Journal of Ancient Egyptian Interconnections

Incident at Shellal: A Reappraisal of the History of Philae in the 4th Century CE

Tsubasa Sakamoto
Kyoto University

Abstract
In 1907, eleven necropolises ranging from the prehistoric era to modern times were excavated by George Reisner in the first cataract region. Among the most important of these was Cemetery 3 at el-Hesa, which was used as a burial ground for the priests who carried the statue of Isis from Philae to Biga to offer milk libations to Osiris. However, despite their importance, archaeological materials related to the fate of this priestly community have been insufficiently explored within the context of the history of Philae. Based on numismatic evidence found around the island, at el-Hesa and Shellal in particular, the present paper demonstrates the challenging context faced by the priests of Isis at Philae in the middle of the 4th century CE.

Introduction

In 1907, eleven necropolises ranging from the prehistoric era to modern times were excavated by George Reisner in the first csataract region. One of the most important of these was Cemetery 3 on the island of el-Hesa (Fig. 1).[1] Based on inscribed materials discovered at this site, Hermann Junker demonstrated that the cemetery was used as a burial ground for the priests of Isis who carried the statue of Isis from the Gate of Hadrian at Philae to the island of Biga every ten days to offer milk libations to her consort, Osiris.[2] John Ray later dedicated an in-depth study to one of the excavated stelae, establishing a late Ptolemaic dating for the cemetery.[3]

What has remained unclear, however, is the fate of the community in charge of the burial of Osiris at Abaton.[4] Although this ritual appears to have survived at least until the year 90 of Diocletian (i.e., 373 CE),[5] the situation was manifestly different from that of previous centuries in several respects. First, perhaps for the first time in its history, the divine barque of Isis was left in the hands of barbarians for two years; that is, it remained in territory ruled by the Blemmyes and the Noubades and therefore had no access to Abaton.[6] Second, there was almost a hundred-year hiatus before this toponym reappeared at Philae among a series of four Demotic inscriptions written within the same year.[7] Clearly, the political circumstances of the island underwent significant changes during this period.

Third, and perhaps most importantly, the four aforementioned Demotic inscriptions are situated on the wall below the staircase leading to the roof of the Isis temple. In other words, these inscriptions are not near the ceremonial passage leading to Abaton and therefore appear to reflect a different religious context.[8] The last mention of Abaton in this regard occurred on 27 December 260 CE, the day upon

Figure 1: Topographical map of the area around Philae (after Junker 1913, Abb. 13).

which the Meroitic embassy of Abratoye and Tami paid a second visit to Philae and engraved Greek *proskynemata* on the exterior west wall of the Gate of Hadrian.[9] Given their location, from which the priests of Isis went by water to Abaton, it seems likely that the same ritual was organized on behalf of the contemporary Meroitic ruler;[10] this may have continued even later, at the end of the 3rd century CE when King Yesbokheamani left graffiti on the western end of the north and south walls of the same passage.[11] Still, our understanding of the later history of Philae is greatly hindered by the dearth of inscriptions from the 4th century CE.

4th Century CE Coins Discovered at el-Hesa and Shellal

Notwithstanding this limitation, certain pieces of evidence have been found but never been considered together. Particularly important are four bronze coins that were discovered in Cemetery 3 close to two plundered rock-cut tombs.[12] While one of these tombs contained no inscribed objects, the other had been filled with an offering table and fragments of at least two stelae.[13] As the other fragments were scattered across the cemetery, it remains uncertain whether they originally belonged to the owner of the tomb. A similar observation holds true for the coins, which were neither found in an archaeological context nor dated in Reisner's excavation report. However, these coins were later examined by Ugo Monneret de Villard, who identified the following principal elements (Table 1).[14]

Disregarding the last coin, the exact date of which remains unknown, the other examples fall within the period between 314 and 343 CE. This finding indicates that Cemetery 3 had been occupied at least in the first half of the 4th century CE. This numismatic evidence has thus far received little attention,[15] but recent scholarship has supplied arguments in its favor. Vincent Francigny demonstrated that the Christian necropolis stretching to the north of Cemetery 3 contained a coin of Theodosius I (347–395 CE); on this basis, he concluded that the population buried at el-Hesa survived "the transition in which paganism was on the decline and Christianity on the rise, between the fourth and early seventh centuriess AD."[16] One implication of this conclusion is that the island witnessed an abrupt change in the course of the 4th century CE, during which the traditional pagan cemetery (Cemetery 3) was abandoned and a new burial ground (Cemetery 2) was opened slightly to the north to receive burials from Christian communities.[17] In other words, the long-established necropolis for the priests of Isis had lost its function.

