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**STUDIES IN ANCIENT ART
AND CIVILIZATION**

23

**DE ANTIQUORUM ARTIBUS
ET CIVILISATIONE
STUDIA VARIA**

Pars XXIII

Edidit

Jaroslav Bodzek

**STUDIES
IN ANCIENT ART
AND CIVILIZATION**

23

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Jarosław Bodzek

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STATUE OF PTOLEMY II
PHILADELPHUS (VILLA ALBANI 558):
STUDY OF THE INSCRIPTION AND
PROBLEM OF THE DATING

Abstract: The article presents a newly commented translation of the hieroglyphic inscription on the statue of Ptolemy II Philadelphos from Bubastis, created several years after a countrywide Egyptian cult dedicated to Arsinoe II had been established. A new interpretation of the text provides evidence for Ptolemy II erecting an additional statue in honor of his deceased sister, and adds one more spelling of Arsinoe's name based on the wordplay 'Arsinoe = his sister' to the already known variants. A victorious military journey to the coastal settlements of Asian countries at the beginning of the Second Syrian War (259-257 BCE), accordingly provides an opportunity to reconsider and improve the current reconstruction of the military activities. The historical source under discussion along with the papyri from Zenon's archive and other Egyptian documents dating to the same period not only show quite clearly that Ptolemy himself took part in that campaign, but also enables the correct dating of the end of the war to the spring of 257 BCE.

Keywords: Ptolemaic Egypt; Egyptian names for Arsinoe; the Second Syrian War; dioiketes Apollonios; Bubastis

* Sections 1–5 are written by M. Panov, sections 6–8 by A. Zelinskyi.

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1. Background information

The “Villa Albani” residence designed by the architect C. Marchionni for Cardinal A. Albani was built in Rome between 1747 and 1763; in 1866 it was purchased by Prince A. Torlonia. The villa may be referred to as a museum of antique art; the collection includes a statue of Ptolemy II Philadelphos on display in one of the galleries. The 2.8m-high granite statue was presumably brought from Egypt in the Roman Imperial period; further details of its acquisition by Cardinal Albani are unknown.

J.-F. Champollion was the first to mention the monument, in his letter written on May 5, 1825: ‘J’ai reconnu dans les mêmes jardins une seconde statue de Ptolémée Philadelphie, avec une longue inscription en trois colonnes, que j’ai copiée’ (see Hartleben 1909, 207). That copy of the inscription engraved on the back pillar remains unpublished.

The statue was described in this way by I. Rosellini (1834, II, 121):
 Regnando i primi Tolomei, e specialmente il secondo, che fu Filadelfo, si fecero ancora delle opere d’arte meno lontane dall’antico carattere; e ciò tanto meglio dimostrano quelle figure, che sono di maggior dimensione; massimamente poi qualche statua colossale, come quelle dello stesso Filadelfo e di Arsinoe, che ora veggonsi in Roma al Campidoglio, e nel giardino della Villa Albani... Nelle nominate statue, che son di granito, si veggono lungo il pilastro, che sta dietro al dorso, geroglifici fatti con sufficiente diligenza, e non in rilievo, ma leggermente incavati; lo che si fece poi in progresso più rare volte. Sono pertanto queste statue le più belle opera della scultura, che da quest’ epoca uscissero.

The inventory number 558 (under which the statue is known in the academic literature) was first recorded in the catalogue of Albani’s collection (Morcelli et al., 1869, 83): ‘558. RITRATTO di Tolomeo Filadelfo, grandezza semicolossale, granito morato egiziano... La leggenda geroglifica, ch’ è scolpita in questa insigne statua, è memoria delle di lui gloriose imprese.’ Giving several self-evident attributions (cf. further notes to Sethe, 1904), Fr. W. von Bissing published a small photo of the statue taken *en face* (1914, no. 71a), but with apparent confusion in the presentation of the material: discussion of the Turin statuette of Psammetichus is accompanied by a photo of a three-meter-high statue of Rameses II and the caption reads: ‘Standbild des Amasis. Villa Albani.’

2. History of the study

Previous studies are very few in number. The copy of the inscription was included in K. Sethe's edition (Urk. II, 70), and sixty years later it became clear that the published fragment represented little more than only a half of the hieroglyphic signs preserved on the monument. Sethe did not examine the original, but used a drawing received from C. R. Lepsius: 'nach Berlin. Abdr. 1380'. Some years later the scholar wrote two pages for the Ancient Egyptian Dictionary developed in Berlin (DZA 24.249.560, 23.527.040); the digitalized archive is publicly available now (see *Thesaurus Linguae Aegyptiae*). Hieroglyphic signs follow the copy in Urk. II, and a fragmentary translation is supplied.

