnos<sup>3876</sup>:

δι' ἡμερῶν πέντε ἦλθεν εἰς Πηλούσιον, ἵνα ἐπισκέψηται τοὺς εἰς τὴν ἔγγιστα ἔρημον καθεζομένους ἀδελφοὺς. εἶχον δὲ οὗτοι τὸ κελλίον ἐν τῷ τόπῳ τῷ καλουμένῳ Λύχνῳ· ἰδὼν δὲ αὐτοὺς ἀπῆλθεν ἐκεῖθεν διὰ τριῶν ἡμερῶν εἰς κάστρον καλούμενον Ταβαστόν, ...

'He came to Pelousion in five days, in order to visit the brothers who had settled in the nearby desert. They had a cell in the place called Lychnos. After the visit he went from there in three days to the camp called Tabaston, ...'

## THYLAX

<sup>3872</sup> *Itinerarium Egeriae*, 7, 4 (Franceschini, 1965, p. 48); cf. the translation of Wilkinson, 1971, p. 101; cf. Figueras, 2000, p. 201 (otherwise on p. 22.258).

<sup>3873</sup> *Itinerarium provinciarum Antonini Augusti*, 171, 1-4 (Cuntz, 1929, p. 23); cf. also P.Oxy. LX, 4067, 8.22.

<sup>3874</sup> Hieronymus, *Vita Hilarionis*, 20, 9 (Bastiaensen, 1975, p. 118).

<sup>3875</sup> Cf. Bastiaensen, 1975, p. 307.

<sup>3876</sup> Sophronios, *Vita Hilarionis*, 30 (Papadopoulos, 1898, p. 120).

### Topographical situation

The village Thylax, where in the 5th or 6th century AD people from Tyros are residing (1-2), probably lies in the neighbourhood of Pelousion, but further information is lacking<sup>3877</sup>.

### Etymology

The Greek word θύλαξ or θύλακος indicates a sack, often used to carry meal<sup>3878</sup>, but it is not clear whether this meaning is referred to in the toponym Thylax.

### Analysis of the sources

Two memoranda on the same papyrus (1-2), which is palaeographically dated to the 5th-6th centuries AD, discuss the arrangements for the distribution of oil among the inhabitants of the metropolis of Pelousion. The exact procedure is not clear, but it involves people from Tyros - possibly merchants that handled the purchase and sale of oil - that reside in Pelousion and in the village of Thylax<sup>3879</sup>:

A, 4 ... τοὺς Τυρέους τοῦ ἴτε ἐν τῇ Πηλουσιωτῶν καὶ ἐν Θύλακι τῇ κώμῃ διάγοντας ...

'... the Tyrians who are currently staying in the metropolis of Pelousion and in the village Thylax ...'

B, 2-3 ... ὥστε αὐτὸν ἅπαντας τοὺς [Τυρέους τοὺς διάγοντας ἐπὶ Πηλουσιωτῶν] καὶ κώμης Θύλακος παρενεγκῖν Ἰπατίῳ τῷ πολιτευομένῳ ...

'... to fetch all the Tyrians who are currently staying in the metropolis of Pelousion and the village Thylax, to Hypatios the curialis ...'

<sup>3877</sup> Cf. P.Mich. XVIII, 1996, p. 312.324-325.

<sup>3878</sup> Cf. LSJ, 1940, p. 809, s.v. θύλαξ.

<sup>3879</sup> P.Mich. XVIII, 795, A, 4 and B, 2-3; cf. Sijpesteijn, 1990, p. 169.

*Modern period*

**THE ALLEGED EASTERN BORDER CANAL**

**Topographical situation**

On the basis of aerial photos Sneh and an Israeli geological team found two tracks of what they called the Egyptian eastern border canal<sup>3880</sup>. The southern section, some 6 km long, lies between Tell Abu Seifa and Tell el-Heir; the northern section, some 7 or 8 km long, lies between Tell el-Heir and Qal'at el-Tina, where it apparently flew into the Mediterranean. The southern section is sometimes linked with the harbour facilities found immediately east of Tell Abu Seifa<sup>3881</sup>. The northern section was said to be linked with an irrigation network<sup>3882</sup> and to cross the former Pelousiac branch some 2 km west of Tell el-Farama. The scholars supposed that the canal was dug long before the Pelousiac branch had advanced into that area, which gave at least a terminus ante quem of the 6th century BC. They noticed an embankment dump, which gave a constant width of 70 m, while the bottom of the canal was apparently some 20 m wide.

