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INHALTSVERZEICHNIS

Roxanne B é l a n g e r S a r r a z i n — Jitse H. F. D i j k s t r a — Nicholas H e d l e y — Sabrina C. H i g g i n s: New Greek Inscriptions from Philae (Taf. 1–7).....	1
Lajos B e r k e s: Two Greek Tax-Receipts with Hijri Dates from the 730s (Taf. 8–10).....	13
Dan D e a c, Dan E l e f t e r e s c u: A Lead Tag Inscribed in Greek from <i>Durostorum</i> (Moesia Inferior) (Taf. 11).....	19
Christopher D e g e l m a n n: Schwätzer oder Hexer? Ein Ostrakon gegen Leagros Glaukonos (Kerameikos O 5847).....	25
Anna D o l g a n o v — Fritz M i t t h o f — Hannah M. C o t t o n — Avner E c k e r: Forgery and Fiscal Fraud in Iudaea and Arabia on the Eve of the Bar Kokhba Revolt: Memorandum and Minutes of a Trial before a Roman Official (P.Cotton) (Taf. 12–16).....	37
Anne K o l b — Michael A. S p e i d e l: Ein Vermessungsingenieur der 22. Legion in <i>Aquae Helveticae</i> (Taf. 17).....	167
Csaba A. L a ' d a — Amphilochios P a p a t h o m a s: A New Greek Papyrus Fragment of an Account and a List of Toponyms from the Late Antique Herakleopolites (Taf. 18).....	173
Leah L a z a r: New readings in a Hellenistic Athenian honorific decree from Priene (<i>I.Priene</i> 45 = <i>I.Priene B-M</i> 99 = <i>IG</i> II/III ³ 1, 1239) (Taf. 19–20)	181
Jack W. G. S c h r o p p: Eine neue fragmentarische Grabinschrift aus Mustis mit <i>signum</i> und <i>carmen</i> (Taf. 21).....	191
Mirko T a s s o: Ein bislang übersehener jambischer Senar aus Mauretania Tingitana.....	197
Thomas A. W a y m e n t: Two Lists of Personal Items from Oxyrhynchus (Taf. 22).....	201
Ekkehard W e b e r: Apocolocyntosis. Mit einem „botanischen“ zweiten Teil von Monika K i e h n.....	207
Bemerkungen zu Papyri XXXVI (<Korr. Tyche> 1113–1141)	221
Adnotationes epigraphicae XIV (<Adn. Tyche> 124–127) (Taf. 23–25)	249

Tafeln 1–25

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New Greek Inscriptions from Philae

Plates 1–7

Philae, a temple island located on the border between Ancient Egypt and Nubia, has an incredibly rich epigraphical record, certainly considering its size of only 150 by 460 m. It consists of ca. 1400 graffiti in demotic and other Ancient Egyptian scripts, Greek and Latin — in majority edited in 1969 by André and Étienne Bernand in two volumes known in Greek epigraphical circles as *I.Philae* I–II —, Meroitic, Coptic and Arabic.¹ They provide detailed information about the personal religious devotion of priests and visitors to the island from both south and north of the border over a span of hundreds of years. Strikingly, the figural graffiti that are often found side by side with the textual ones and can furnish equally abundant information on the site's cults and practices have so far been almost completely ignored. To redress the balance, in 2016 the Philae Temple Graffiti Project was launched.

The Philae Temple Graffiti Project, which operates under the umbrella of the Philae Temple Text Project of the Austrian Academy of Sciences and is supported by the Swiss

¹ The demotic (and other Ancient Egyptian) graffiti were edited in two stages by F. Ll. Griffith, *Catalogue of the Demotic Graffiti of the Dodecaschoenus*, 2 vols, Oxford 1935–1937, 42–130 (nos 1–450) and E. Cruz-Urbe, *The Demotic Graffiti from the Temple of Isis at Philae Island* (Material and Visual Culture of Ancient Egypt 3), Atlanta 2016, nos 500–1033, and are abbreviated here as *I.PhilaeDem*. *I.Philae* I–II, with 322 items, has only been supplemented by 38 inscriptions (*IThSy*. 307–344) that came to light during the transferal of the temples to their current location due to the building of the Aswan High Dam and 4 more discovered twenty years ago in the notebooks of Ludwig Borchardt by one of the current authors, J. H. F. Dijkstra, *Late Antique Inscriptions from the First Cataract Area Discovered and Rediscovered*, JJP 33 (2003) 55–66 at 56–59 (nos 1–4). For the inscriptions in Meroitic, the language of the Kingdom of Meroe, which ruled Nubia between the third century BCE and the third century CE, see F. Ll. Griffith, *Meroitic Inscriptions. Part II: Napata to Philae and Miscellaneous* (Archaeological Survey of Egypt 20), London 1912, 33–52 (nos 95–125) = *I.PhilaeMer*. The Coptic graffiti, amounting to ca. 20 texts, remain as yet unpublished. The first 2 Arabic graffiti from the island, dating to the end of the tenth century, on the other hand, have now been published, A. Lagaron, *Commémorations de naissances et de baptêmes. Le cas des graffiti arabes du temple d'Isis à Philae (Assouan, fin du IV^e/X^e siècle)*, *Annales islamologiques* 57 (2023) 129–152.

