

Raumes, der Wand und des Registers den Umgang noch praktischer gestaltet.

Die vorliegende Publikation des Tempels von Schanhur liefert wertvolle Informationen über den Kultbetrieb dieses Heiligtums, das höchste Aufmerksamkeit verdient. Bereits die bisher präsentierten Einblicke sind in mehrfacher Hinsicht bedeutsam, vor allem bezüglich des Verständnisses der in Schanhur verwirklichten theologischen Konzepte. Sie sind ebenso spannend wie die Baugeschichte des Tempels, innerhalb derer der Grundriß beständig modifiziert und den Erfordernissen angepaßt wurde.<sup>18</sup> All dies spiegelt die lebendige Vielfalt der spätägyptischen Religion wider. Die Publikation verbindet diese unterschiedlichen Aspekte, und man darf mit Spannung das Erscheinen der nächsten Bände erwarten.

Mainz, im August 2006

Dagmar BUDDE

#### KORTE AANKONDIGINGEN

*ÉGYPTE, AFRIQUE et ORIENT*, n° 41, avril 2006 (Les Égyptiens et la Mer Rouge). Khéops, Paris, 2006 (27 cm, 72). ISSN 1276-9223. € 11,-.

Cinq articles forment le noyau du n° 41 de cette revue qui occupe un place fort honorable au sein de l'égyptologie française. Le thème qui les unit est la Mer Rouge et le rôle que celle-ci a joué dans la navigation égyptienne. On y lira des exposés particulièrement intéressants, comme, par exemple, celui que R. Fattovich et Kathryn Bard consacrent "à la recherche de Pount" en y joignant une bibliographie très complète du sujet. Le site d'Ayn Soukhna (Pierre Tallet e.a.), les ostraca hiératiques du Ouadi Gaouasis (El-Sayed Mahfouz), les chanceliers du dieu (Céline Merrer) et les expéditions du début de la 12<sup>e</sup> dynastie (D. Farout) achèvent de donner au recueil une valeur documentaire de premier ordre. Les dernières pages renferment quelques comptes rendus de livres récemment publiés par des Français.

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*ÉGYPTE, AFRIQUE et ORIENT*, n° 42, juin 2006 (Le Delta égyptien et la XXX<sup>e</sup> dynastie). Khéops, Paris, 2006 (27 cm, 72). ISSN 1276-9229. € 11,-.

C'est un choix d'articles relatifs à l'activité des pharaons de la 30<sup>e</sup> dynastie, en particulier dans le Delta égyptien, que nous offre le n° 42 de cette revue que Thierry-Louis Bergerot du Centre vaclusien d'égyptologie dirige avec autorité. Après une introduction sur le Delta à la Basse Époque (V. Razanajao), N. Spencer fournit des informations sur ce que les fouilles d'Édouard Naville ont apporté pour notre connaissance des temples que les Nectanebo y ont érigés. Les quatre naos de Saft el-Hennah (H. Virenque) et le sanctuaire de Nectanebo II à Boubastis (D. Rosenow) forment l'objet des deux

<sup>18</sup>) Vor diesem Hintergrund wären die Überlegungen von D. Frankfurter zu betrachten, nach denen kleinere Heiligtümer innovativer als die großen Tempel sein konnten, da sie sich schneller den Bedürfnissen der Gläubigen, von deren Unterstützung sie profitierten, anpassen mußten, während sich größere Tempel eher in staatlicher Abhängigkeit befanden (D. Frankfurter, *Religion in Roman Egypt. Assimilation and Resistance*, Princeton 1998, u.a. p. 97f.).

contributions suivantes, auxquelles s'ajoute un exposé de O. Perdu sur les statues du vizir Psamtekseneb originaires de la ville d'Héliopolis ou de ses environs. Pour terminer, S. Aufrère relève une réminiscence du dernier Nectanebo dans l'œuvre d'Eunape de Sardes (4<sup>e</sup> siècle après J.-C.). Avec les Lectures et les Multimedia qui le clôturent, ce volume, illustré avec agrément, ne manquera pas d'être accueilli avec gratitude par les lecteurs avertis auxquels il s'adresse.

#### GRIEKS-ROMEINS EGYPTE

CUVIGNY, H. — Ostraca de Krokodilô. La correspondance militaire et sa circulation. (Fouilles de l'Ifao 51). Institut Français d'Archéologie Orientale du Caire, Cairo, 2005. (32 cm, XII, 283). ISBN 2-7247-0370-7. ISSN 0768-4703.