Between lake Timsah and lake Ballah, north of Ismailia, a 12 km stretch of another canal had already been discovered in the 19th century AD. This track is traditionally ascribed to the Saite king Necho II, who also constructed the Red Sea Canal, but actual evidence for this date is lacking. Sneh supposes that it was the result of a re-excavation of the former eastern border canal, which in his opinion linked the Wadi Tumilat with the Mediterranean. He sees three possible functions for the canal: a defence line against Beduin and other invaders from the east, a water supply for an irrigation network in the region, and the possibility of navigation reaching Egypt's most eastern border. Bietak and Butzer, however, do not accept the link of the eastern

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<sup>3880</sup> Sneh, 1975, p. 542-548; Shea, 1977, p. 31-38; Hoffmeier, 1997, p. 164-175. Sleeswyk, 1995, p. 105-107 (unfortunately) also uses the expression 'the canal of Pelousion'.

<sup>3881</sup> Hoffmeier, 1997, p. 167; Redford, 1998, p. 48-49, n. 19; see s.v. Tell Abu Seifa for the identification of this water with the Pelousiac branch.

<sup>3882</sup> Cf. the indication of this network on the maps Abd el-Maksoud, 1992b, p. 11.12; Marcolongo, 1992, p. 26-27; Valbelle, 1996, p. 60.



## 10. Pelousion and the Pelousiac plain

canal with this track and they suppose that the eastern canal in fact joined the Pelousiac branch near Tell Defenna<sup>3883</sup>.

The mere existence of the eastern border canal, however, has been enfeebled. During a field survey in 1992 Maryvonne Chartier-Raymond and Claude Traunecker investigated the traces of the alleged northern track<sup>3884</sup>. At its northern end, at the alleged crossing with the Pelousiac branch, no traces at all were found of any canal, while the Pelousiac branch itself was clearly visible. At its southern end they followed for more than 1 km a brown zone, which had risen some 5 cm and extended over a width of 20 to 30 m, without seeing any archaeological traces. The zone was not interpreted as the remains of an ancient canal, but the result of a pedological surface phenomenon, perhaps due to a former military road<sup>3885</sup>. Also the traces of the alleged irrigation network in fact appeared to be car tracks. The southern track of the canal, on the other hand, corresponds with the former railway line through the northern Sinai, constructed by the English during the First World War<sup>3886</sup>. The traces on the satellite photos, therefore, have nothing to do with an eastern border canal.

In 1994, 1995 and 1998 James Hoffmeier, who apparently still believed in the existence of the canal, investigated the area, but had to conclude that the rapid development in the area had largely obliterated any traces and that the new road between el-Qantara and el-Arish was laid directly on the track of the alleged ancient canal. On satellite images made in the 1960s and early 1970s, on the other hand, Hoffmeier noticed that the track suggested by Sneh was apparently not correct, since the canal did not make a sharp turn northwards in the direction of Tell el-Heir and Tell el-Farama, but continued more to the east. He could not, however investigate the traces, since deep sand dunes made it impossible to reach the original profile of the canal<sup>3887</sup>. None of Hoffmeier's observations therefore enfeebles the findings of Chartier-Raymond and Traunecker that there has never been an eastern border canal.

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<sup>3883</sup> Bietak, 1975, p. 139; Butzer, 1976, p. 46, n. 2; cf. Holladay, 1982, p. 2-3 and n. 4-5; Redmount, 1995, p. 151, n. 24.

<sup>3884</sup> Chartier-Raymond, 1993, p. 61-62; cf. Abd el-Maksoud, 1998b, p. 27-28. Hoffmeier, 1997, p. 166 is wrong stating that this survey confirmed the existence of the canal. Already Holladay, 1982, p. 2-3 was sceptical about the existence of the eastern border canal.

<sup>3885</sup> Chartier-Raymond, 1993, p. 62, n. 52: 'Foissonnement de surface provoquant la légère surélévation. Couleur brune due à des éléments fortement hygroscopiques'; cf. Valbelle, 1996, p. 62: 'un réseau hydrographique moderne'.

<sup>3886</sup> Valbelle, 1996, p. 62. For the railway track, cf. the maps of Gauthier, 1931, VII, map 1 and Kümmerly, 1995(?).