Another piece of evidence that should not be overlooked or underestimated consists of another four coins that Reisner discovered on the sandy plain near the railway station at Shellal, a site on the eastern bank of the Nile, opposite Philae.[18] The first two of these coins were unearthed in the surface debris, while the third coin came from the western end of the same plain, where traces of two Roman camps had been preserved.[19] The smaller camp, perhaps dating prior to the reign of Diocletian,[20] measured approximately 100 square meters and had a gateway in the center of each of its four sides. The same was true for the larger camp, but it also consisted of what appeared to be the remains of a tower at each corner; the third coin was found in the eastern trench of this camp.

The fourth coin was also discovered in the larger camp but, in an entirely different context; it had been deposited in one of two pits, which together contained more than one hundred adult males in total (Fig. 2).[21] Most importantly, a length of cord had been wrapped around the neck of each body, and a number of them had sustained injuries caused by blows from weapons. All of these factors seem to be evidence of torture or execution according to Reisner's interpretation. While the aforementioned four coins were yet again undated in his excavation report, the two coins from the larger camp became the subject of expert scrutiny and a 1998 publication of Engentio Fantusati. A footnote of this study reads:[22]

Table 1: Coins discovered in Cemetery 3 at el-Hesa.

No.	Legend	Emperor	Date
1	*Obv:* CONSTANTINVS IVN NOB C... *Rev:* GLORIA EXERCITVS	Constantine I	314–317 CE
2	*Obv:* DN CONSTANTINVS PF AVG *Rev:* GLORIA EXERCITVS	Constantine II	337–340 CE
3	*Obv:* (DN CONST)ANTIVS PF A(VG) *Rev:* VOT XX MVLT XXX	?	337–343 CE
4	*Obv:* VRBS ROMA *Rev:*	?	?

Figure 2: Executioner's trench at Shellal (after Reisner 1910, II pl. 9.b).

These are two identical pieces produced by the mint in Constantinople and attributable to the reign of Constantisus II (*Costanzo*). On one side, the crowned head of the emperor appears accompanied by the legend: DN COSTANTIVS PF AVG. On the reverse side, there is a soldier in the act of piercing an enemy with a spear and a legend that reads: FEL TEMP REPARATIO. They were minted during the period between 348 and 351.

This passage reveals that the two coins discovered in the larger camp were identical and bore the same legend, which is attributable to the reign of Constantius II. Still more striking is their date of issue,[23] which is broadly contemporary to but surely later than those of the coins found in Cemetery 3. It therefore appears likely that the massacre at Shellal occurred in the middle of the 4th century CE,[24] more precisely between 348 and 351 CE, perhaps shortly after the close (?) of the pagan necropolis of el-Hesa. Equally apparent is the fact that an unpleasant incident occurred between the Roman soldiers and the group of one hundred captured male individuals. It remains then to be determined where this group originated and what this massacre meant in terms of the history of Philae.

Incident at Shellal: A Reappraisal

As Reisner would have observed,[25] no ornaments or pottery of any kind were found with the executed bodies. Any clues to the answer to these questions therefore lie with the skeletons themselves. Great caution must be taken in interpreting such data, rendered all the more problematic because the osteological analyses were carried out more than one hundred years ago. It is nevertheless noteworthy that Elliot Smith and Wood Jones, physical anthropologists in charge of the skeletal materials, attempted to identify these individuals with the Blemmyes,[26] inhabitants of the Eastern Desert who are known to have settled in the region south of the first cataract over the 4th and 5th centuries CE.[27] Such a scenario is in no way contradicted by archaeological evidence. Hermann Junker and Robert Updegraff respectively observed that *E-group* graves dispersed over the desert edge at Shellal as Cemetery 7 possess a number of features similar to those of the necropolis of Kalabsha—the capital of the Blemmyes—and, on this basis, posited that these graves served as their burial ground.[28] The dating of these graves to the first half of the 4th century CE may also be inferred from a Constantine coin unearthed on the surface of the same cemetery,[29] rendered still more probable by the fact that all the datable coins found by Reisner fell within this time range.[30]