Institute for Architectural and Archaeological Research, Cairo, has as its main aim to record and publish the figural graffiti from the island, focusing in particular on the ca. 400 graffiti from the main temple of Isis and the court in front of it delineated by the First Pylon in the south, the Birthhouse, also called ‘Mammisi’, in the west, and the Second East Colonnade in the east (Pl. 1, Fig. 1). The project uses advanced methods of recording, such as Reflectance Transformation Imaging (RTI), photogrammetry and laser scanning, not only to render individual graffiti as accurately as possible, but also to enable them to be studied within their architectural context. The placement of the graffiti can be visualized in the form of wall plans, giving us detailed insight into the distribution of the graffiti in the area under study, and hence its use (and reuse) over time. Thus, a major aim of the project is to investigate the accessibility of parts of the area to different groups in the Graeco-Roman period, as non-priestly personnel was usually not allowed beyond the (in this case, first) pylon. Naturally, the already known textual graffiti are taken into account in this project since they, literally, occur side by side with the figures, sometimes even as part of the same graffito, and can provide important supplementary information, such as a date and/or the identity of the maker (for instance, whether priest or layman).²

In carefully investigating the walls, we have discovered four new Greek graffiti, two on the bridge between the towers of the First Pylon (nos 1–2 below) and two on the roof of the Birthhouse (3–4), the latter both belonging to depictions of feet.³ This circumstance is somewhat surprising, since the Bernand brothers have usually been very thorough in documenting the Greek inscriptions. As they relate in the preface of both of their volumes, they visited the original site a couple times in the 1950s, but always when the temples were partly inundated, and only were able to visit the monuments when they were not under water in a dedicated campaign of a month, conducted under difficult circumstances, in 1960.⁴ Apparently, for whatever reason,

² For a first announcement of the project, see R. Bélanger Sarrazin, J. H. F. Dijkstra, N. Hedley, S. C. Higgins, *Figures That Matter: The Graffiti of the Isis Temple at Philae*, *Egyptian Archaeology* 60 (2022) 36–40, and in more detail *Picturing Religion: The Philae Temple Graffiti Project*, in: J. Hamilton (ed.), *Making and Experiencing Graffiti in Ancient and Late Antique Egypt and Sudan*, Leiden in press. We are grateful for funding of our project from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (2021–2026). We would like to thank Holger Kockelmann, director of the Philae Temple Text Project, and Cornelius von Pilgrim, director of the Swiss Institute, for their support in the field; the second-named author would also like to thank the audience at the ConText III workshop on the First Cataract region at the Freie Universität in Berlin for insightful comments on his presentation of the inscriptions (and their context) on 16 December 2022. Further thanks are due to Alain Delattre and Peter van Minnen for their comments on, and improvements to the readings of, the inscriptions.

³ One of these (3) was already included under *I.PhilaeDem.* 891, but not adequately recorded and edited, see below.

⁴ *I.Philae* I, pp. xi–xii; II, p. i.

they did not have access to the upper parts of the First Pylon and Birthhouse, so that they missed these four inscriptions.⁵

In the following contribution, we will publish the four new inscriptions, probably all dating to the Graeco-Roman period, to which we add in an appendix a note on an already published text from the Second Pylon (*I.Philae* II 284), thus providing a small complement to the monumental work of the brothers Bernand. The publication of these four inscriptions is particularly important for their location and what it reveals about the question of accessibility. Of the two largest categories of textual graffiti, demotic was mostly the prerogative of the priesthood, whereas the ones in Greek could have been inscribed by both priests and visitors, but especially the latter. A study of the distribution of demotic vs Greek inscriptions can therefore be revealing about the accessibility of parts of a temple terrain. In another contribution, we have already done so for the area in front of the temple, focusing on the lower parts and walls adjoining the court. As this discussion makes clear, the largest concentration of Greek graffiti is on the southern wall of the First Pylon, accessible to the general public from the colonnaded court or *dromos*, and they are much more sporadic on the inside, whereas those in demotic are most numerous on the inside, clustered especially in the Birthhouse. That at least part of the graffiti on the inside were left by visitors appears from those in demotic and Meroitic left by Nubians and the ones in Greek with the formula 'I have come' and variants. These data indicate that access to the court between the pylons was restricted and only allowed by the priesthood on certain occasions, such as festivals.⁶

So far, no Greek inscriptions from the bridge between the towers of the First Pylon or the roof of the Birthhouse were known. After gaining access to the court between the pylons, both areas would have required visitors to go through further doors and ascend steps to reach them, making it increasingly less likely that visitors would have been allowed there. To reach the pylon bridge, one would need to take the door in the south-east corner of the court and ascend several flights of stairs in the eastern tower to arrive at the bridge, while in the Birthhouse, the roof can only be reached by going through the main door and, keeping right, taking a stairwell (now lost) on the eastern side of the southernmost of its three rooms.

From the interior of the First Pylon 15 demotic graffiti have been published, among which 3 in the room leading to the pylon bridge and 3 at the bridge itself.⁷ These,

⁵ They could have expected to find Greek inscriptions on the roof of the Birthhouse due to the comment in *I.PhilaeMer.*, p. 42: 'On the flat top of this raised platform are many representations of feet, and graffiti more or less worn in Egyptian demotic, Meroitic, and Greek', and that in *I.PhilaeDem.*, p. 79 (talking about the location of *I.PhilaeDem.* 234): 'near others in Meroitic and Greek'. Our text 4 is located there and must be the one (or among the ones, if other Greek inscriptions are now gone) referred to by Griffith.

⁶ Bélanger Sarrazin, Dijkstra, Hedley, Higgins, *Picturing Religion* (n. 2).