The first complete translation of the inscription was published by the Italian Egyptologist S. Curto (1967, 74-80, 82, Pl. XXIV–XXV). The researcher presented a newly made copy of the text with fragments, those missed by K. Sethe; the text layout contains three columns instead of two given in the previous publication. This fifty-year-old research consisting of transliteration, translation and comments has remained the only interpretation of the text until now. Curto later republished his first study with a small number of improvements (1985, 36-42, Pl. VIII). Thus, the translation, copy of the inscription and the photo are only reprints from the earlier article; the introductory note and commentaries are slightly revised, and a newly made text layout turned out to be less helpful.

As stated by Curto (1985, 36, 41, n. h), the statue dates to *c.* 265 BCE (hereafter the historic dates are given according to the Julian calendar). In his comments Curto qualifies the statue as a votive sculpture and gives a broader time frame for its creation: between 270 and 265 BCE. The upper time limit was defined by the date when Arsinoe II died; the lower was based on the dating of the stela Louvre C 123 (Urk. II, 75-80; Thiers, 1999), thus, he associated the two monuments by their functional features: to commemorate Ptolemy's II military victory over Antiochos I. In 1985 Curto took into account only the regnal year 20 (= 266/5 BCE), mentioned on the fragment Louvre C 123, disregarding the date recorded in Codex Ursinianus¹, 1: *rnpt-sp 22 3bd 3 3ht* '(regnal) year 22, the 3rd month of inundation season' corresponding to the end of 264 – beginning of 263 BCE.

¹ The old drawing of the hieroglyphic inscription was published in 1972 with reference to J. Yoyotte's suggestion that it is a fragment of a historical text, another portion of which is in the Louvre (see Rouillet 1972, 63, no. 44).

One photo from Curto's study (1967, Pl. XXIV) was republished in a book by A. Rouillet (1972, 108, no. 177, Pl. CXLIII, Fig. 201), but the reference to the original work was omitted. A weak point of both publications is undoubtedly a lack of a photo of the inscription; the reason being that the statue stands in a niche with its back to the wall (see Pl. 3:1). A major flaw, however, is the presentation of the hieroglyphic text where the dimensions of the ruined text are imprecise, although it is vitally important for restoration.

The city of Bast (Gr. Bubastis) mentioned at the end of the inscription allowed the provenance of the statue to be specified and thereafter the monument was included in the Topographical Bibliography (PM IV, 33; PM VIII, no. 800-900-750). The latter volume has the additional reference 'H. W. Müller Archive 24 [32072]'. Today Müller's archive and the catalogue of his photos (*Das Photoarchiv H. W. Müller der Universitätsbibliothek Heidelberg*) are in the public domain. However, I was unable to confirm this information using different search criteria (number, date, and provenance).

Our request for providing new photos of the inscription sent in 2018 to the owner's executives has remained unanswered. Today modern technologies allow photos to be taken without needing to move the statue. Due to the lack of a photo my commentaries have several remarks on probable mistakes that occurred in Curto's copy.

Consequently, this is a new interpretation of a little-known hieroglyphic inscription: I have been unable to find any modern research on Egyptian history of the 3rd century BCE dealing with this ancient Egyptian monument.

3. Transliteration

- (1) [...] 'nsw-bjt`
 nb t3wj wsr-k3-n-r^c-mrj-jmn
 s3 r^c nb h^cw ptwlmjjs^c nh dt [...] ^(a)
- (2) [...] h^c m nsw wr phjtj
 r srnpj dt n snt=f^(b)
 r shpr[=s (?)] ^(c) m-q3b ntrw
 r (=jw) hr-nb [hr] dw3 nfrw=s
 hmw ^(d) s(w) m k3t n r3^c-ht
 mhr ^(e) r jwntj nfrw
 wr wdjt ^(f) r t3w sttw ^(g) r j3wt nw wdb (?) [...] ^(h)
- (3) [...] n=f[...] sw t3
 jn=tw n=f ht m^c=sn


t3w nb(w) <hr> sjn m nrt=f
wrw=sn m [ksw] n b3w=f
nh̄t m b3qt
s3q s(w) m sj3=f
jr ^cdt̄ m pšnw=f
swd̄3 s(w) m m3wj qm3.n jb=f
n(n) sh̄ / sh̄(t) r-mn dt̄
[mrj] b3stt ^c3t nb(t) b3st

4. Translation

⁽¹⁾ [...] the king of Upper and Lower Egypt,
 lord of the Two lands Userkanre Mery-Amun,
 son of Re, lord of the crowns Ptolemy, may he live forever [...]
⁽²⁾ [...] appeared as a king, great of strength, (who acts in order)
 to make the body of his sister young,
 to immortalize [her (?)] among the gods,
 while everyone is praising her beauty.
 Who is skilled in warcraft,
 who (has shot) arrows and (driven) horses since childhood.
 who is great of the expedition to the countries of Setjet, to the coastal
 (?) places [...]
⁽³⁾ [...] him the land.
 (Men and women) bring (various) goods in their hands for him,
 all countries hurry (to him) because of his awe,
 their rulers [bow down] because of his might.
 A hero in Baqet (i.e. Egypt),
 skilled in his wisdom,
 who slaughters his adversaries,
 who achieves prosperity by (his) ideas which his heart has borne,
 who never fails for all eternity,
 [beloved] of the great Bastet, mistress of Bast.’

