
UCLA ENCYCLOPEDIA *of* EGYPTOLOGY

PHILAE
فيلة

Holger Kockelmann

EDITORS

WILLEKE WENDRICH

Editor-in-Chief

Area Editor Geography

University of California, Los Angeles

JACCO DIELEMAN

Editor

University of California, Los Angeles

ELIZABETH FROOD

Editor

University of Oxford

JOHN BAINES

Senior Editorial Consultant

University of Oxford

Short Citation:

Kockelmann, 2012, Philae. *UEE*.

Full Citation:

Kockelmann, Holger, 2012, Philae. In Willeke Wendrich (ed.), *UCLA Encyclopedia of Egyptology*, Los Angeles. <http://digital2.library.ucla.edu/viewItem.do?ark=21198/zz002bwv5j>

8490 Version 1, April 2012

<http://digital2.library.ucla.edu/viewItem.do?ark=21198/zz002bwv5j>

Philae
Philae

The island of Philae, located amid the First Cataract some 7 kilometers south of modern Aswan, housed an ancient settlement and one of the most extensive and best preserved temple complexes of Ptolemaic and Roman Egypt. Together with the abaton on the neighboring island of Biga, Philae was the most important cultic center of Isis and Osiris in Upper Egypt and Nubia. According to the ground plan published by Lyons in 1896, the island measured c. 385 meters in length (orientated south-north) and c. 176 meters in width. Today it is submerged in the lake between the first Aswan Dam and the modern Aswan High Dam. For their preservation, the monuments of Philae were transferred to the nearby island of Agilkia.

تقع جزيرة فيلة في منتصف الشلال الأول بالنيل حوالي سبعة كيلومترات جنوب مدينة أسوان الحالية ، وتضم مستوطنة قديمة بالإضافة الي واحد من أكبر وأفضل معابد العصر البطلمي والروماني حفظا. قديما أعتبر كلا من فيلة و«الأباتون» (أي المكان الخفي) الواقع بجزيرة بيجا المجاورة لها أحد أهم مراكز عبادة إيزيس وأوزوريس بمصر العليا والنوبة. طبقاً للخريطة التي نشرها ليون عام 1896م، بلغت مساحة الجزيرة حوالي 385 متر طولاً باتجاه شمال جنوب، وباتساع 176 متر عرضاً. حالياً الجزيرة غارقة في البحيرة الممتدة فيما بين سد أسوان القديم والسد العالي، وللحفاظ علي آثارها وحمايتها من الغرق تم نقل ثار جزيرة فيلة إلي جزيرة أجيليكيا المجاورة.

The Egyptian denomination of Philae, (*Pz-Jrk*) (Coptic πιλαικ, πιλαικκ, Arabic بلاق; Timm 1984: 392), is attested from the 30th Dynasty (Nectanebo I) onward, unlike the abaton (*jw-wʿb*) on the neighboring island of Biga, attested since the 26th Dynasty (see Hölbl 2004: 41 and below; there is no reason to regard *jw-wʿb* as the ancient name of Philae as Kadry 1980: 297 did). Before the 30th Dynasty, Philae island may have been called “Takompso” (Winter 1982: 1025).

The meaning of (*Pz-Jrk*), which is probably of Nubian origin, remains obscure. In the

Roman Period, local priests interpreted this toponym as *Pz-jw-rk*, “the island of time” or “the island of the past” (Kákosy 1968). Phonetically, the Greek denomination Φιλαι (Calderini and Daris 1987: 79; Latin “Philae”) takes account of the Egyptian term “Pilak” (Hölbl 2004: 41; Locher 1999: 121 - 128); it is explained by classical authors as “(fem.) friends” or “friendship” (Dijkstra 2008: 142; Rutherford 1998: 233).

Monuments

The island of Philae was 385 meters long (orientated south-north) and 176 meters wide



Figure 1. Plan of Philae island, the letter designation follows Lyons

- | | | | |
|--|-----------------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------|
| A. Gate of Nectanebo/1 st Pylon | G. Temple of Hathor | M. Great Temple of Isis | R. Gate of Diocletian |
| B. Temple of Arensnuphis | I. "Gate of Hadrian" | O. Temple of Harendotes | Y. Eastern Colonnade |
| D. Chapel of Mandulis | K. Kiosk of Trajan | P. Western Church | Z. Western Colonnade |
| F. Temple of Imhotep | L. Prostyle Temple Augustus | Q. Eastern Church | |

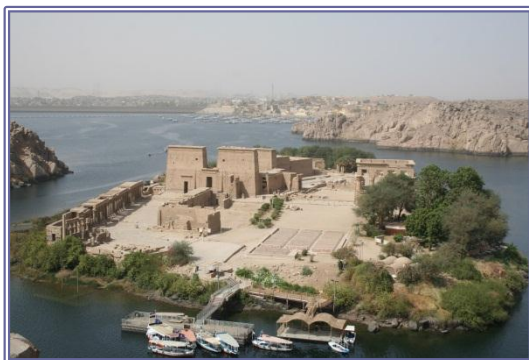


Figure 2. The temples of Philae at their new location on Agilkia island seen from the southeast.

according to the ground plan published by Lyons in 1896 (the scale of this plan is 1:533, not 1:600 as stated on the plan itself; for further details, see [Aegaron](#) metadata).