⁷ East tower of First Pylon, various places: *I.PhilaeDem.* 68, 70–71, 601–603 (note that *I.PhilaeDem.* 68 is a *dipinto*, now gone, written partly in hieroglyphic-hieratic, partly in demotic, and that according to Cruz-Urbe, *Demotic Graffiti* [n. 1], 94, *I.PhilaeDem.* 69 is actually not

together with the figural graffiti that we have recorded, mostly found in the pylon bridge area, and characterized by detailed drawings of deities and sacred animals, give the impression of being a ‘priestly area’, just like the interior of the Second Pylon does (on which see the Appendix).⁸ The bridge between the pylons had an important cultic function as each year during the Choiak festival, a live falcon was brought up here to be ceremonially crowned and shown to the public below on the *dromos*.⁹ Since one of the Greek inscriptions from the pylon bridge (1) has the ἦκω ‘I have come’-formula and was certainly left by a visitor, and the other Greek inscription (2) likely as well (in this case, actually two visitors), they provide crucial new evidence that even here, perhaps exceptionally, visitors were sometimes allowed.

As we have seen, the Birthhouse contains an overwhelming number of demotic graffiti, with over 400 items.¹⁰ In fact, it is the building with the most demotic graffiti on the entire island, reflecting intense religious activity here. The sole exception used to be¹¹ the Greek inscription by a certain Nikomachos, incised using a ladder or scaffolding over 3 m above the ground on the eastern exterior wall facing the court, thereby commemorating his visit as part of the delegation of the *strategos* Ptolemaios in 5 BCE.¹² The addition of two more Greek inscriptions from the roof (3–4) makes the contrast slightly less stark, though the predominance of demotic remains significant.

The two new graffiti are found on the horizontal surfaces of both the lower area of the roof (which we have named Y; 3), which one would reach first after ascending the staircase, and the upper area (4), which surrounding the lower area covers the colonnades and the entrance portico (Z) and one would reach by further climbing up one of the vertical walls of Y. Both occur with feet, just as there are also several pairs of feet with demotic and Meroitic graffiti in the same location.¹³ In contrast to the

located here but at the Second East Colonnade). Room leading to pylon bridge: *I.PhilaeDem.* 72–73, 604. Pylon bridge: *I.PhilaeDem.* 74, 605–606. West tower, various places: *I.PhilaeDem.* 75–76, 607.

⁸ Among the demotic graffiti from this location, 5 mention priestly titles (*I.PhilaeDem.* 68, 71, 75, 601, 607; if it is correct that *I.PhilaeDem.* 602 was a first attempt of the writer of 601, it also concerns a priest), and 1 (*I.PhilaeDem.* 605), on the pylon bridge, is an invocation of Isis that was undoubtedly made by a priest.

⁹ J. H. F. Dijkstra, *Horus on His Throne. The Holy Falcon of Philae in His Demonic Cage*, Göttinger Miszellen 189 (2002) 7–10, and *Philae and the End of Ancient Egyptian Religion. A Regional Study of Religious Transformation (298–642 CE)* (Orientalia Lovaniensia Analecta 173), Leuven 2008, 209–210.

¹⁰ The total number is 410 graffiti: *I.PhilaeDem.* 87–242; 636–892, from which we need to subtract 733 and 885, which are just scratches, and 891, supposedly a demotic-Greek graffiti with feet but in fact only containing Greek (3 below).

¹¹ See e.g. Dijkstra, *Philae and the End* (n. 9), 184.

¹² *I.Philae* II 146, on which see Bélanger Sarrazin, Dijkstra, Hedley, Higgins, *Picturing Religion* (n. 2).

¹³ Demotic: *I.PhilaeDem.* 234–235, 237–238, 890, 892. Meroitic: *I.PhilaeMer.* 112–113, 114–115, 117. Of these *I.PhilaeDem.* 890, 892 occur on Y, just as 3, and the rest on Z, as 4. Note that all demotic and Meroitic graffiti, except for *I.PhilaeDem.* 234 and 892, have the formula ‘The feet of’/‘This pair of feet of’ + name, whereas 3 has only the name (in the genitive) and 4

vertical walls of Y, which seem to have been (mostly) restricted to priestly use — witness the (hieroglyphic)/demotic graffiti and numerous, sometimes exquisite, drawings of deities and animals, as in the bridge area of the First Pylon, and even priests' heads —, on the horizontal parts of Y and Z the number of demotic graffiti is lower and the character of the figures different, including numerous offering tables and feet, which give the impression of being left in part at least by visitors.¹⁴ This impression is confirmed by the demotic and Meroitic graffiti left by Nubians on the roof, which already indicated that this area was not off-limits to visitors either on certain occasions.¹⁵ It is thus not that surprising to find two Greek graffiti here, even though it cannot be excluded that they were incised by priests.

1. Inscription of the ἥκω-type for Alexandros

The inscription was clearly and prominently incised on the northern jamb of the door leading to the balustrade of the First Pylon, and is found below an, unpublished, Coptic inscription (Pls 2–3, Figs 2–3). On the walls of the corridor leading to the balustrade, on both the north and south walls close to the door are depictions of deities and sacred animals, as well as an offering table. On the southern jamb of the door facing the Greek inscription are two men shown in frontal position and three offering tables.