<sup>3887</sup> Cf. Hoffmeier, 2003, p. 172-173 and the map p. 170 (cf. pl. 10).

## Identifications

Scholars have been looking for links between the canal and every known waterway or related toponym at the eastern border in Egyptian and biblical sources: the 'Ways-of-Horos' and 'The wall of the ruler' in *The instructions for Merikare*, *The prophecy of Neferty* and *The story of Sinouhe*; 'The dividing canal' (T3 dni.t) on the Karnak relief of Sethos I, which would imply that the city of Tcharou was situated along the eastern canal; the Egyptian and biblical Shihor; Pi-Hahirof of the Exodus, interpreted as 'mouth of the canal'; the biblical toponym Shur, considered to refer to a canal. Because of the story of Sinouhe, Sneh supposed the canal to be build before the 2nd millennium BC, while Shea even proposed a more detailed chronological framework for its history between the First Intermediate period and the late New Kingdom<sup>3888</sup>. For Butzer, however, the canal cannot be earlier than the New Kingdom<sup>3889</sup>. The interpretation of each of these toponyms, however, is very questionable, and there is no certainty at all that they refer to an eastern border canal.

## TELL EL-MUSALLEM

### Topographical situation

Tell el-Musallem lies on the western shore of the former Pelousiac branch, some 10 km west of Tell el-Farama and 1,5 km northeast of Tell el-Luli, apparently near the junction with one of the secondary arms of the Nile. The site consists of two hills, the smaller one being situated south-southeast of the larger one. The total distance north - south is about 200 m<sup>3890</sup>.

### Archaeological finds

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<sup>3888</sup> Sneh, 1975, p. 546-548; Shea, 1977, p. 35-38; followed by Oren, 1979b, p. 186-187; Oren, 1984a, p. 9-10; Winnicki, 1994, p. 174; Hoffmeier, 1997, p. 166-172.

<sup>3889</sup> Butzer, 1976, p. 46, n. 2. Bietak, 1975, p. 139 at first dated the canal later than the New Kingdom, but afterwards (s.v. Schi-Hor, in LÄ, V, 1986, col. 624 and n. 17) he suggested that it was created 'spätestens im NR'.

<sup>3890</sup> Cf. the maps Marcolongo, 1992, p. 26-27 and Chartier-Raymond, 1993, p. 49. Chartier-Raymond, 1993, p. 56 gives as coordinates 31° 02,222' north latitude and 32° 26,050' eastern longitude. The 'ruins' indicated on Daressy, 1930, pl. and the nameless site on Bietak, 1975, pl. 4 and s.v. Isthmus von Qantara, in LÄ, III, 1980, col. 207-208 probably refer to Tell el-Musallem.

## 10. Pelousion and the Pelousiac plain

Tell el-Musallem was surveyed in 1992 by Maryvonne Chartier-Raymond and Claude Traunecker<sup>3891</sup>. At the southern hill they noticed a nummulite limestone column, pieces of marble and limestone, scattered red bricks, ribbed pottery and slag. The northern hill contains a real agglomeration with some town planning. The numerous mud brick houses, having silos in their courtyards, are built along streets that cross each other at right angles. In the centre of the site there was apparently an open space. The city plan has not been disturbed, so the place was possibly not occupied for a long time. Slag was found - indicator of industrial activity -, ribbed, but also finer pottery, and a biconical millstone. Red bricks were used for certain constructions. No date has been suggested, but the site was certainly inhabited in the Roman or Byzantine period.

### Identifications

Tell el-Musallem might be identical with Tell Abiad mentioned by Clédat<sup>3892</sup>.

On the maps of Sneh this site is incorrectly called Tell el-Luli, while the real site of Tell el-Luli remains nameless<sup>3893</sup>.

## TELL ABIAD

### Topographical situation

On a very inaccurate map Clédat locates Tell Abiad, 'White tell' (?), some 3 km northeast of Tell Zemurt, both sites being situated at quite a distance northwest of Tell Kedwa and Tell el-Heir. He describes the place as a small elevation of some 2 m high and some 50-60 m long, but he is not certain that it is an ancient site<sup>3894</sup>.

Hoffmeier, on the other hand, knows a Tell Abiad some 3 km south of Tell el-Heir, near the eastern laguna<sup>3895</sup>. It is not clear whether the name of Clédat has incorrectly been used to indicate another site, or whether perhaps some other kind of confusion is involved.