5. Commentary

^(a) Three or four sentences preceding the next column are lost.




^(b) The signs  transliterated by Curto as *sdtj*, i.e. ‘child’ (with a determinative placed in the middle(!) part of the word) are rather to be interpreted as the verb *srnpj* ‘make young’, the noun *dt* ‘body’ and



the genitival adjective *n*, introducing *snt=f* ‘his sister’ enclosed in a cartouche.


Curto suggests that *snt=f* is an epithet of Isis (1967, 80, 82, n. d, f; 1985, 40-41, n. d, f) and the preceding ruined fragment had another epithet *jw^c wn-nfr* ‘successor of Wennefer’.


To prove his opinion, Curto (1967, 80, n. d-f) referred to the parallel on the Pithom stela (CGC 31088, 2). First, no other example with an epithet of Isis *snt=f* enclosed in a cartouche is known, the Pithom inscription calls Ptolemy *jw^c mnḥ n wn-nfr* ‘an excellent successor of Wennefer’ (Urk. II, 85.4) and does not contain a “complementary” epithet with Isis’s name or another paraphrase of the meaning ‘with sister (of this god).’

I propose that *snt=f* ‘his sister’ enclosed in a cartouche relates to Arsinoe, not Isis, especially in the context of funerary inscription. Then, the words ‘make his sister’s body young’ imply that her statue was erected after the death of the queen (see Wb IV, 198.6, 198.18; Wb V, 8-10).

The name ‘Arsinoe’ has many variants in hieroglyphic writing. On the above-mentioned stela from Sais (col. 8, 10) with approximate dating and provenance this name is written as follows: . A common transcription is *jrj-snj* ‘Irisenjj’ => ‘Arsinoe’, but if the signs are read in reverse order *snt-jrj* (the sign  also reads *snt* ‘sister’ and *jrj* is registered as a possessive pronoun) we get another interpretation: ‘his sister’. Most likely, the Egyptian scribes found a way to express the meaning ‘his sister (i.e. Ptolemy’s)’ using the hieroglyphic signs that formed the name ‘Arsinoe’. Thereafter, the signs in the cartouche  may be interpreted literally or as a play upon the name ‘Arsinoe’.

(c) The length of the ruined text is vague in Curto, cf.  =>  (proposed by the anonymous reviewer), if the lacuna is big it is possible to add *rn=s* ‘her name’, cf. papyrus Lansing, 10,8 (Gardiner 1937, 109.7).

(d) K. Sethe (followed by Curto) proposed that the scribe made a mistake and the word  *hmw* ‘skill’ should be replaced by *sh_m* ‘might, strength’.


The word *hmw* with the determinative  ‘strength’ is listed in the dictionary, likewise the examples of similar phrases (see Wb III, 82.15–83.4), cf. also a combination of *hmw(t)* and *r3^c-ht* describing military skills of the pharaoh Taharqo on the stela Khartoum 2678, 6 (see Jansen-Winkel 2009, 133).

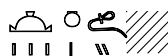



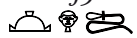
(e) See Wb II, 116.1.



(f) The person doing the action is omitted (after the copies by Sethe and Curto), most likely, a noun, see Wb I, 398.11. The word *wr* ‘great’ does not

agree with the plural *nfrw* ‘horses’ (cf. Sethe: ‘grosse Rosse’) and might be an extra epithet applied to Ptolemy II (proposed by the anonymous reviewer) after a certain victorious military expedition.

(g) For the name *stt* denoting ‘Asia’, see Wb IV, 348.3; cf. KRI V, 57.6.

(h) Cf. Urk. II, 70.8: . Curto following Sethe’s copy transliterated and translated the location as *j'tw n hntj* ‘*alture della frontiera*’.

N.B.! Curto gives another spelling for the geographical area: . Instead of the sign  ‘nose’ in K. Sethe’s copy meaning *hntj* ‘in front of’, there is a flower on the curved stalk , most likely,  *wdb* ‘shore, bank’. The record from Dendera contains the expression *j3wt hr wdb* ‘places on the bank’ (see Mariette, 1870, 61, b19): . In this particular case there is no crucial difference

between the use of a genitive adjective  and a preposition  (although the copy may have a mistake), cf. expression *smnw hr wdb* ‘*geese on the bank*’ (see KRI I, 50.5) and *smn n wdb* ‘*goose of the river-bank*’ (lit. ‘*goose belonging to the bank*’), see papyrus Lansing, 3,5 (Gardiner 1937, 102.6). The word *j3t* also denotes a certain territory (regarding sacred places in Egypt: temples, islands). All of this leads one to conclude that Ptolemy set off to ‘the (different) places on the bank’, i.e. to the settlements located on the seashore.