The text is written with some space to the left and then all the way until the edge of the door jamb. The first three lines containing the name and patronymic, until the joint dividing the two blocks, are written underneath each other, but slightly moving to the left each line. The lines below the joint, with the ἥκω-formula, again start a bit further to the left, and are more or less beneath each other. In l. 3, due to the small space and the ρ of the previous line, the ω is rendered smaller and higher up, right of the vertical of the ρ. The left parts of the ζ and υ in ll. 5–6 are gone because of a hole that was later made into the door jamb, but the letters are clear. In l. 6, the letters αϣ are written a bit

the formula Τὸ προσκόνημα + name. In all cases, the inscription is written above the feet, with the exception of *I.PhilaeDem.* 235, where the feet are found above, presumably due to space restrictions, and *I.PhilaeMer.* 113, where the feet are found on the left-hand side, but this has to do with the fact that it was added to another inscription with feet, *I.PhilaeMer.* 112, see n. 34 below. Cf. *I.PhilaeMer.* 116, which also contains the formula 'This pair of feet of' and was thought to belong to *I.PhilaeDem.* 237, a demotic graffito with feet above it, but its feet are probably lost, see R. Bélanger Sarrazin, J. H. F. Dijkstra, N. Hedley, S. C. Higgins, *Were the Last Priests of Philae Trilingual?*, *Enchoria* 37 (2020–2023) 1–4; the same is the case with *I.PhilaeDem.* 242.

¹⁴ Demotic graffiti on the roof: *I.PhilaeDem.* 217–233, 870–883, 888–892 (minus 891, see n. 10 above; 875 is a hieroglyphic graffito) on Y and 234–242, 884–887 (minus 885, see n. 10) on Z, for a total of 35 + 12 = 47 graffiti. Of the ones on Y, 31 are found on the vertical walls of Y, and only 4 on its floor (*I.PhilaeDem.* 888–892, minus 891, see n. 10). Contrast with the 205 figures on the roof, 87 on Y and 118 on Z, including 83 foot graffiti, 13 on Y and 70 on Z, and 34 offering tables, 18 on Y and 16 on Z (all on horizontal surfaces). Note that these numbers may still slightly shift as we progress with our project.

¹⁵ An example of a demotic text left by a Nubian is *I.PhilaeDem.* 225, found on the west wall of Y.

hastily. The vertical line after the name of the goddess in l. 7 is a later scratch and does not belong to the inscription.

Ἀλέξαν-
δρος Ἀρίσ-
τωνος
ἤκω πρὸ-
5 ς τὴν κ-
υρίαν
Ἰσιν.

‘I, Alexandros, son of Ariston, have come to the lady Isis’.

1–3. Ἀλέξανδρος Ἀρίστωνος: both Alexandros and Ariston are well-known names in Graeco-Roman times, see Trismegistos People (available online at <https://www.trismegistos.org/ref/>), Nam_ID 1882 and 2299. The name Alexandros is attested in two other inscriptions from Philae. In 2/1 BCE, an Alexandros incised a graffito on the south wall of the First Pylon, using the same formula as the present inscription in combination with the προσκύνημα-phrase.¹⁶ And an Apollonios, son of Alexandros, left an inscription of the ἤκω-type, again in combination with the προσκύνημα-phrase, on the north wall of the First Pylon, dating to the Roman period,¹⁷ which given the letter-forms is also a likely date for our text.¹⁸

4–7. ἤκω πρὸς τὴν κυρίαν Ἰσιν: this is an inscription of the ἤκω ‘I have come’-type, which is among the most common formulae in Philaean epigraphy and, like variants such as ἦλθον ‘I came’, expresses the worshipful presence with a deity of a visitor to a temple at the end of a journey.¹⁹ The description of the goddess to whom the journey was made as ἡ κυρία Ἰσις ‘the lady Isis’ is the most frequently attested form of addressing her on the island,²⁰ and the formula ἤκω πρὸς τὴν κυρίαν Ἰσιν ‘I have come to the lady Isis’ widespread.²¹ We can thus add another attestation of the familiar formula to this group.

¹⁶ *I.Philae* II 148.

¹⁷ *I.Philae* II 270.

¹⁸ Cf. e.g. the way the κ is written in ll. 4–5, featuring short obliques not reaching the end of the script line at top and bottom, with the two previously mentioned inscriptions, and the υ in l. 6, with a long vertical and relatively short obliques at the top, as in *I.Philae* II 148.1. We would like to thank Adam Łajtar for sharing his opinion on the dating of the script.

¹⁹ For the ἤκω-formula at Philae, see esp. *I.Philae* II, pp. 9–10; for the symbolism behind it, Dijkstra, *Philae and the End* (n. 9), 189.

²⁰ *I.Philae* I, p. 61; II, p. 29.

²¹ *I.Philae* I 22.2–4, 26.2, 30.2–3, 33.4–5, 34.2–3, 45.1–2, 46.1–2, 47.2–3, 48.1–2, 52.6, 56.2, 57.3–4, 82.1–2, 85.3, 93.1–3, 117.1–2; II 132.2–3, 148.1, 156.1, 288.1–2, 306.2–5, 321.2–3. Cf. the variant ἤκω πρὸς τὴν Ἰσιν τὴν κυρίαν found in *I.Philae* I 110.2–3, 111.3–4.

2. Inscription of Maron and Gorgias

This inscription is found around the corner from the previous one (1), on the east wall of the balustrade of the First Pylon, fourth row of blocks (Pl. 4, Fig. 4). While there are no graffiti dating from the Graeco-Roman period on the west wall of the balustrade, there are some on the same east wall as 2: an offering table and four depictions of animals, two of which are falcons, as well as a hieroglyphic graffito.²²

The text is quite deeply incised into the stone and the reading, mostly, clear. We first have the name Μάρων, then κα. In l. 2, written in smaller script, the following letters are οργία, but the first letter of the line, which is rendered as a horizontal stroke, defies interpretation. The most likely solution is that we have here two names connected by a καί, and the name Gorgias in the second line, with which we thus assume that the letter at the beginning of l. 2 is a γ (cf. the way the other γ is written, of which the horizontal line is at the same height),²³ and a letter is missing at the end of l. 1 and one at the end of l. 2. There does not seem to be anything missing around the text as read. Note, however, that the missing ι could have been lost in the joint in the stone to the right of κα. This may find confirmation in the modern visitor's inscription by one C. Revill — scratched in a bit further down below our inscription, where something of a following letter seems to continue on the block to the right, probably the lower horizontal of an 'e', but most of it is lost in the joint. In any case, even if the ι was written in l. 1, it does not explain the absence of the ζ at the end of the name Gorgias in l. 2.