Philae in its original location, when the island had not been flooded by the water level rise that was the effect of the first Aswan Dam, comprised more than a dozen still-standing monuments dating from the end of the Late Period to Christian times. At least two-thirds of the temple buildings were constructed and decorated during the Ptolemaic era. Most of the remaining third derives from the time of Augustus to Nero. There was also a Meroitic contribution to the sanctuaries of Philae by Arkamani (Ergamenes) II, when Ptolemaic control of Upper Egypt was temporarily lost in the late third and early second century BCE (Winter 1981).

The main building complex of Philae is the Great Temple of Isis located in the center of the island (fig. 1 “M” and fig. 2); it was erected during the third and second centuries BCE and decorated from the time of Ptolemy II onward. Apparently, Philae’s upsurge was related to Ptolemaic economic benefits, notably the endowment of the Dodekaschoinos, the southernmost province of Ptolemaic-Roman Egypt between Aswan and the Wadi Allaqi, forming an approximately 75 mile (12 *schoenoi*) long border region along the Nile (Dietze 1994: 69; Hölbl 1994: 78 - 79, 166; Locher 1999: 152). The plan to promote the cult of Isis on Philae



Figure 3. Kiosk of Nectanebo seen from the northeast.

may go back to Ptolemy I (Haeny 1985: 207) or Nectanebo I (Arnold 1999: 122).

The oldest still-standing temple structures derive from the reign of Nectanebo I: A gate of the Late Period temple complex of Isis (Arnold 1999: 119) was integrated into the first pylon of the Ptolemaic Isis Temple; a kiosk, restored under Ptolemy II, was reerected in the southwest corner of the island (fig. 1 “A” and fig. 3), presumably in the time between Ptolemy VIII and Ptolemy XII (Arnold 1999: 119; Dietze 1994: 72; Haeny 1985: 206; Hölbl 2004: 43). In addition, a small number of reused blocks dating to Nectanebo I’s reign have been detected (Farak et al. 1978).

Close to the kiosk of Nectanebo I, the modest temple of the Nubian god Arensnuphis is located (fig. 1 “B”), erected on the remains of an older building (Arnold 1999: 178). It goes back at least to Ptolemy IV; after that king, Arkamani (Ergamenes) II (Winter 1981: 510), Ptolemy V, Ptolemy VI or VIII, and Tiberius enlarged or decorated the temple (Arnold 1999: 190; Haeny 1985: 220 - 221; Winter 1982: 1022). The sanctuary of Arensnuphis, who had a cult association on the island (Locher 1999: 138) and whose worship is rarely attested further north (Chauveau 1995: 254 commentary on no. 130), is a tribute to the Nubian-Egyptian cultural environment in which Philae is embedded.

To the north lies the large, paved, trapezoidal forecourt of the Temple of Isis

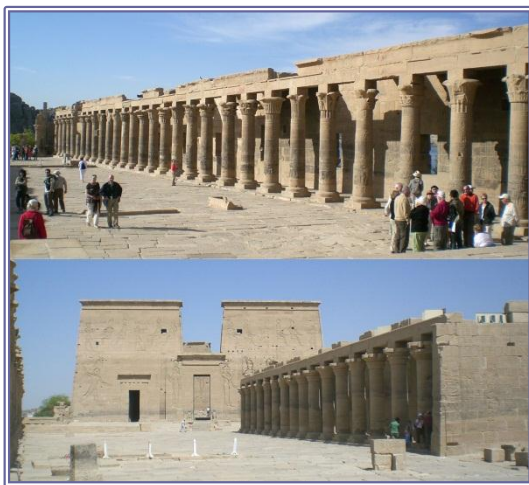


Figure 4. Forecourt of the Temple of Isis with western colonnade seen from the northeast (top) and first eastern colonnade with first pylon of Isis from the southwest (bottom).