6. Critical remarks on the dating suggested by Curto

As has already been noted, the publisher of the hieroglyphic inscription accompanying the statue, Curto, dated the creation of this artifact between 270 and 265 BCE. At the same time, the lower chronological limit seemed to him somewhat preferable (see above). Curto based his point of view on the supposed parallels between the text, preserved on *the statue from Bubastis*, and the Louvre fragment of the Saite inscription, known to him (Louvre C 123, see above). These parallels are represented by passages in both texts that glorify the military valor of Ptolemy II; Curto associated both these passages with the victory of this Egyptian monarch in the First Syrian War (275-272/1 BCE), which he led against Antiochos I Soter (cf. Winnicki 1990, 157-167; Hölbl 2001, 38-40; Huss 2001, 265-271; Grainger 2010, 81-87; Zelinsky 2015, 34-41).

In my opinion, these conclusions of Curto should be revised. First of all, it should be noted that 265 BCE mentioned by the researcher is not

the *termino ante quem*, but the *termino post quem* for the creation of the statue *from Bubastis*. As shown above, the inscription contains more than a transparent allusion to the cult of Arsinoe II, Ptolemy's II deceased sister-wife; as a part of this cult (established by Ptolemy), at least one statue of Arsinoe was installed (col. 2. [1], also see commentary b). As it is well-known from the Saite inscription, the official Egyptian cult of Arsinoe, which included installation of her statues at Egyptian temples (cf. Quaegebeur 1971a, 239-270; Quaegebeur 1971b, 191-217; Collombert 2008, 83-101; Schäfer 2011, 263-267), was established by the local priesthood in 266/5 BCE, by Ptolemy's direct initiative. The corresponding decision of the Alexandrian sovereign was formalized by the all-Egyptian representative assembly, which was called specifically for this purpose (Codex Ursinianus + Naples 1034 + Louvre C 123, col. 7-8). Detailed information about its subsequent implementation, dated 265-264 BCE, was provided by the compilers of the Inscription from Mendes (CGC 22181, 12-14, see Kamal 1904-1905, 159-168, Pl. LIV-LV). Moreover, both Mendesian priests and their colleagues from Sais pay special attention to the installation process of the cult statues of Arsinoe, both in their native nomes, as well as throughout the country (Codex Ursinianus + Naples 1034 + Louvre C 123, col. 7-8, 10; CGC 22181, 12-14, 24-25).

Thus, the Inscription from Bubastis, which is discussed in this article, due to its reference to the cult of Arsinoe, could not have been created before the establishment of the general Egyptian cult of Arsinoe, which was reflected on the stelae from Sais and Mendes. At the same time, I believe that the events of 266/5 BCE and the installation of the statue of Ptolemy II at Bubastis are separated by several years. The Egyptian priesthood needed time to make the statues of the new goddess and install them in the provincial religious centers. In addition, it took temple scribes a sufficient amount of time to create the ambiguous hieroglyphic construction for the name of Arsinoe, which appeared for the first time on *the statue of Ptolemy from Bubastis* (see commentary b). Finally, it is worth considering that the statue in question itself was probably created after the completion and installation of the statue of the deified deceased, mentioned in the past tense (col. 2. [1]). So, the presumptive date of the artifact's creation becomes even more chronologically distant from the events of the First Syrian War. These circumstances, in turn, make Curto's assumptions regarding the First Syrian War as being mentioned on *the statue from Bubastis* even less likely.

According to the translation proposed above, this inscription concerns some real military campaign of the Egyptian army to the Asian coast

(col. 2. [3]). At the same time, the overwhelming majority of the Egyptian texts of the Ptolemaic period known to date, reflecting real foreign policy events, were written, so to say, ‘hot on the trail’. These include: the Satrap stela (CGC 22182), the Synodal-decrees from Alexandria and partly from Kanopos (Akhmim 915; CGC 22186), and also the Decree from Raphia (CGC 31088). An exception to this rule is the Pithom stela (CGC 22183, 11, 15-16, see Kamal 1904-1905, 171-177, Pl. LVII), dated 264 BCE (Schäfer 2011, 208). However, this exception is understandable. The events of the First Syrian War mentioned in the text of this artifact were interesting to the local priesthood only in the context of a demonstration of a special relationship that existed between Ptolemy II and a local temple of Atum (CGC 22183, 11-16). Therefore, the matter of chronological distance of the event from the moment when the artifact was created is simply irrelevant.