In this regard, three 4th-century CE sources may prove especially significant. The first is *Vita Constantini*, a eulogy written shortly after the death of Emperor Constantine I, which reveals that the Blemmyes sent envoys to Constantinople on the occasion of the emperor's thirty-year anniversary in 336 CE to cement a friendship alliance.[31] A similar statement is chronicled in the second source, a Latin petition by Flavius Abbinaeus, who guided Blemmyan refugees to Constantinople in 337/338 CE.[32] After an audience with Emperor Constantius II, Abbinaeus brought these desert dwellers back to their country and lived with them for three years. Here again, the story is told in the context of a rather peaceful relationship between the Blemmyes and their northern neighbor. However, the situation drastically changed when Pachomius (*c.* 292–346 CE), the founder of Christian cenobitic monasticism, sent a monk to a village upstream situated close to Blemmyan territory. When this monk approached the desert, the Blemmyes captured him and forced him to pour libations for their gods.[33]

Although these texts do not mention Shellal by name, they at least appear to indicate that the relationship between the Blemmyes and their northern neighbor had seriously deteriorated during the lifetime of Pachomius. This chronological framework is of particular importance because it convincingly places the incident at Shellal after Pachomius' death and therefore within the period during which the Blemmyes engaged in continuous raids against their northern neighbor.[34] Taking all the above into consideration, the incident in question appears to have been a battle between Roman soldiers and a group of one hundred male individuals of the Blemmyes who settled around Shellal in the middle of the 4th century CE.[35]

When considered within the context of the late 4th century CE and beyond, the ethnic picture outlined above holds significant implications for the history of Philae. Particularly illuminating is the last hieroglyphic inscription engraved on the north wall of the Gate of Hadrian.[36] Dated to 24 August 394 CE, this text is all the more remarkable because it mentions Mandulis—a deity who was especially worshipped by the Blemmyes[37]—and equates him with the Lord of Abaton. The accompanying Demotic graffito also states that the text was engraved on the birthday of Osiris, his *ʿyq* in the year 110 (of Diocletian). This term may variously be translated to *dedication festival*,[38] *festival of entry*,[39] or *q-procession*.[40] A consensus has nevertheless been formed that during this festival, which in the 3rd century CE appears to have been organized on behalf of the Meroitic kings, the statue of Isis was transported by boat from Philae to Abaton to take

part in a ritual dedicated to Osiris.[41] The last hieroglyphic inscription could therefore be best understood as a reflection of a diplomatic context in which the Meroitic Kingdom no longer existed and the Blemmyes had taken over a considerable part of the Dodekaschoinos.[42]

If correct, this interpretation would reflect an increased likelihood that the hieroglyphic text in question was incised on behalf of a Blemmyan (not an Egyptian) priest who, quite naturally, had venerated the deity of his own country during the festival. Although we are unable to present a detailed picture of this figure, which resides within the most prominent sanctuary of late antique Egypt, it can be inferred from the preceding discussion that local communities of the Blemmyes had been established along the desert edge at Shellal in the middle of the 4th century CE. Contemporary sources have shown that the relationship between the Blemmyes and Roman Egypt had already deteriorated by this point, suggesting a possible cause for the aforementioned incident and subsequent capture of the Blemmyan warriors; the desert dwellers, however, never ceased raiding.

Viewed from this perspective, the incident at Shellal appears to mark a critical moment in the articulation of Blemmyan hostility toward the the Egyptian community at Philae. Leaving the statue of Isis in foreigners' hands would have obviously represented a painful decision for the Egyptian priests, who apparently had already abandoned the long-established burial ground at el-Hesa. This would be all the more difficult for them considering the period of the loan known to us. Whether or not this arrangement was willingly chosen, accepting it—and thus ensuring Blemmyan membership in the religious community at Philae[43]—could have been more prudent than risking another conflict that might have dealt a premature final blow to the traditions of ancient Egypt, which were otherwise being slowly abandoned.

Conclusions

Before closing, brief consideration must be made of the resting place of the priests of Isis at Philae. Although little is known concerning why the traditional necropolis at el-Hesa was abandoned, it is beyond doubt that cultic activities at Philae continued at least until the middle of 5th century CE, when the last dated Demotic and Greek inscriptions referring to such activities were engraved on the walls of the temple of Isis.[44] What remains unknown, however, is the burial place of these later generations of priests, but there seems to be no other trace of such a necropolis, either on Philae or at el-Hesa.[45] Therefore, Cemetery 3 might have survived well beyond the middle of the 4th century CE, notwithstanding the absence of directly associated archaeological evidence.