Μάρων κα<ι>

Γ.οργία<ζ>

‘Maron and Gorgias’.

1–2. Μάρων κα<ι> Γ.οργία<ζ>: the name Maron is quite common in the Graeco-Roman period, but Gorgias is much rarer, see Trismegistos People, Nam_ID 3988 and 3357. The latter name is not attested beyond the third century CE.

3. Inscription with Feet of Pachoumios

Moving to the roof of the Birthhouse, 3 has been incised above a pair of feet (Pl. 5, Fig. 5) on the pavement of the lower part (Y), about in the middle, with on an adjoining slab a similar pair of feet with inscription, this one in demotic for a priest of Isis (name

²² The hieroglyphic graffito is *I.PhilaeDem.* 605, an invocation of Isis. Note that the other two graffiti mentioned in n. 7 above, *I.PhilaeDem.* 74, 606, are found on the south jamb of the door leading from the balustrade up to the west tower, not on the bridge itself. Opposite these two, just west of the north jamb of the same door, is a small offering table.

²³ Another option would be that the letter is a τ, written without the vertical, as in *I.Philae* II 270.6, 14, but that does not yield any satisfactory reading.

lost),²⁴ suggesting that we may be dealing here with a priest, too. The Greek letters are arranged in neat, triangular fashion above the pair of feet, which feature toes and even their nails. This item was included as a bilingual demotic-Greek text by Eugene Cruz-Urbe in his edition of demotic graffiti from Philae, but what he sees as demotic signs to the left of the π are clearly destructions in the surface (as there are many on this slab), and so it needs to be struck from his edition.²⁵ Moreover, he reads the Greek as ΠΑΧΟΜ, missing several letters, and does not provide any commentary on the text, while his drawing of the feet, especially the right foot, also leaves out several details.²⁶ We thus provide here a new drawing (Pl. 5, Fig. 6) and proper edition of the text.

Παχουμίου

‘Of Pachoumios’.

1. Παχουμίου: the name *P3-ḥm* (‘the holy falcon’) and its Greek equivalent Pachoumios (and variants) is one of the most attested names on Philae and typically, as can be expected given its meaning, a name carried by priests.²⁷ We are therefore almost certainly dealing here with a priest as well, even if the name is generally a popular one at this time (Trismegistos People, Nam_ID 679). Interestingly, the name Pachoumios (and variants) is only found at Philae in Greek inscriptions of the fifth century CE, in particular, but not exclusively, referring to the Pachoumios who was a first prophet of Isis between at least 408/409 and 452 and the father of three brothers Smet, together constituting the last priestly family of Egypt.²⁸ It should also be noted that four of the five Greek inscriptions with feet published so far date to the fifth century, all left on the roof of the Isis temple and three of them by members of the Smet family.²⁹ Moreover,

²⁴ *I.PhilaeDem.* 892. At p. 220, Cruz-Urbe remarks that a boat was later incised over the text, but what he sees as a ‘boat’ are in fact lines to accentuate the box surrounding the demotic text and thus belong to the same graffito.

²⁵ See n. 10 above.

²⁶ Cruz-Urbe, *Demotic Graffiti* (n. 1), 220, with facsimile at p. 228.

²⁷ Griffith, *Catalogue of the Demotic Graffiti* (n. 1), 236–239 (no. 565); *I.Philae* II, p. 241; Dijkstra, *Philae and the End* (n. 9), 197; Cruz-Urbe, *Demotic Graffiti* (n. 1), 300.

²⁸ *I.Philae* II 188.2, 189.1 (Παχόμιος), 190.2, 193.2 (Πακόμιος), 196.2, 197.4, 15, 199.3 (Παχόμιος). Of these, the one in *I.Philae* II 190.2 (434 CE) is the father of a Pasnous, ‘prophet of Ptireus’ (of unknown status, see Dijkstra, *Philae and the End* [n. 9], 212–213), and the one in *I.Philae* II 199.3 also of a Pasnous, this one a *protoklinarchos* (456/457 CE); it is unclear whether it concerns the same person, cf. Dijkstra, *Philae and the End*, 214 (n. 117). The other 5 attestations concern the patron of the Smet family, whose name is thus spelled in three different ways (Πακόμιος, Παχόμιος, Παχούμιος). On this Pachoumios, see Dijkstra, *Philae and the End*, 198, with at n. 25 also his attestations in demotic: *I.Bj.Dem.* 6.2, and *I.PhilaeDem.* 240.2, 332.2, 343.1, 365.1, 366.1, 376.2 (from this list, *I.PhilaeDem.* 237 should now be removed, see Bélanger Sarrazin, Dijkstra, Hedley, Higgins, *Last Priests* [n. 13], 3). For the last priests of Philae in general, see Dijkstra, *Philae and the End*, 193–218 (Ch. 6).

²⁹ Greek inscriptions with feet: *I.Philae* II 188–189, 196, 198; *IThSy* 333; the first three are by members of the Smet family, while *I.Philae* II 198 is left by another person but at the same

we know that the fourth- and fifth-century priests of Philae left graffiti, though in demotic and not with feet, in various places in the Birthhouse, two on the upper part of the roof (Z), not far from our inscription.³⁰ It could therefore be that we are dealing here with one of the last priests of Philae. On the other hand, given the ubiquity of the name and the circumstance that the majority of the pairs of feet with text, 15 in total (adding 3–4),³¹ were left on the Birthhouse roof, of which the Meroitic ones no doubt date to the Roman period and the demotic ones probably as well,³² it is equally, if not more, likely that a priest left the feet and inscription at an earlier date.