Based on this trend, it can be assumed that the events mentioned in the Inscription from Bubastis could hardly have been attributed to the First Syrian War, which ended in 271 BCE (see above). Thus, we are talking about a different, chronologically closer military conflict, which included military activity of the Egyptian army in the Asian coast region. These events include the Chremonidian War in 267-261 BCE (Hölbl 2001, 40-43; Huss 2001, 272-281)² and the Second Syrian War that followed (see below). The first option will have to be abandoned. It is well known that Ptolemy II had not personally taken part in the military actions during the Chremonidian War, while the nature of the message of the discussed inscription indicates the sovereign’s direct involvement in the campaign mentioned in it. This is evidenced by the fact that the inscription was placed not on an ordinary stela, but on the statue of the ruling Pharaoh (also see commentary f). This circumstance could allow writers of the inscription to omit the obvious fact of Ptolemy’s direct personal participation in the Asian campaign, whose successes in the martial arts had been extolled in the previous passage of the same inscription (col. 2. [2]).

As a result, the only conflict that can be related to the artifact from Bubastis is the Second Syrian War (259-253 BCE) between Ptolemy II Philadelphos and the son of Antiochos I, Antiochos II Theos.

² On the military actions at the coast of Asia Minor, during the Chremonidian War see A. Zelinsky (2018, 218-222).

7. The Second Syrian War

It is not an exaggeration to say that the Second Syrian War is the least-documented military conflict of the third century BCE. It is enough to say that none of the ancient narratives at our disposal contain even a schematic report on this conflict. We can judge the historicity of this war only by an excerpt from the accidentally preserved Anti-Christian pamphlet of Porphyry of Tyros (FrGrHist, 260, f42). Several generations of researchers have been trying to recreate the picture of events, stringing scattered data obtained from narrative, epigraphic, papyrological and numismatic sources on the sparse evidence of Porphyry (cf. Winnicki 1991, 87-104; Hölbl 2001, 44-45; Huss 2001, 282-287; Grainger 2010, 117-136; Grainger 2014, 172-184; Grabowski 2015, 85-87). Nevertheless, our information about this war is still too scanty. For example, we still cannot confidently identify the date of the beginning of the conflict, the number of its participants, the sequence of events and the full scope of conditions of the peace treaty which concluded it. With some confidence we can speak only about three points: 1. During the Second Syrian War, there were two separate theaters of military actions: the first in the west of Asia Minor (Ionia, Caria and the nearby islands: Samos, Chios and Lesbos), and the second in Northern Syria and in the southeast of Asia Minor (Cilicia and Pamphylia) (see below); 2. Ptolemy II suffered an obvious defeat in this war, having lost all his Asia Minor territories, with the exception of Lycia and the southeast of Caria³ (see Hölbl 2001, 44; Huss 2001, 287; Grainger 2010, 129, 132); 3. Despite the lost war, the border between Southern (Ptolemaic) and Northern (Seleucid) Syria, which ran along the Eleutheros River, remained unchanged (cf. P.C.Z. 59.242, 59.251; Winnicki 1991, 103; Hölbl 2001, 44-45).

It should be noted that relative to the dating of the statue from Bubastis, the events that took place in Northern Syria, adjacent to Eastern (Plain) Cilicia and directly in Egypt are of paramount importance. In Western Asia Minor Antiochos II and his unexpected allies, the Rhodians, acted as unquestionable aggressors (App. Syr. 65; Front. 3.9.10; Polyæn. 5.18; FrGrHist, 532, F3, 97-99; Hölbl 2001, 44; Huss 2001, 282-283; Grainger 2010, 121, 125; Grabowski 2015, 85-86), but Ptolemy Philadelphos was the attacker in Northern Syria and Eastern Cilicia (Winnicki 2009, 120-121; Grabowski 2015, 87).

³ A significant number of letters sent to Egypt from Kaunos and nearby Kalynda after the end of the Second Syrian War give evidence to this statement (P.C.Z. 59.037; 59.045; 59.056; 59.341; P.Col.Zen. 11).

It seems that the Alexandrian ruler was indeed preparing to attack the Syrian territories of the Seleucids, but Antiochos II managed to strike first in Asia Minor (cf. Grainger 2014, 168-169, 172). Such a state of affairs can be evidenced by the number of activities that were carried out by Philadelphos in Southern Syria, Phoenicia, Palestine and Transjordan in the wake of the conflict in question. These include: expanding the financial autonomy of a few cities in the abovementioned region (Burova 1980, 87-88; cf. Hazzard 2000, 18-19; Grainger 2010, 96); establishing close relations with representatives of the local aristocracy, such as the well-known Toubias (Pfeiffer 2010, 242-257; Pfeiffer 2011, 192-203, 210-214); as well as issuing a decree prohibiting the illegal enslavement of the Syrian and Phoenician laoi (PER 24.552 (gr), see Liebesny 1936, 257-288; cf. Winnicki 2009, 120-121).⁴ Most likely, the purpose of these activities was to increase the loyalty of the population in the above areas, and to create a secure rear guard for supporting offensive operations in the neighboring Seleucid Syria.