Figure 5. Gate of Philadelphus from the southwest.

with a nilometer (Giammarusti and Roccati 1980: 32 - 33, 72 - 73) and colonnades on

either side (fig. 1 and fig. 4; Haeny 1985: 218; Jaritz 1991: 179). The court, perhaps inspired by Hellenistic public spaces (Baines 1997: 233 - 234), was created under Ptolemy VI or VIII (Hölbl 2004: 42) and destined to receive visitors during festivities (I. dem. Dakka 30, l. 7, see Griffith 1935 - 1937, Vol. 2: 29). Its colonnades with their great variety in capital types (Arnold 1999: 149) were established in Augustean time. The 77 m long western colonnade (fig. 1 “Z”) with 32 columns and 12 openings in the rear wall was decorated under Augustus, Tiberius, Claudius, and Nero and served as a pronaos of the sanctuaries located on the neighboring abaton (Jaritz 1991: 185).

The 42 meter long, largely unfinished first eastern colonnade (fig. 1 “Y”) with 16 columns functioned as a common vestibule for the sanctuaries located behind the rear wall (Jaritz 1991: 180), which were accessible through six doors. One of the chapels was consecrated to the Nubian divinity Mandulis (fig. 1 “D”), whose cult on Philae is probably mentioned in a Greek inscription from the middle of the second century BCE (SB VIII 9737; see Locher 1999: 137; Haeny 1985: 222). Behind the northern end of the rear wall of the first eastern colonnade, the temple of Imhotep is situated (fig. 1 “F”); it was dedicated by Ptolemy V, possibly in gratitude for the birth of his son Ptolemy VI (Arnold 1999: 181; Lanciers 1986: 97).

North of the temple of Imhotep stands the so-called “Gate of Philadelphus” (fig. 1 and fig. 5), which may have already been erected in the 30th Dynasty for the Late Period Temple of Isis (Arnold 1999: 119). Later it was decorated by Ptolemy II (and Tiberius) and joined to the Ptolemaic first pylon of Isis (Hölbl 2004: 55, fig. 67).

On the west side of Philae lie a number of undecorated stone structures of unknown purpose (fig. 1); moreover, a stairway led to the shore (Arnold 1999: 264). At the height of the pronaos, the so-called “Gate of Hadrian” (fig. 1 “I” and fig. 6) is situated, which is actually a corridor-like passage with decorated side walls and a now lost columned porch

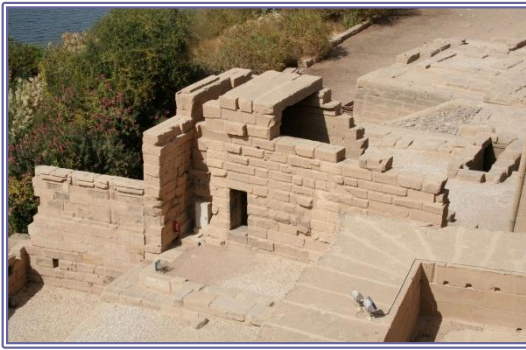


Figure 6. Gate of Hadrian from the south.



Figure 7. Temple of Harendotes from the southeast.

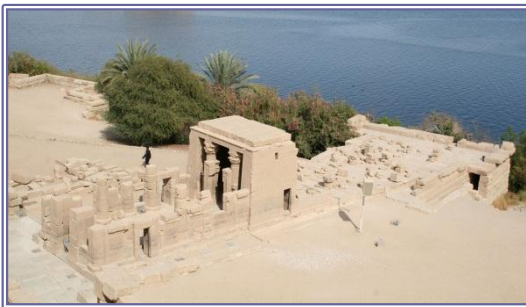


Figure 8. Temple of Hathor from the southwest.

attached to its west exit (Arnold 1999: 264; Haeny 1985: 215 - 216). It is the latest cultic building on Philae with proper, though not fully completed temple reliefs, datable to between c. 117 and 180 CE (Hadrian, Marcus Aurelius, and Lucius Verus, see Hölbl 2004: 89 and 96). Originally, the gate was located opposite the mooring chapel on Biga and served as a departure point for the bark procession of Isis to the tomb of Osiris on the abaton. Among other things, it bears the

abaton decree with regulations concerning the cult of Osiris on Biga (Junker 1913) and a text recording the donation of a vineyard to the Temple of Isis (Junker 1924). A depiction of the god Mandulis is accompanied by the youngest datable hieroglyphic inscription from Egypt (August 24, 394 CE, see Hölbl 2004: 96, fig. 129).

A short distance north of the Gate of Hadrian lies the temple of Harendotes (fig. 1 “O” and fig. 7), which was decorated by Claudius (Arnold 1999: 252; Giammarusti and Roccati 1980: 74). Only the pavement and lowest course of blocks remain (Haeny 1985: 216); many blocks were reused in the Western Church (see below; Winter 1976: 13, 1982: 1023).