4. Inscription of the προσκύνημα-type with feet

This inscription (Pl. 6, Fig. 7) is incised above a pair of feet on the upper part of the roof (Z), southern side, which has the largest concentration of foot graffiti of the roof and Z, with 38 in total, that is, over half of all foot graffiti on this surface.³³ The inscription with feet is found on the south-eastern corner slab of the roof, amidst 7 other graffiti, including 2 single feet and 3 pairs of feet. The latter are all with text as is the case with our pair of feet: to the west is a pair of feet, pointing to the north, with above it a demotic inscription, now lost under modern cement, to the east, in the same direction as our graffiti, the east, a fine pair of feet in sunken relief with above it a Meroitic text in a box, to which is added, to the left of the sunken feet, a cruder pair, its left part almost entirely covered by cement, and, to the right, another Meroitic text, no

late date, 454/455 CE; *IThSy* 333, on the other hand, was found on a loose block and dates to the Roman period. Of these, *I.Philae* II 189, dated to 411/412 CE, is the only text with the name above the feet in the genitive, as in 3, and it is also the only text in which Pachoumios is not referred to in the form of a patronymic. We agree with *I.Philae* II, p. 221 that we probably have to supply the word ‘The feet’ before the genitive, inspired on the demotic formula, as becomes clear from *I.Philae* II 188, which belongs to the same pair of feet as *I.PhilaeDem.* 376 (the demotic written above, the Greek below the feet) and ‘translates’ the demotic with the unique formula Πόδας ‘The feet of’ + name. It should be noted that the date, only expressed as a number, remains doubtful (though the script, in particular the α and ιο in ligature, does suggest a late date), and this could be another person. Despite a photo of the stone housed in the Graeco-Roman Museum in Alexandria (inv. no. 11850), kindly sent to us by Thomas Faucher, we are unable to read the inscription to the right and below *I.Philae* II 189 (also visible on Pl. 99), above another pair of feet (the right part of its right foot not preserved) and deemed ‘illisible’, though it seems to end on -ο; in any case, this inscription needs to be added to the total number of Greek inscriptions from Philae. Besides *I.PhilaeDem.* 376, the other demotic foot graffiti on the roof of the Isis temple, *I.PhilaeDem.* 377 (of which the feet have disappeared, as is the case with *I.PhilaeDem.* 242 and *I.PhilaeMer.* 116, see above, n. 13), is by someone else than one of the last priests and could well be earlier. Cf. *I.PhilaeDem.* 444–445, also with feet, found elsewhere and undated.

³⁰ *I.PhilaeDem.* 96, 159, 194, 211, 236 (roof), 240 (roof). Cf. *I.PhilaeDem.* 237, which can no longer be counted among the graffiti of the last priests of Philae, see n. 28 above.

³¹ See n. 13 above (we also count here the texts with the formula ‘The feet of’/‘This pair of feet of’ + name, of which the feet have been lost).

³² Bélanger Sarrazin, Dijkstra, Hedley, Higgins, *Last Priests* (n. 13), 3–4.

³³ Cf. n. 14: there are 70 foot graffiti on Z.

doubt by someone in the entourage of the Nubian official who left the nicer feet during his visit to the site.³⁴ The pair of feet belonging to the Greek inscription contains toenails and X's to indicate sandal straps (Pl. 6, Fig. 8).³⁵ In between the feet is a palm branch, a common sign of devotion. To the right is a scratch, which may or may not have been incised by the maker of the graffito. The Greek text is nicely centred above the feet. Unfortunately, due to the worn surface, it is extremely difficult to read it, except for the beginning of l. 1.

Τὸ προσκύ<νη>μα
traces

‘The *proskynema* of ...’.

1. Τὸ προσκύ<νη>μα: the first seven letters of this line are clear and read τοπροσκ, which indicates that we have here the formula Τὸ προσκύνημα + name. And indeed, there follow traces of three letters, which can be read as υμα, of which in particular the four-stroke μ is well visible. As with the ἥκω-formula, inscriptions of the προσκύνημα-type are extremely common on Philae and generally in a Graeco-Roman Egyptian temple context, and also express the worshipful presence with a deity.³⁶ The spelling προσκύμα instead of προσκύνημα can be explained as a kind of haplography due to the similar-sounding syllables κυ and νη, and is attested in other graffiti as well (e.g. *I.Syringes* 1583.1–2 [Western Thebes]; *SB* I 4134 = *I.Ko.Ko.* 85.1 [Wadi Hammamat; Roman period]; *SB* I 4575.1 [Kalabsha; Roman period]; cf. *IThSy* 279 [Elephantine; Roman period], which has προσκύμα, after which νη was written above it). Since the symbolism behind inscriptions of the προσκύνημα-type comes from the same realm as that of foot representations, the combination here is not surprising.³⁷ It is also found in a graffito from the pavement of the podium of the Meroitic temple complex at Qasr Ibrim in Lower Nubia, dating to around the late Ptolemaic–early Roman period, where Τὸ προσκύνημα (without name), is written, perpendicularly, within a right foot.³⁸

³⁴ The demotic text, left by a priest of Isis, is *I.PhilaeDem.* 234; the Meroitic texts are *I.PhilaeMer.* 112–113, with Griffith’s commentary at p. 42.

³⁵ Note that in this drawing, unlike Fig. 6, we did not copy the Greek text as it cannot be entirely read.