Anyone with even a passing interest in the Eastern Desert of Egypt, its quarries, its ports, its caravans, and its military presence, will already be familiar with the leading role played in the study of this region and its forts by Hélène Cuvigny, both as leader of an excavation team at several sites and particularly as the editor of ostraca found in these excavations. Her volume of receipts for advances of commodities to members of the imperial *familia* found in the excavations of an international team at Mons Claudianus (*O.Claud.* III, 2000) was a model of what could be gained by bringing together all of the material relevant to a subject from the thousands of texts found in the dumps at that ostraca-rich site.

But it is her own series of excavations subsequent to Mons Claudianus that is now coming to prominence. The multi-author *La route de Myos Hormos* (2 vols., Cairo 2003), of which she was the editor and a principal author, already offered a synthesis of the results from the excavations of the small forts along the roads of the Eastern Desert, leading to the ports of Myos Hormos and Berenike, that her team has carried out over the past dozen years. These volumes provided in passing some appetizers for papyrologists, in the form of a number of particularly interesting or significant sample texts. The volume under review here (labeled volume 2 in 'Praesidia du désert de Bérénice', a subseries within Fouilles de l'IFAO) is the first in a series of systematic publications of the ostraca from the three forts the dumps of which yielded large quantities of such texts (Maximianon and Didymoi being the others besides Krokodilo).

Here, too, Cuvigny has chosen a group of ostraca because they inform us about a single subject, namely the military post, carried by horse, and the mechanisms by which it circulated. It is precisely because this circulation of the post is so fundamental to the entire phenomenon of the presence of thousands of texts on potsherds at these desert posts that she has given this mass of material from Krokodilo precedence in the order of publication. In this way we obtain a snapshot of this system of communication during the period 102-118, evidently the only window in the history of Krokodilo for which the ostraca-bearing dumps have not been washed away by flash floods, the fort being ineptly located in the path of such floods. The fort itself belongs to a system established in the reign of Vespasian; the functioning of the network is described in detail in *La route* II, 295-357.

The publication of the ostraca by subject and type in this fashion is extremely illuminating. If the ostraca came from

habitation levels, of course, one might be torn between this organization and one based on archaeological context. But because they come from the dump, context takes second place to contents, and quite rightly. Cuvigny does, however, give stratigraphic information, both level and 'U(nité) S(tratigraphique)', with great scrupulousness, and she discusses this information where appropriate.

One gain of the investigation is a more secure sense of the size of the garrisons of these little forts. Krokodilo had 3-5 cavalry (most likely 5), 8-10 infantry, and a *curator praesidii*. The evidence for Persou, Simiou, and Maximianon also tends to suggest total garrison sizes of 15-18 military personnel. The seven *praesidia* between Myos Hormos and Coptos would thus have had somewhere between 100 and 120 military personnel. Even Mons Claudianus itself probably had not much more than twice the number of one of the small forts. Certainly these forts would have held more people than these small numbers of soldiers, and each certainly had a number of civilians living there, including women and children, but their number is not known. The cavalrymen at Krokodilo all came from different *turmae* of a unit that Cuvigny identifies as the Ala Vocontiorum. These men tend to have names suggesting origin outside Egypt (Thrace, Cyrenaica), while the infantry have common place names and may have been from Egypt.

The texts are organized into 11 chapters: (1) postal journals from the prefecture (of the Mons Berenices) of Cosconius; (2) correspondence and other texts connected with the *curator Capito*; (3) postal journals from the prefecture of Artorius Priscillus; (4) copies of circulars addressed to curators during that prefecture; (5) other circulars; (6) letters to and from the *curatores*; (7) other official letters; (8) the 'amphora of the barbarians' and related texts; (9) private letters of soldiers concerning military matters; (10) dipinti and lists; and (11) day tags. A total of 151 ostraca appear, with many more to come in further volumes.

Readers will find throughout the volume a high standard of editorial work. The texts are informed by an unsurpassed knowledge of the documents of the Eastern Desert, including of thousands of still-unpublished ostraca, as well as a first-hand expertise in the military documents from Dura-Europos. They are accompanied by full commentaries and translations, as well as excellent photographs by Adam Bülow-Jacobsen. In the commentaries one gets some sense of Cuvigny's intimate knowledge of the life of the desert stations in Roman times; her depth of understanding of the environment allows her to recognize what is ordinary and what is unusual, often bringing to light significant details, such as the way in which some of the shipments of fresh fish — travelling, unlike the post, by night — may have been intended to grace the table of the prefect of Egypt while he was in Coptos on his annual tour (p. 12). The usual papyrological indexes are supplied. But it needs to be emphasized that the volume is not to be read in isolation. Readers will want to have *La route* at hand all the time, because many larger issues that arise from the texts are not discussed in the commentaries in the volume, but rather in the synthetic work, and only the latter has a subject index.