On the east side of the Temple of Isis stands the temple of Hathor (fig. 1 “G” and fig. 8), which was decorated under Ptolemy VI, Ptolemy VIII, and Augustus and once had its own mud-brick enclosure wall. A block built into walls close to the temple also mentions Ptolemy XII (Hölbl 2004: 43; Lepsius 1901: 170γ; Minas 1997: 108; Morardet 1981; Winter 1982: 1023). The columned vestibule on its west was added under Augustus (Daumas 1968 - 1969: 1) or earlier, rather than Tiberius (thus Arnold 1999: 248 and 192, fig. 141; Haeny 1985: 230). In the mid-first century CE, a quay-platform was annexed on the east side. The cult of the temple focused on Hathor as embodiment of the Sun’s Eye that was brought back from Nubia.

Some 20 meters south is the unfinished “Kiosk of Trajan” (fig. 1 “K” and fig. 9; “Pharaoh’s Bed”; Lyons 1908: 15), whose southern screen walls were decorated with two offering scenes under this emperor; the actual building may date to the reign of Augustus (Haeny 1985: 230). It probably served as a resting point during processions (Arnold 1999: 235). At the western end of the path that linked the kiosk with the Gate of Philadelphus there is a small undecorated Roman chapel (fig. 1; Hölbl 2004: 92, fig. 124).

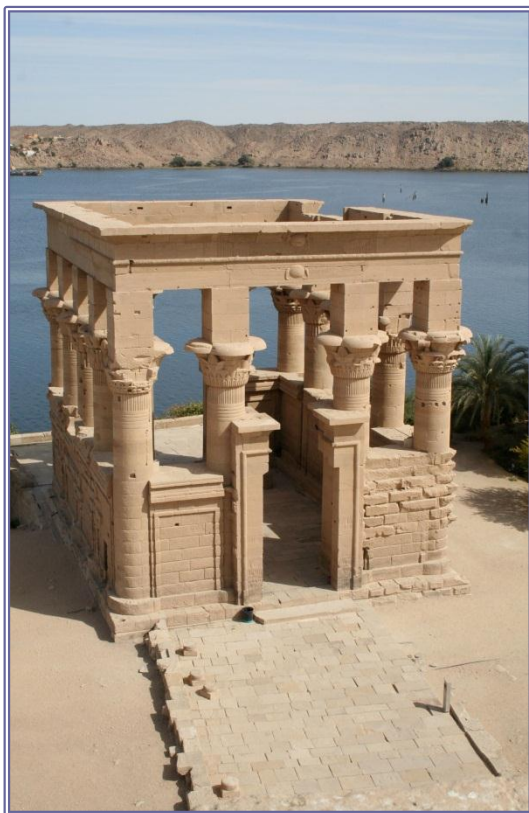


Figure 9. Kiosk of Trajan from the west. In the background, relicts of the cofferdam, which was built around Old Philae, emerging from the water.

The north end of the island is occupied by a prostyle temple in classical architecture of the Ptolemaic and Roman Periods, dedicated to the cult of Augustus (fig. 1 “L” and fig. 10). Built by the prefect P. Rubrius Barbarus, it was “one of the first Roman-style buildings in the East” (Arnold 1999: 237). Here a trilingual stela of the first governor of Egypt G. Cornelius Gallus was discovered, who defeated a revolt in the Thebaid and put the Triakontaschoinos, a thirty *schoenoi* long border area, of which the Dodekaschoinos formed part, under Rome’s supremacy (Hoffmann et al. 2009).

To the east of the temple of Augustus is the Roman-style Gate of Diocletian (fig. 1 “R” and fig. 10; Arnold 1999: 226; Dijkstra 2008: 27 with note 126; Locher 1999: 132). It was thought to represent the rest of a late Roman fortification, established after Diocletian had abandoned the Dodekaschoinos and moved



Figure 10. Temple of Augustus and Gate of Diocletian from the west.

the frontier to the region of Philae. More likely, it was a freestanding triumphal arch (Haeny 1985: 232).

As the latest historic stone buildings of the island, two churches were located in the area between the temple of Augustus and the Temple of Isis. The Western Church (fig. 1 “P”) was dedicated to Maria (mid-eighth century, see Giammarusti and Roccati 1980: 79). The Eastern Church (fig. 1 “Q”) might have belonged to the episcopate of bishop Theodorus (c. 525 - 577 CE; Grossmann 1970: 41). When the edifices of Philae were moved to Agilkia Island (see below), the two churches could not be saved. The late antique and Arabic mud-brick houses, which covered large parts of the island until the late nineteenth century, had already been removed (Lyons 1908: 16) or washed away.