³⁶ Dijkstra, *Philae and the End* (n. 9), 187–188.

³⁷ J. H. F. Dijkstra, *Syene I. The Figural and Textual Graffiti from the Temple of Isis at Aswan* (Beiträge zur ägyptischen Bauforschung und Altertumskunde 18), Darmstadt, Mainz 2012, 43–44.

³⁸ P. Wilson in P. J. Rose, *The Meroitic Temple Complex at Qasr Ibrim* (Egypt Exploration Society Excavation Memoir 84), London 2007, 109 (no. PS 118, Fig. 18.14, Pl. 18.5), with p. 120 for the date. There is some caution in the editor’s transcription, but the photo indicates that the reading is clear.

2. Only traces of the name can be discerned. The first letter might be a π and the one below $\rho\omega$ in the previous line could be a χ , but too little of the letters survives to warrant a reading.

Appendix: A Note on *I.Philae* II 284

We end with a note on an already published text, *I.Philae* II 284. It is found on the stairs leading from the bridge between the towers of the Second Pylon upwards in the east tower, on the south wall, near the top (Pl. 7, Fig. 9).³⁹ Even more than the interior of the First Pylon, that of the Second Pylon, which can be reached through a door in the south-west corner of the *pronaos*, then taking the steps upwards in the west tower towards the bridge, strikes one as a space mainly for priests. There are 79 demotic graffiti from these parts, 23 from a passage at the top of the stairs in the west tower, similar to the corridor in the First Pylon (though there it extends into a longer passage), where we also find some figural graffiti such as a falcon, a horned altar and a standing man before a seated deity, and 47 from the balustrade.⁴⁰ When an occupation is mentioned, these are invariably priests and priestly personnel. This high number contrasts with the Greek inscriptions, of which we only have 3 in the passage of the west tower, 1 on the bridge (which actually forms a bilingual text with a demotic graffito), and 1 on the stairs in the east tower, the text which is the focus of this note.⁴¹ As with the First Pylon bridge, we can therefore posit that this area was mostly off-limits to laymen, though as there we cannot completely exclude that visitors were allowed up in exceptional cases.⁴²

The text in the east tower was included by Francis Ll. Griffith as *I.PhilaeDem.* 321, which he describes as ‘demotic with reversed Greek’ and transcribes as Πετε-*p-šr* (?), with the comment ‘unfinished’. Already in the original edition (which was published posthumously), Sir Herbert Thompson added that the reading Πετεῶρ could also be entertained. The confusion is then not resolved in *I.Philae* II 284, which, based on Griffith’s facsimile,⁴³ renders the text, written from right to left, as Πετεῶρ, with the comment: ‘Les lettres pointées ne sont pas sûres et ressemblent à des caractères

³⁹ Cf. *I.Philae* II, p. 360, which erroneously locates it ‘au sommet des marches, à gauche en montant’, which should be ‘à droite’.

⁴⁰ West tower, staircase and passage to bridge: *I.PhilaeDem.* 264–282, 912–915. Bridge: *I.PhilaeDem.* 283–319, 916–925. Stairs in east tower: *I.PhilaeDem.* 320, 322–325. Location within Second Pylon unknown: *I.PhilaeDem.* 326–329.

⁴¹ West tower, staircase and passage to bridge: *I.Philae* II 164, 183, 283. Bridge: *I.Philae* II 182 (which belongs to *I.PhilaeDem.* 302). Stairs in east tower: *I.Philae* II 284. We ignore here *I.Philae* II 240, a Christian text.

⁴² Though it remains difficult to know for sure, e.g. *I.Philae* II 183, a *dipinto* (now lost) dated to the later Roman period on the basis of letter forms for Σεῶ[ς] καὶ | Εὐώνυμ[ος] and similar to our no. 2, may well have been left by two visitors. For Seos, see Trismegistos People, NamVar_ID 4476, for Euonymos Nam_ID 35454 (only attested at Philae, but otherwise known from outside Egypt, see *LGN* s.v.).

⁴³ Griffith, *Catalogue of the Demotic Graffiti* (n. 1), included both at p. 248 (no. 630) and as Pl. XLIX.

démotiques’. The text is dated to the Roman period, which indeed seems correct. Perhaps what threw the Bernand brothers off was Griffith’s facsimile, which includes two small strokes on either side of final ρ, but these are destructions in the stone and do not belong to the text. When looking closely at the inscription (Pl. 7, Fig. 10), it is evident that it was written in Greek only and by someone standing on the steps writing from right to left,⁴⁴ no doubt a priest. Thus, the inscription can be removed from the *corpus* of demotic graffiti from Philae,⁴⁵ and the transcription of *I.Philae* II 284 improved.

Πετῆωρ

‘Peteor’.

1. Πετῆωρ: the name is written in reverse, with both ε’s in mirror image, but the closing ρ again as one would write from left to right. The name Peteor is a variant of *P3-di-Hr* ‘He who was given by Horus’ (Trismegistos People, Nam_ID 861), and as such, like *P3-ḥm* (above), a fitting name for a priest at Philae, as appears from numerous attestations in the demotic graffiti.⁴⁶ The spelling Πετῆωρ (Trismegistos People, NamVar_ID 45452) is only attested in one other text, the mummy label *SB XIV* 12193 i 1 (third century CE).

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⁴⁴ For this phenomenon, see J. K. Winnicki, *Vier demotische Graffiti in den Königsgräbern in Theben*, *Enchoria* 15 (1987) 163–168 at 164–166, who cites some further examples, as well as A. Łajtar, *Deir el-Bahari in the Hellenistic and Roman Periods: A Study of an Egyptian Temple Based on Greek Sources* (JJP Supplements 4), Warsaw 2006, 312.