From the standpoint of anyone interested in the use of writing materials, the volume offers a striking group of objects that can be called ostraca only because one cannot find a better single-word designation. These are the amphoras, or very large pieces of amphoras, used not for the usual short texts

that were suited to ostraca but to larger compilations of data, often retrospective records of one sort or another. This phenomenon is mentioned briefly by Cuvigny in *La route* 266-67, where she cites *O.Amst.* 8 (reedited as *SB XX* 14180, with additional fragments; a plate appears in H. Willems and W. Clarysse, *Les empereurs du Nil* [Leuven 2000] 169 fig. 65), a duty roster 40.6 cm in height, and *O.Claud.* II 304 (illustrated on pll. XXXIII-XXXIV of the edition), a 'tableau de service' 41.5 cm in height. Several more examples are yet to be published from the finds at Maximianon. Cuvigny notes that only at Krokodilo do we have instances of the use of such amphoras for copies of official letters or for postal records. I may add that two examples, not yet published, are known to me from Gigthi, in Tunisia; these contain accounts in Latin. (I am indebted to Ali Drine for knowledge of these 'ostraca', which will be published by Zsuzsanna Várhelyi and me in collaboration with Mr. Drine.)

How are we to interpret the use of these ungainly bearers of writing? Cuvigny says only, 'La parcimonie qu'ils [the *curatores*] s'imposaient explique aussi peut-être l'existence des ostraca géants, souvent des amphores entières, qu'on utilisait pour composer le planning des tours de service, pour constituer des recueils de copies de lettres officielles ou pour noter au jour le jour les arrivées et les sorties.' Economy seems to me unlikely to have been the only motive at work here. Ostraca were used above all in situations where the message was not thought to have any lasting importance; they were ephemeral. Something similar is likely to have been true even with the larger records on pottery, accounts of various sorts that might seem to us at first blush indistinguishable from much that appears on papyrus and was obviously thought to deserve longer-term archiving. These texts on amphoras, even if themselves compiled from shorter annotations on ostraca (as seems likely to be the case with *O.Krok.* 1), may have served as drafts, or they may have been material with a built-in expiration date, no longer needed after some point in the near future. One may wonder if they were smashed deliberately before being thrown onto the dumps.<sup>1)</sup>

The prize specimen is undoubtedly *O.Krok.* 87, the 'amphora of the barbarians', 55 cm high and 122 lines even in its present state (an overall view appears on p. 256), plus some related fragments. It is occupied entirely by copies of a dozen official circulars, dated to AD 118. These are concerned with matters of security in the desert and in particular with some barbarian attacks, actual or potential, on forts and convoys. Although much remains uncertain because of the fragmentary character of parts of the texts, we see traces both of the hierarchical and centralized nature of the system for gathering and disseminating information and of its ability to respond to urgent situations with local initiative, short-circuiting (as Cuvigny puts it) the longer lines of communication in order to save time.

The most striking passage is the report from a cavalryman of the Cohors II Ituraeorum to a centurion to the effect that sixty 'barbarians' had attacked the fort of Patkoua (the location of which is unknown) on the 17<sup>th</sup> of Phamenoth, resulting in a battle from the tenth hour of the day to the second

<sup>1)</sup> And not for the last time, alas, in the case of *O.Krok.* 30; cf. p. 65, n. 8: 'L'inspecteur des antiquités m'a malheureusement demandé de démonter le document après la photographie afin que chaque fragment (pourvu d'un numéro d'inventaire individuel) puisse retourner dans sa boîte d'origine.'



hour of the night, and a continued siege of the fort until dawn. There were casualties among the military—at least two soldiers dead, others wounded—as well as among the civilians, and a woman and two children were carried off. The centurion, who cannot have been at any great distance, circulated this report on the 19<sup>th</sup> to the centurions, decurions, *duplicarii*, and *curatores* of the *praesidia* of the Myos Hormos road. Another circular, at the end of Phamenoth, concerns the need for adequate escorts for supply caravans between Coptos and the forts in order to ward off the barbarians. It is clear enough that the Roman military presence in the desert was no mere show; it responded to real threats to security. These threats, of course, were themselves in large part probably the result of the extensive Roman presence in the desert for trade and quarrying.

There is much more of interest in the volume, but the remarks above will, I hope, give some idea of the range of material and its implications. No one concerned with the actual functioning of the Roman army in frontier regions and along lines of communication can afford to miss the vivid picture offered by the ledgers and circulars of how the daily bureaucratic routine of the army intersected with the real threats to Roman control of the desert and its lines of communication. Future volumes of the ostraca from these forts will deepen this picture and give us more of the civilian side of desert life, but for the moment the reader can get a good idea of many aspects of the coming harvest from *La route de Myos Hormos*.