In addition, we also have several indirect indications of military actions in the region, around the end of 259-257 BCE. For example, the autonomy provided by Antiochos II to Phoenician Arados, bordering the Ptolemaic territories, should be considered in this context. As the starting point for the era, established in the mentioned city, is 259/8 BCE, a number of researchers consider this concession from the Seleucids to be a reward for the loyalty of Arados during the Ptolemaic military aggression in the early 250s BCE (Winnicki 1991, 87; Huss 2001, 284; Anm. 248; Grainger 2010, 123-124; Grainger 2014, 173-174).

Providing weighty evidence for the presence of the Egyptian army in the area of the Seleucid Syrian residence, Antiocheia on the Orontes, is an impressive hoard of Ptolemaic gold coins, approximately dated to 261-257 BCE (Davesne, Yenisoganci 1992, 23-36). Nowadays, the opinion first voiced by the publishers of this discovery still prevails: the majority of this hoard appears to be Egyptian military treasure which was buried during the retreat of the Ptolemaic army from this region (Davesne and Yenisoganci 1992, 23, 32, 36; Grainger 2010, 122-124; Grainger 2014, 172-173). Of particular note is a recording in the early 250s BCE at the Mint of Eastern Cilician Tarsos which deserves special attention. According to numismatic studies, in this city owned by the Seleucids before and after the Second Syrian War, the coinage of Ptolemaic coins was carried out for a number

⁴ Perhaps in the light of the latter, the apocryphal story of Ptolemy II releasing hundreds of thousands of Jewish slaves associated with the appearance of the first Greek translation of the Pentateuch (Pseudo-Aristeas, 22-25 = Flav. AJ. 12.2) is worth considering.

of years (Davesne, Yenisoganci 1992, 32; Grainger 2010, 123; Grainger 2014, 173). See the AR tetradrachm of Ptolemy II from Cilicia (Pl. 3: 2)⁵.

In my opinion, the inscription from Bubastis, discussed in this article, which suggests the personal participation of Ptolemy II in the campaign to the Asian coast, appears perfectly correct in the list of the abovementioned sources. In a sense, it can compensate for the Ostrakon from Karnak (Karnak L.S. 462.4), which has to be withdrawn from the Hellenistic source base. The latter was considered evidence for the Syrian campaign of Ptolemy II, dated 258-257 BCE by general opinion (Winnicki 1991, 87-104; Clarysse 2000, 34, 43; Hölbl 2001, 44, 70 not. 63; Huss 2001, 284-285; Grainger 2010, 127) – before M. Chauveau (2011, 39-45) persuasively redated the content of this artifact to the Saite Period.

8. The return of Ptolemy to Egypt and dating of the statue

In his 2007 article, W. Clarysse devotes several pages to his observations based on the analysis of the registration marks from *Zenon's archive* papyri, dated February – April 257 BCE. Zenon, a man from Carian Kaunos, served in 258-256 BCE as a personal secretary to the dioiketes Apollonios – a well-known Ptolemaic dignitary (about both of them see Świderek 1959; Orrioux 1985). In particular, the pedantic Kaunian supplied the correspondence addressed to him personally, as well as to his patron, with special postscripts indicating the place and date of receipt. Thanks to these marks, Clarysse, partly following J.-K. Winnicki, recreates the route of Apollonios and his escort, who, at the time of interest, were travelling to nomes of the Southeast and Central Delta. His picture is as follows: February 27 – March 10 – Berenikes Hormos (Heliopolite nome), March 16-26 – Bubastis, April 2(?)–7 – Leontonpolis (Tell Moqdam), April 11-20 – Mendes, April 23-28 – Memphis (Clarysse 2007, 201-203; cf. Winnicki 1991, 97-101).

Considering the fact that Ptolemy II was staying in Mendes on April 15th, where he had celebrated his birthday (Winnicki 1991, 97-98; cf. Schäfer 2011, 243), and the high probability of celebrating the anniversary of his ascension to the throne in Memphis later that year on April 28 (Clarysse 2007, 203, 205-206; cf. Weber 2012, 107), Clarysse concludes that the movement of Apollonios-Zenon is interrelated with the route of Ptolemy's journey to the Delta. According to Clarysse, this route included Bubastis, Leontonpolis, Mendes and Memphis (Clarysse 2007, 201-206).

⁵ There is an opinion according to which the realism of the image of Ptolemy II on these coins can testify in favor of the monarch's personal presence in Cilicia.