⁴⁵ Hence it is not included in n. 40 above.

⁴⁶ Griffith, *Catalogue of the Demotic Graffiti* (n. 1), 260–261 (no. 667) and Cruz-Urbe, *Demotic Graffiti* (n. 1), 303–304, with following variants.



Fig. 1: Plan of central part of the temple complex at Philae (drawing courtesy of Aegaron, <http://digital2.library.ucla.edu/dlcontent/aegaron/pdf/0191>)

zu R. Bélanger Sarrazin, J. H. F. Dijkstra, N. Hedley, S. C. Higgins, S. 2



Fig. 2: Door to the eastern tower of the First Pylon, showing the location of no. 1 (and no. 2, one block higher on the east wall of the bridge; photograph: J. H. F. Dijkstra; courtesy of Philae Temple Text Project, Austrian Academy of Sciences)

zu R. Bélanger Sarrazin, J. H. F. Dijkstra, N. Hedley, S. C. Higgins, S. 5



Fig. 3: Inscription no. 1 (photograph: J. H. F. Dijkstra;
courtesy of Philae Temple Text Project, Austrian Academy of Sciences)

zu R. Bélanger Sarrazin, J. H. F. Dijkstra, N. Hedley, S. C. Higgins, S. 5

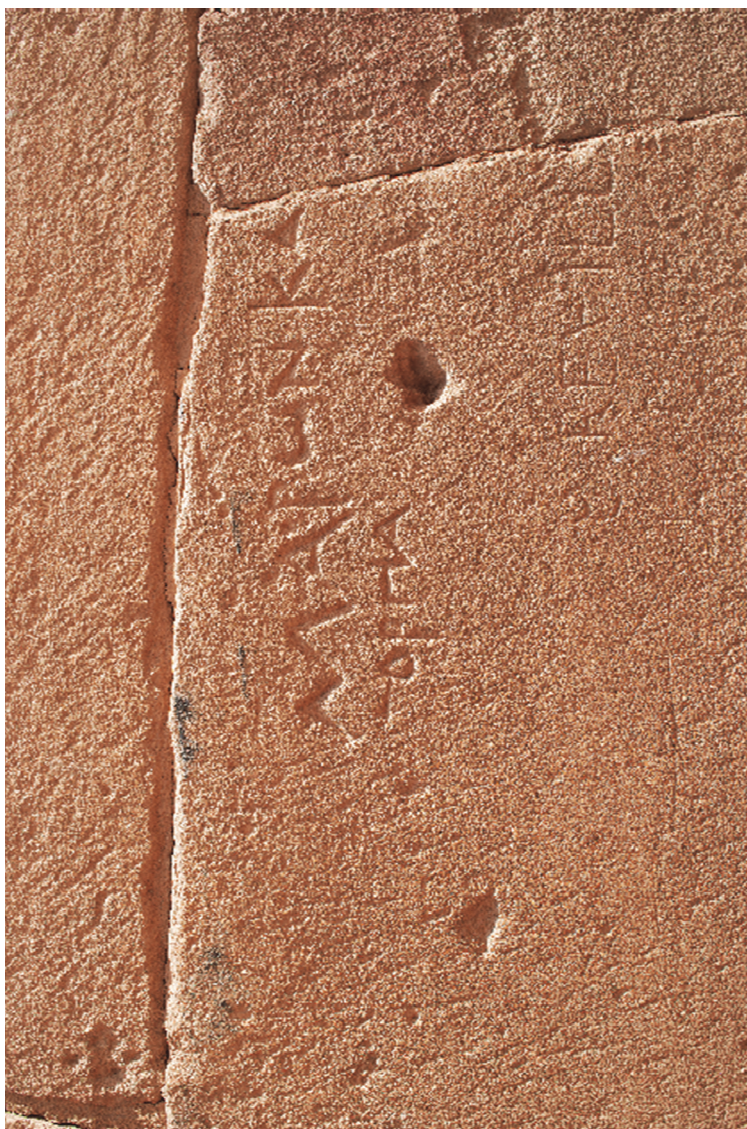


Fig. 4: Inscription no. 2 (photograph: J. H. F. Dijkstra;
courtesy of Philae Temple Text Project, Austrian Academy of Sciences)

zu R. Bélanger Sarrazin, J. H. F. Dijkstra, N. Hedley, S. C. Higgins, S. 7



Figs 5 and 6: Inscription no. 3 (photograph and drawing: J. H. F. Dijkstra; courtesy of Philae Temple Text Project, Austrian Academy of Sciences)

zu R. Bélanger Sarrazin, J. H. F. Dijkstra, N. Hedley, S. C. Higgins, S. 7 und 8



Greek inscription



Figs 7 and 8: Inscription no. 4 (photograph and drawing: J. H. F. Dijkstra; courtesy of Philae Temple Text Project, Austrian Academy of Sciences)

zu R. Bélanger Sarrazin, J. H. F. Dijkstra, N. Hedley, S. C. Higgins, S. 9 und 10



Fig. 9: Steps to roof in the east tower of the Second Pylon, showing the location of
I.Philae II 284 (photograph: J. H. F. Dijkstra;
courtesy of Philae Temple Text Project, Austrian Academy of Sciences)



Fig. 10: *I.Philae* II 284 (photograph: J. H. F. Dijkstra;
courtesy of Philae Temple Text Project, Austrian Academy of Sciences)

zu R. Bélanger Sarrazin, J. H. F. Dijkstra, N. Hedley, S. C. Higgins, S. 11 und 12