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<sup>3891</sup> Chartier-Raymond, 1993, p. 56.65, with p. 57, fig. 7, 1-2 and pl. 7a-b.

<sup>3892</sup> Valbelle, 1999a, p. 73. See s.v. Tell Abiad.

<sup>3893</sup> Sneh, 1973, p. 60 (cf. the commentary p. 61) and 1975, p. 543. See s.v. Tell el-Luli.

<sup>3894</sup> Clédat, 1905c, p. 603; Valbelle, 1999a, p. 72-73.

<sup>3895</sup> Cf. the map Hoffmeier, 2005b, p. 82.

## Identifications

Valbelle with reservation suggests an identification of Tell Abiad with Tell el-Musallem<sup>3896</sup>. In 1970, on the other hand, the Israeli northern Sinai expedition examined fifteen sites in the swampy region along the northern part of the Suez Canal<sup>3897</sup>, and perhaps Tell Abiad is one of them.

## TELL EL-LULI

### Topographical situation

Tell el-Luli lies on the eastern shore of the former Pelousiac branch, some 11 km west of Tell el-Farama, 1,5 km southwest of Tell el-Musallem and some 11 km east of the Suez Canal. The tell raises some 6 to 7 m above the plain<sup>3898</sup>.

### Archaeological finds

During their survey in 1992 Maryvonne Chartier-Raymond and Claude Traunecker noticed constructions from three periods in Tell el-Luli. The oldest traces are a mud brick (enclosure?) wall, for which no date is suggested. On top of this Roman and Byzantine red brick constructions were built. A nummulite limestone block with engravings possibly comes from the pulpit of a church. East and north of the site are square and rectangular cisterns made with red bricks and water-resistant mortar. On a lower level, nearly at the height of the plain, lie circular wells with a lot of amphora sherds in their neighbourhood<sup>3899</sup>.

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<sup>3896</sup> Valbelle, 1999a, p. 72. See s.v. Tell el-Musallem.

<sup>3897</sup> Kloner, 1971, p. 237; the geographical setting and the information given are too scanty to identify these places with any of the sites known from other surveys. Cf. also the nameless site on the maps of Sneh, 1973, p. 60 (see also the commentary p. 61) and 1975, p. 543, at the northern shore of the Pelousiac branch, at the junction with the secondary arm that also passes by Tell el-Fadda (west).

<sup>3898</sup> Cf. the maps Marcolongo, 1992, p. 26-27 and Chartier-Raymond, 1993, p. 49. Chartier-Raymond, 1993, p. 55 gives as coordinates 31° 01,416' north latitude and 32° 25,203' eastern longitude. According to Baumgarten, 1990, map and Kümmerly, 1995(?) the tell has a height of 13 m above sea level. The surface of 200 km<sup>2</sup>, given in Haikal, 1995, p. 187, is a printing mistake. Already Daressy, 1929, p. 328 (cf. 1930, pl. and 1931, pl.) supposed that the Pelousiac branch passed by Tell el-Luli. The position of Tell el-Luli on Bagnall, 2001, p. 228 is not correct.

<sup>3899</sup> Chartier-Raymond, 1993, p. 55.63 and pl. 7b.

## *10. Pelousion and the Pelousiac plain*

Later in 1992 the site was excavated. A late Roman and Byzantine habitat was found, with a fortress, a bath, wells and a vaulted cistern, all built in red bricks<sup>3900</sup>. Oren, however, dated the small fortress to the 13th-15th centuries AD<sup>3901</sup>.

In Tell el-Luni (sic), 25 km (sic) east of the Suez Canal, a large bath of the 3rd century AD with mosaics and (unpublished) inscriptions was found in 1995-1996<sup>3902</sup>. Most likely Tell el-Luli is referred to.

### **Identifications**

Tell el-Luli might be identical with Tell Zemurt mentioned by Clédat<sup>3903</sup>.

On the maps of Sneh this site incorrectly remained nameless, while the name Tell el-Luli is used for the site of Tell el-Musallem<sup>3904</sup>.