Alternatively, as Reisner suggested,[46] it is possible that the later generations of priests could be buried in Cemetery 9, located directly opposite and to the north of Philae. Although the excavation here was restricted to a series of nine rock-cut tombs that remained above the groundwater level, all but one of these contained mummified bodies wrapped in cloth and placed in stone or pottery coffins, leading Reisner to conclude that they were "of the same type in every way as the tombs in Cemetery 3."[47] Unfortunately, Reisner only vaguely dated Cemetery 9 to the Ptolemaic-Roman Period, and currently available evidence does not allow for much confidence on the subject. It is to be expected that future research will provide further material for discussion and more reliable dating of this cemetery,[48] thus allowing for a better understanding of the later history of Philae.

Reference List

Ashby, Solange. 2016. *Calling Out to Isis: The Enduring Nubian Presence at Philae*. PhD dissertation. University of Chicago.

Bakry, Hassan S. K. 1968. "A Ptolemaic Stela from Lower Nubia." *Annales du service des antiquités de l'Égypte* 60: 27–35.

Bernand, Étienne. 1969. *Les inscriptions grecques et latins de Philae* II*: Haut et Bas Empire*. Paris: Centre national de la recherche scientifique.

Cabon, Olivier, Vincent Francigny, Bernand François, Marc Maillot, Mohamed M. Ibrahim, Odile Nicoloso, Claude Rilly, and Olivier Rolin. 2017. *Histoire et civilisations du Soudan: de la préhistoire à nos jours*. Paris: éditions Soleb.

Colin, Frédéric. 2003. "Le parfumeur (*p*^{3} *ʿnt*)." *Bulletin de l'Institut français d'archéologie orientale* 103: 73–109.

Cruz-Uribe, Eugene. 2016. *The Demotic Graffiti from the Temple of Isis on Philae Island*. Atlanta: Lockwood Press.

Cruz-Uribe, Eugene. 2018. "The Last Demotic Inscription." In Cary J. Martin, Francisca A. J. Hoogendijk, and Koenraad Donker van Heel

(eds.), *Hieratic, Demotic and Greek Studies and Text Editions: Of Making Many Books There Is No End: Festschrift in Honour of Sven P. Vleeming*, 6–8. Leiden: Brill.

Desanges, Jehan. 1972. "Les raids des Blemmyes sous le règne de Valens, en 373–374." *Meroitic Newsletter* 10: 32–34.

Desroches-Noblecourt, Christiane. 1985. "Les zélateurs de Mandoulis et les maîtres de Ballana et de Qustul." In Paule Posener-Kriéger (ed.), *Mélanges Gamal Eddin Mokhtar* I, 199–218. Cairo: Institut français d'archéologie orientale.

Devauchelle, Didier. 1994. "24 août 394 – 24 août 1994: 1600 ans." *Bulletin de la société française d'égyptologie* 131, 16–18.

Dijkstra, Jitse H. F. 2008. *Philae and the End of Ancient Egyptian Religion: A Regional Study of Religious Transformation (298–642 CE)*. Leuven: Peeters.

Dijkstra, Jitse H. F. 2012. "Blemmyes, Noubades and the Eastern Desert in Late Antiquity: Reassessing the Written Sources." In Hans Barnard and Kim Duistermaat (eds.), *The History of the Peoples of the Eastern Desert*, 238–247. Los Angeles: Cotsen Institute of Archaeology Press.

Dijkstra, Jitse H. F. and Jacques van der Vliet. 2020. *The Coptic Life of Aaron: Critical Edition, Translation and Commentary*. Leiden: Brill.

Eide, Tormud, Tomas Hägg, Richard Pierce, and László Török. 1998. *Fontes Historiae Nubiorum: Textual Sources for the History of the Middle Nile Region Between the Eighth Century BC and the Sixth Century AD* III. *From the First to the Sixth Century AD*. Bergen: University of Bergen.

Elliot Smith, Grafton and Frederic Wood Jones. 1910. *Report on the Human Remains*. Cairo: National Printing Department.

Fantusati, Eugenio. 1993. "I Blemmi in Bassa Nubia: La fine del paganesimo e i primordi dell' evangelizzazione." *Studi e materiali di storia delle religioni* n.s. 17.2: 209–224.

Fantusati, Eugenio. 1998. "Gli accampamenti romani di Shellal." In Nicola Bonacasa, Maria C. Naro, Elisa C. Portale, and Amedeo Tullio (eds.), *L'Egitto in Italia dall'Antichità al Medioevo: Atti del III Congresso Internazionale Italo-Egiziano, Roma, CNR-Pompei, 13–19 Novembre 1995*, 247–253. Rome: Consiglio nazionale delle ricerche.