As an additional argument in favor of his hypothesis, Clarysse also cites three Egyptian stelae, which in his opinion correspond to the place and time of the suggested journey. One of these artifacts is a fragmented stela, dated June 256 BCE (BM 616, 1, see Guerneur & Thiers 2001, 197-219, esp. 204) and originating from the Xoite nome, which is situated aside from the route suggested above (cf. Montet 1957, 89-95). Another artifact, originating from Leontonpolis, represents, traditional for this nome, a scene of worship of a sacred lion by a certain representative of the Ptolemaic Dynasty (Leipzig 1668, see Clarysse & Haiying 2007, 86-87, no. 13, 96). It is absolutely impossible to identify the depicted pharaoh. However, the Greek graffiti found on the stela mention the date of the local religious festival (9 Mecheir), which actually coincides with a stay of Apollonios-Zenon's group in Leontonpolis (Clarysse 2007, 202-203, 205; cf. Weber 2012, 107). Finally, Clarysse, quite hypothetically, adds the Mendes stela (CGC 22181) to this list of sources, and suggests its dating as 257 BCE (Clarysse 2007, 203-205)⁶. At the end of his article, Clarysse remarks that the journey of Ptolemy II through the Delta took place "on the verge of his last major war" (2007, 206).

The text found on the Statue from Bubastis, especially in its new reading, serves as powerful evidence for the overlapping routes of Apollonios-Zenon and Ptolemy Philadelphos, both connected to the Second Syrian War. The inscription from Bubastis not only duplicates the papyrologic evidence of Zenon's and Apollonios' presence in the Bubastis nome, but also explicitly mentions the victorious campaign of the Alexandrian ruler on the Asian (Syrian) coast, referring to the realities of the Second Syrian War. This rather verbose text, which ends with the assurance of Bastet's grace on the ruling monarch (col. 3), similar to the other local artifacts of this kind (see above), also testifies to Ptolemy's personal visit to the temples in Bubastis, which is also suggested by Clarysse (Clarysse 2007, 205 not. 10; cf. Weber 2012, 107). Additionally, some privileges (in particular, exemption from general labor duties) granted by this ruler to the priests of Bastet across all Egypt (cf. P.C.Z. 59.451), can be considered as indirect evidence of Philadelphos' visit to Bubastis.

In the same time, according to a common point of view, Ptolemy's II appearance in Mendes in the spring of 257 BCE preceded the beginning of his Syrian campaign (Winnicki 1991, 87-104; Clarysse 2000, 34; Huss 2001, 284-285; cf. Hölbl 2001, 44, 70 not. 63). In my opinion, in the spring of 257 BCE Philadelphos, probably with a part of his army,

⁶ It is only possible to determine that the Mendes Stele was definitely created during 264–257 BCE (see Schäfer 2011, 241, 243-244).

returned to Egypt from Syria. The inscription on the statue from Bubastis was created by the local priesthood in response to the royal visit, and it speaks of the coastal campaign as a recent fact (see above). In addition, there is a letter from Toubias from Transjordan, a military-administrative functionary in the Ptolemaic service (see above), regarding the gifts that he had sent to his “employer,” to Alexandria, in the middle of May 257 BCE (P.C.Z. 59.075). Winnicki, and after him W. Huss considered this letter as evidence of rather a late (not earlier than June 257 BCE) arrival of Ptolemy II to Syria (Winnicki 1991, 97-98; Huss 2001, 285). However, it is more logical to assume that Toubias sent his presents to Alexandria by mid-May, since, according to his calculations, by that time the Egyptian sovereign should have had returned to his capital. Among other things, the relative chronology of numismatic sources originating from the neighborhoods of Antiocheia on the Orontes and from Eastern Cilician Tarsos, should not be disregarded either (see above).

Finally, the very logistics of his movements through the nomes of the Nile Delta, restored by Clarisse and confirmed by data of the inscription from Bubastis, testify to Philadelphos’s return from Syria in the spring of 257 BCE. Based on our sources, it should be noted that Ptolemy II did not travel from Alexandria through Memphis to Pelusion, but in the opposite direction (cf. Orrieux 1985, 108). In my opinion, Philadelphos’ route was as follows: arriving at Pelusion, he traveled up the Pelusian branch of the Nile Delta to Bubastis (cf. Montet 1957, 155-172), where he met with a group of Dioiketes Apollonios descending from Berenikes hormos (Winnicki 1991, 101-102; cf. Montet 1957, 155-172); then, probably wanting to strengthen his authority among the local population and having the proper amount of time for it, Ptolemy, accompanied by his dignitary, made a small temple tour, starting from Bubastis itself; after giving honors to the goddess Bastet, the Alexandrian pharaoh headed down the channels westward – to Leontonpolis (cf. Montet 1957, 129-136), where he probably took part in a local religious festival; then, continuing to travel along the channels in the north-western direction, Philadelphos found himself in Mendes (cf. Montet 1957, 143-154), well-known to him from his previous visits (cf. CGC 22181), where he celebrated his birthday; further, the Egyptian ruler traveled up to the Mendesian branch of the Nile to Memphis, long since friendly to him, and celebrated there the anniversary of his accession to the throne; finally, Ptolemy II and Apollonios turned to the north-west and, visiting Xoïs, arrived at Alexandria, where letters and gifts from Toubias were waiting for them (P.C.Z. 59.075-59.076).