## **TELL ZEMURT**

### **Topographical situation**

There is some confusion about the position of Tell Zemurt. On a very inaccurate map Clédat locates Tell Zemurt some 3 km southwest of Tell Abiad, both sites being situated at quite a distance northwest of Tell Kedwa and Tell el-Heir<sup>3905</sup>. Elsewhere Clédat describes another map where Tell el-Fadda (east?) is situated some 2 km east of Qal'at el-Tina, and he supposes that actually Tell Zemurt is referred to<sup>3906</sup>. Fontaine, finally, locates Tell Zemurt between Pelousion and Tell Kedwa, which implies a position on the sandy ridge east of the Pelousiac plain<sup>3907</sup>.

### **Archaeological finds**

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<sup>3900</sup> BIA, 1991, IV, p. 52; Haikal, 1995, p. 187.

<sup>3901</sup> Oren, 1993a, p. 1396.

<sup>3902</sup> Cf. Höber-Kamel, 1996, p. 70-71; Leclant, 1997, p. 241; Bagnall, 2001, p. 232.

<sup>3903</sup> Valbelle, 1999a, p. 72-73. See s.v. Tell Zemurt.

<sup>3904</sup> Sneh, 1973, p. 60 (cf. the commentary p. 61) and 1975, p. 543. See s.v. Tell el-Mousallem.

<sup>3905</sup> Clédat, 1905c, p. 603; Valbelle, 1999a, p. 72.

<sup>3906</sup> Clédat, 1913a, p. 81, n. 1; cf. Daressy, 1930, p. 111-112, n. 1 (who places this Tell el-Fadda some 10 km east of the Suez Canal, near Qal'at el-Tina, but who on p. 111 and on his map definitely refers to Tell el-Fadda west, some 3 km east of the Suez Canal).

<sup>3907</sup> Fontaine, 1948, p. 64.

## 10. Pelousion and the Pelousiac plain

According to Clédat, who visited the site in 1904, Tell Zemurt covered a surface of some 120 m north - south and some 900 m east - west. He found architectural elements in limestone, sandstone blocs, pink granite and a capital in diodorite<sup>3908</sup>. No date has been suggested, but it seems to be a Roman or Byzantine site.

### Identifications

Valbelle with reservation suggests an identification of Tell Zemurt with Tell el-Luli<sup>3909</sup>.

### TELL OF THE SKULL (?)

About 4 km north of Tell el-Fadda (west) Dothan mentions the 'Tell of the skull' (?)<sup>3910</sup>. This place probably corresponds with the nameless site shown on other maps on the eastern shore of a secondary arm of the Pelousiac branch, which flows out in the main branch south of Tell el-Fadda (west)<sup>3911</sup>.

### TELL EL-FADDA (WEST)

#### Topographical situation

Tell el-Fadda, 'Hill of the silver'<sup>3912</sup>, lies some 2-3 km east of the present-day Suez Canal and some 19 km west of Tell el-Farama<sup>3913</sup>. The site, which has a diameter of some 150 m, is situated on the eastern shore of a secondary, northern arm

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<sup>3908</sup> Valbelle, 1999a, p. 72.

<sup>3909</sup> Valbelle, 1999a, p. 72. See s.v. Tell el-Luli.

<sup>3910</sup> Dothan, 1971, p. 34 (Hebrew) [tl "hǵolǵolt" - 'Tell of the skull' (?)] and the map p. 33 [tl hǵlǵlot - 'Tell of the skulls' (?)].

<sup>3911</sup> Cf. Sneh, 1973, p. 60 (see also the commentary p. 61) and 1975, p. 543.

<sup>3912</sup> Cf. Daressy, 1930, p. 111, n. 1 ('la butte de l'argent').

<sup>3913</sup> Chartier-Raymond, 1993, p. 55 gives the coordinates as 31° 01,805' north latitude and 32° 25,203' eastern longitude. The place is probably identical with the 'ruins' indicated on Paoletti, 1903, map.

## 10. Pelousion and the Pelousiac plain

of the Pelousiac branch<sup>3914</sup>. The town perhaps lay on a road between Pelousion and Herakleous Polis Parva<sup>3915</sup>.

### Archaeological finds

Tell el-Fadda (west) was surveyed in 1992 by Maryvonne Chartier-Raymond and Claude Traunecker<sup>3916</sup>. The site, which they date to the Byzantine period, seems to be very rich: a lot of pottery, marble plates, glass, limestone and marble fragments, millstones, coins and constructions in red brick are visible on the surface.