Francigny, Vincent. 2014. "At the Border between Egypt and Nubia: Skeletal Material from el-Hesa Cemetery 2." *Journal of Ancient Egyptian Interconnections* 6.1: 5–10.

Griffith, Francis Ll. 1929. "Meroitic Studies VI." *Journal of Egyptian Archaeology* 15: 69–74.

Griffith, Francis Ll. 1937. *Catalogue of the Demotic Graffiti of the Dodecaschoenus*. London: Oxford University Press.

Junker, Hermann. 1913. *Das Götterdekret über das Abaton*. Vienna: Alfred Hölder.

Junker, Hermann. 1925. *Bericht über die Grabungen der Akademie der Wissenschaften in Wien auf den Friedhöfen von Ermenne (Nubien) im Winter 1911–1912*. Vienna: Holder-Pichler-Tempsky.

Kákosy, László. 1968. "Zu einer Etymologie von Philä: Die 'Insel der Zeit.'" *Acta Antiqua Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae* 16: 39–48.

Kockelmann, Holger. 2010–2011. "L'Abaton: Tombe et lieu de culte d'Osiris sur la première cataracte." *Égypte: Afrique et Oriente* 60: 31–44.

Kockelmann, Holger. 2013. "Zur Kultpraxis auf Philae: Aussagen der Tempeldekoration und dokumentarischer Befund im Vergleich." In Horst Beinlich (ed.), *9. Ägyptologische Tempeltagung: Kultabbildung und Kultrealität. Hamburg, 27. September–1. Oktober 2011*, 97–127. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz.

Locher, Josef. 1999. *Topographie und Geschichte der Region am ersten Nilkatarakt in griechisch-römischer Zeit*. Stuttgart: B. G. Teubner.

Moje, Jan. 2014. "Materiale Präsenz sakraler vs. profaner Schriften in bilinguer Epigraphik des ptolemäisch-römischen Ägypten." In Joachim F. Quack and Daniela Luft (eds.), *Erscheinungsformen und Handhabungen Heiliger Schriften*, 137–175. Berlin: De Gruyter.

Monneret de Villard, Ugo. 1940. "Le necropoli di Ballaña e di Qōsṭul." *Orientalia* 9: 61–75.

Monneret de Villard, Ugo. 1941. *La Nubia romana*. Rome: Istituto per l'Oriente.

Nagel, Svenja. 2019. *Isis im Römischen Reich*. Wiesbaden: Harrasowitz.

Pope, Jeremy. 2008–2009. "The Demotic Proskynema of a Meroïte Envoy to Roman Egypt (Philae 416)." *Enchoria* 31: 68–103.

Pope, Jeremy. 2014. "Meroitic Diplomacy and the Festival of Entry." In Julie R. Anderson and Derek A. Welsby (eds.), *The Fourth Cataract and Beyond: Proceedings of the 12th International Conference for Nubian Studies*, 577–582. Leuven: Peeters.

Ray, John. D. 1987. "A Pious Soldier: Stele Aswan 1057." *Journal of Egyptian Archaeology* 73: 169–180.

Ray, John. D. 1989. "Further Notes on Stele Aswan 1057." *Journal of Egyptian Archaeology* 75: 243–244.

Reisner, George A. 1910. *The Archæological Survey of Nubia: Report for 1907–1908*. Cairo: National Printing Department.

Sakamoto, Tsubasa. 2019. "Les Blemmyes en l'an 90 de l'ère de Dioclétien." *Zeitschrift für Ägyptische Sprache und Altertumskunde* 146: 54–62.

Smith, Mark. 2017. *Following Osiris: Perspectives on the Osirian Afterlife from Four Millennia*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Török, László. 1974. "An Archaeological Note on the Connections between the Meroitic and Ballana Cultures." *Studia Aegyptiaca* 1: 361–378.

Török, László. 2009. *Between Two Worlds: The Frontier Region between Ancient Nubia and Egypt 3700 BC–500 AD*. Leiden: Brill.

Tsakos, Alexandros. 2005. "Ancient Coins in the National Museum of Khartoum." *Nomismatika Khronika* 24: 44–50.

Updegraff, Robert T. 1978. *The Study of the Blemmyes*. PhD dissertation. Brandeis University.

Welsby, Derek A. 1998. "Roman Military Installations along the Nile South of the First Cataract." *Archéologie du Nil moyen* 8: 157–182.