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TACOMA, L.E. — *Fragile Hierarchies. The Urban Elites of Third-Century Roman Egypt*. (Mnemosyne Supplements Volume 271). Brill Academic Publishers, Leiden, 2006 (24,5 cm, XIV, 353). ISBN 90-04-14831-0. ISSN 0169-8958.

In this revised version of his Leiden University doctoral dissertation (2003), Tacoma (afterwards T.) extends the work of historians such as Bagnall, Bowman, and Rathbone to create a multi-faceted study of membership of the town councils (*boulai*) introduced into Roman Egypt by Septimius Severus in 200. The town councils endured throughout the 3<sup>rd</sup> century as a central feature of civic life in the metropoleis before declining and becoming increasingly marginalized in the course of the 4<sup>th</sup> century as members of these urban elites found better outlets for their talents and ambitions, including within the hierarchy of the emerging Christian church.

T. has succeeded in controlling an immense amount of primary evidence and uses an impressive range of techniques in marshalling it. I hesitate to say 'manipulating' it, although much of Part One Hierarchies does rely on the creation of a number of quantitative models of the extent of urbanization, the population size of the metropoleis, income distribution, and the size of the councils. T. is quite upfront about the slippery nature of the figures used and the conclusions generated from them. Nonetheless I sometimes felt that some important variables might have been missed out, as, e.g., on p. 48 the

effect of the Antonine plague on population numbers in the second half of the 2<sup>nd</sup> century. This is also an area where comparable calculations from pharaonic Egypt could have been looked at. For example, B.J. Kemp's estimate that the Estate of the Aten at Amarna (c. 162 sq.km) might have supported a population as large as 45,000 without any external inputs (Ancient Egypt. Anatomy of a Civilization, London, 1991, 269). This question of external inputs itself is a tricky one; to state as T. does (p. 51) that 'The urban population ... was dependent on rural production. The size of the towns depended on the size of the rural production, which depended on the size of the nome' risks ignoring all the evidence of the thriving internal trade in foodstuffs and other commodities within Roman Egypt.

Chapters Three and Four of Part One present an analysis of the wealth of the elite, the membership of the councils and the role played by Alexandrians resident in the *chora*, which is analysed in terms of an over-arching regional elite. T. concludes from the Hermopolite land register, *P.Herm.Landl.*, that perhaps only 2% of the urban population, or 12% of urban households, were landowners. This is a striking figure, but it may be no more than we should expect given that the relationship of most people to the land in Egypt had always been one of rental or lease rather than ownership.

I would like to take issue, however, with T.'s later conclusion (p. 111) that the metropolitan elites had little to do with non-agricultural forms of wealth or business, and that what there was is all 'rather small-scale.' Private letters from Oxyrhynchos often show that while landowning might well be the main form of elite wealth, elite persons were actively engaged in all sorts of other economic activities; cf. *P.Oxy.* XLIX 3507 (early iv) where there are dealings in large quantities of wine, carpets are put out to contract, and contracts for leasing usiac land are apparently undertaken. There is also the example of Septimios Eudaimon, referred to in T.'s Conclusion (pp. 265 ff), who clawed his way back from *cessio bonorum* in 248 to reappear in 260 as part-owner of an industrial scale pottery (*P.Oxy.*L 3596 and 3597). A further minor point: had the gymnasial class really disappeared by the end of the 3<sup>rd</sup> century (p. 126, n.41)? See *P.Oxy.*LXV 4489 (297) in which a woman with the *ius trium liberorum* applies to the systates to register her 13 year old son, who is a 'dodekadrachmos of the gymnasial class.' This woman obviously did not know that the gymnasial class had disappeared, or was about to disappear, when she wrote this application in 297.

Part Two of *Fragile Hierarchies* addresses aspects of the social mobility and continuity of the urban elites. Drawing on the parallel demographic evidence of the census returns (which run only up to the mid 3<sup>rd</sup> century), T. demonstrates inter alia that the elites most probably experienced the same levels of high mortality and high fertility as the local population in general (Part Two Chapter Two). But, although fertility was high, a major problem was that the number of children who would survive was always highly unpredictable. Too few survivors might then lead to extinction of the family line, while too many might result in a break up of family wealth as a consequence of the common pattern of partible inheritance. Testate succession, favouring the eldest son over other children or sons over daughters, offered some limited possibility of control over the transfer of landed wealth as did the practice of isogamous