Based on the above, it can be concluded that the statue from Bubastis was a kind of landmark marking the path of Ptolemy II Philadelphos from Syria to Alexandria. Based on this circumstance, I propose to date this artifact to 257/6 BCE, which makes it chronologically closer to the stela from Xoïs, rather than to the Saïte stela.

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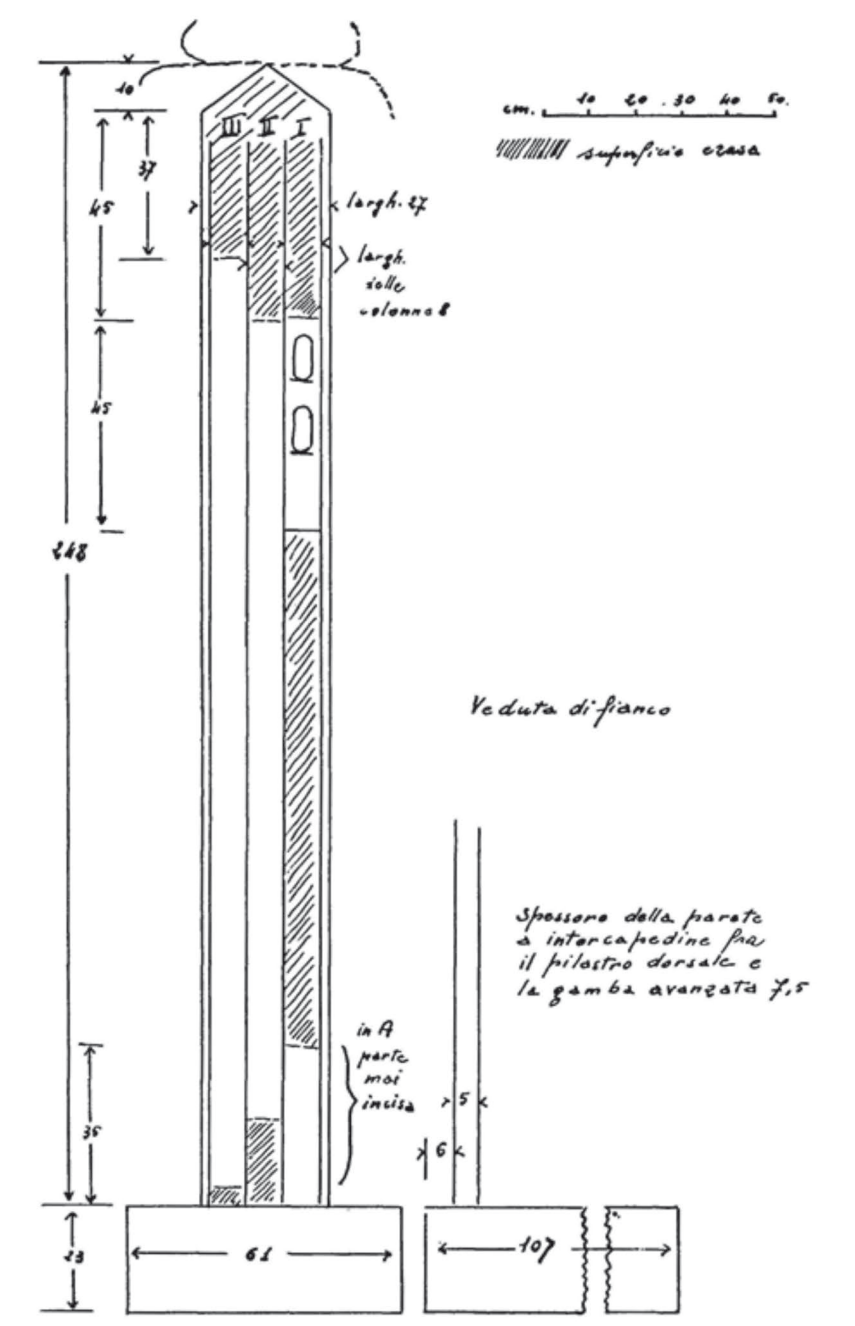
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Pl. 1 – Arrangement of the inscriptions (Curto 1967, 77, Fig. 7)



---: inizio trascrizione Sethe

Pl. 2 – Text copy (Curto 1967, 79, Fig. 8; Curto 1985, 40)



1



2

Pl. 3:1 – Statue of Ptolemy II from Bubastis (Curto 1967, Pl. XXV)

Pl. 3: 2 – AR Tetradrachm of Ptolemy II (26mm, 13.88g)

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