Williams, Bruce B. 1991. *Noubadian X-Group Remains from Royal Complexes in Cemeteries Q and 219 and from Private Cemeteries Q, R, V, W, B, J, and M at Qustul and Ballana*. Chicago: Oriental Institute.

Zach, Michael. 1992. "Nero und Meroe: Die alexandrinische Münzprägung als historische Quelle." *Beiträge zu Sudanforschung* 5: 165–178.

Notes

1 Reisner 1910, I 74–93.

2 Junker 1913, 48–49; see recently Kockelmann 2013, 102–105; Nagel 2019, 111–114.

3 Ray 1987, 177–180; Ray 1989, 244; see also Bakry 1968, 27–35.

4 Josef Locher has inferred that Abaton is situated in the now-submerged valley between el-Hesa and Biga, but Holger Kockelmann's more recent study has assigned it to the eastern valley on the latter island. Both possibilities must remain open, given the absence of available archaeological evidence; see Locher 1999, 163, 172; Kockelmann 2010–2011, 40.

5 Griffith 1937, 105.

6 Eide et al. 1998, 1111; Dijkstra 2008, 151.

7 Griffith 1937, 105.

8 Colin 2003, 77–81; Smith 2017, 454.

9 Bernand 1969, 192–201; Eide et al. 1998, 1020–1024; Cabon et al. 2017, 311.

10 Pope 2008–2009, 76–77; Pope 2014, 581.

11 Eide et al. 1998, 1049–1050.

12 Reisner 1910, II pl. 72.g.2–5.

13 Reisner 1910, II pl. 15.d, g.

14 Monneret de Villard 1941, 15–16.

15 For an exception, see Zach 1992, 171–172.

16 Francigny 2014, 8.

17 For Christian communities at el-Hesa, cf. also Dijkstra and van der Vliet 2020, 226.

18 Reisner 1910, II pl. 72.h.1–4.

19 Reisner 1910, I 72–73; Welsby 1998, 160–161.

20 Locher 1999, 141 note 106; Dijkstra 2008, 28 note 130.

21 Reisner 1910, I 73.

22 Present author's translation from the Italian original; see Fantusati 1998, 249 note 9.

23 A somewhat later dating, 351–361 CE, has been proposed by Welsby 1998, 162.

24 See also Williams 1991, 18 note 56.

25 Reisner 1910, I 73.

26 Elliot Smith and Wood Jones 1910, 100.

27 Dijkstra 2008, 138–152; Dijkstra 2012, 241–243.

28 Junker 1925, 83; Updegraff 1978, 200; see also Monneret de Villard 1940, 67.

29 Reisner 1910, II pl. 72.d, top left (although referred erroneously to 72.h in the original text); Zach 1992, 172.

30 In 1944 at Shellal, John Arkell discovered two coins (SNM 5682–5683) dated to the reigns of Diocletian (288–289 CE) and Valentinian I (364–367 CE), respectively. However, neither the archaeological context of these coins nor the relationship between them have been sufficiently documented. I am grateful to Alexandros Tsakos, Marc Maillot, and Michal Zach for the knowledge of these coins; see in this regard Tsakos 2005, 45.

31 Eide et al. 1998, 1081.

[32] Eide et al. 1998, 1086.

[33] Eide et al. 1998, 1091.

[34] Desanges 1972, 34; Török 2009, 524; Dijkstra 2012, 242.

[35] See also Fantusati 1993, 215–216; Fantusati 1998, 249–250.

[36] Griffith 1937, 126–127; Devauchelle 1994, 16–18; see recently Moje 2014, 164–166.

[37] Griffith 1929, 72–74; Desroches-Noblecourt 1985, 217–218.

[38] Griffith 1937, 127; Cruz-Uribe 2016, 37.

[39] Eide et al. 1998, 1122.

[40] Ashby 2016, 127.

[41] Pope 2014, 581; Ashby 2016, 129.

[42] For the end of Meroe, which is conventionally assigned to the mid-4th century CE, see Török 1974, 369–370.

[43] See recently Sakamoto 2019, 59.

[44] Griffith 1937, 103; Bernand 1969, 248–251; see also Cruz-Uribe 2018, 6.

[45] Although another necropolis (Cemetery 4) is situated on the southern extremity of the island of el-Hesa, it has been attributed to the Muslim cemetery.

[46] Reisner 1910, I 77.

[47] Reisner 1910, I 74.

[48] For such an attempt, see Kákosy 1968, 42.