Later in 1992 the place was excavated, yielding several houses, square buildings in red bricks and three large cisterns. Some architectural elements indicate the presence of a church. The pottery indicates that the place was inhabited from the 5th till the early 8th century<sup>3917</sup>. A lot of bronze coins can be dated to the 6th-7th centuries AD and the town apparently mainly flourished in the 6th century AD. Traces of fire are perhaps related with the Persian invasion of 618-628 AD<sup>3918</sup>. Oren refers to a fortress of the 13th-15th century AD<sup>3919</sup>, but no such traces have been recorded during the Egyptian excavations.

### Homonyms

Tell el-Fadda (east) is a site in the immediate neighbourhood of Tell el-Farama<sup>3920</sup>.

The name Tell el-Fadda occurs on a map some 2 km east of Qal'at el-Tina, and Clédat supposes that actually Tell Zemurt is referred to<sup>3921</sup>. The name Tell el-Fadda, 'Hill of the silver', can indeed easily be created for every archaeological site where

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<sup>3914</sup> Cf. Sneh, 1973, p. 61 and the map p. 60. Daressy, 1930, p. 111-112 (cf. 1930, pl. and 1931, pl.) incorrectly locates the site along the Canal of el-Tina, which he considers one of the parallel arms of the Tanitic branch. According to Fontaine, 1948, p. 64 and map 1 Tell el-Fadda more correctly lies along a northern arm of the Pelousiac branch. The course of the Pelousiac arms near Tell el-Fadda, however, has for unknown reasons been ignored on the map of Marcolongo, 1992, p. 26-27, although it has tentatively been recognized as such by Chartier-Raymond, 1993, p. 65.

<sup>3915</sup> Haikal, 1995, p. 187. For this road from Pelousion to Alexandria, cf. *Itinerarium provinciarum Antonini Augusti*, 152, 4 - 154, 5 (Cuntz, 1929, p. 21).

<sup>3916</sup> Chartier-Raymond, 1993, p. 55-65 with p. 57, fig. 7, 3-4.

<sup>3917</sup> Vogt, 1997, p. 1-22, with pl. 1-3; Ballet, 1997e, p. 145-149.

<sup>3918</sup> BIA, 1991, IV, p. 52; Kamal, 1993, p. 22; Valbelle, 1993b, p. 20; Haikal, 1995, p. 187.

<sup>3919</sup> Oren, 1993a, p. 1396.

<sup>3920</sup> For Tell el-Fadda (east), cf. - e.g. - Clédat, 1905c, p. 603; 1910a, map; 1922, p. 198.

<sup>3921</sup> Clédat, 1913a, p. 81, n. 1; cf. Daressy, 1930, p. 111-112, n. 1.

locals found some silver coins, but the possibility cannot be ruled out that in fact incorrectly one of the two known sites in the northwestern Sinai with the name Tell el-Fadda is referred to.

## **TELL EL-GHARZA**

### **Topographical situation**

Tell el-Gharza lies some 2,5 km northwest of Habwa I, possibly at a secondary arm of the Pelousiac branch. The tell has a surface of 200 x 500 m<sup>3922</sup>.

Some 2,5 km north of Tell el-Gharza lie also three small sandy tells, covered with reed and tamarisks. No archaeological material was noticed and perhaps the tells were related with the former course of the Pelousiac branch. Two other tells between Tell el-Gharza and Tell el-Mufariq could not be reached during the survey<sup>3923</sup>.

### **Archaeological finds**

During a survey in 1992 Chartier-Raymond and Claude Traunecker noticed a Graeco-Roman habitat at the site of Tell el-Gharza. At the surface a few red bricks were visible, pottery (including fragments of great jars), glass, a lot of millstones, ashes, quartzite biconical plates, a limestone mortar, pieces of granite and quartz, and petrified wood<sup>3924</sup>.

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<sup>3922</sup> Chartier-Raymond, 1993, p. 55 and the map p. 49; the coordinates given are 30° 57,835' north latitude and 32° 21,310' eastern longitude. Tell el-Gharza is perhaps identical with the 'Tell of the coins' [tl 'hmtb'ot'] of Dothan, 1971, p. 34 and the map p. 33.

<sup>3923</sup> Chartier-Raymond, 1993, p. 56-58 and the maps p. 49.52. Cf. also the nameless site(s) on the maps of Sneh, 1973, p. 60 and 1975, p. 543.

<sup>3924</sup> Chartier-Raymond, 1993, p. 55.