Early History of Philae

The history of the temples of Philae reaches back to the 25th Dynasty; a single spoil of Senusret III (Giammarusti and Roccati 1980: 55 n. 4) and a few reused Ramesside blocks do not testify to earlier temple building activity on the island (Farag et al. 1979; Haeny 1985: 200 - 201).

Eighteen blocks of Taharqo, reemployed as filler of the Ptolemaic buildings, probably stem from the first cultic edifice on Philae. Judging from the Kushite spoils, the island was not yet consecrated to the goddess Isis, but maybe to Amun (Arnold 1999: 43; Dietze 1994: 68; Giammarusti and Roccati 1980: 57; Winter 1982: 1025). The earliest attestations

of the cult of Isis derive from the 26th Dynasty. Some 300 reused blocks from a temple of Amasis were found in the Ptolemaic Temple of Isis (Farag et al. 1976; Farid 1980). Apparently, Isis played a major role in the decoration of the Saite edifice. This presumed Late Period forerunner of the Ptolemaic-Roman temple was probably located in the area of the later second pylon and only had three aligned rooms (Haeny 1985: 202; Hölbl 2004: 41). Another modest Saitic building was the kiosk of Psammetichus II on the west side of the island. As it is not entirely sure whether the edifice of Taharqo was actually erected on Philae or later transferred there as building material, this kiosk is the oldest structure that definitely stood on Philae (Haeny 1985: 202); the inscriptions of the kiosk allude to the abaton (Giammarusti and Roccati 1980: 58; Kadry 1980). Its erection may relate to Psammetichus' military campaign against the Kushites (Arnold 1999: 76 - 77); conceivably, Saite troops introduced the cult of Isis on the island when they restored Egypt's southern frontier (Haeny 1985: 202).

The Philae temples of the 26th and 30th Dynasties were considerably smaller than their Ptolemaic-Roman successors. While the latter and the abaton are referred to by several classical authors (e.g., Diodorus Siculus I.22 and 27; Strabon XVII.49; Seneca Nat. quaest. IVa,2,7; Plutarch De I. et O., 20), the Saite sanctuary is not mentioned in the fifth century opus by Herodotus, probably because Philae had not yet become an important cult center (Haeny 1985: 207).

The Ptolemaic-Roman cult of Isis and Osiris on Philae attracted numerous pilgrims and visitors (Cruz-Urbe 2002: 176 - 177; Rutherford 1998: 230), who left hundreds of votive inscriptions and other graffiti in Demotic (Griffith 1935 - 1937), Greek, Latin (Bernand and Bernand 1969), and Meroitic (Griffith 1912). Certain visitors were of elevated social status, like Hermias, governor of the Thebaid (c. 120 BCE; Roccati 1981: 329 - 330, no. 11); apparently, also Ptolemaic kings were among those who traveled to the island (e.g., Bingen 1997: 93 - 94; Hölbl 1994:

143; Rutherford 1998: 236). In Hellenistic times, devotees came from as far as Greece, Crete, and Asia Minor. During the Roman Period, we encounter pilgrims primarily from Egypt and Nubia (Dijkstra 2008: 186; Hölbl 2004: 51 - 53). Noteworthy are the Meroitic delegations that visited the island regularly in the third century CE (Hölbl 2004: 54 and 89) and donated precious cult objects to the temple. The strong presence of Meroites, who had their own cultic room in the second eastern colonnade (Dijkstra 2008: 135 and 184; Rutherford 1998: 234), was already noted in the late first century BCE by Strabon (XVII.49).

From the fourth to sixth century, Christian religion became gradually dominant in Philae and in the region of Aswan. By the mid-fourth century, Philae had its own bishop (Macedonius, attested in 343 CE); the diocese on the island must have been founded around the same time. Irrespective of this, traditional Egyptian temple cults continued for more than another century and were the last Egyptian cults to survive. Priests of Isis left Demotic graffiti as late as the fifth century CE (Griffith 1935 - 1937, Vol. 2: 104 - 105, no. 370 and no. 372), and the cult image of Isis was still worshipped in 451/452 CE, as is verified by an agreement between the officer Maximinus and the Blemmyes and Nobades. This arrangement guaranteed the Nubian tribes free access to the Temple of Isis; moreover, they were granted permission to carry the statue of Isis to their homeland for a period of time, as they used to do (Cruz-Urbe 2002: 171 - 172, 181; Rutherford 1998: 234 - 235). Besides the worship of Isis, other cults subsisted in the fifth century, as did the cult for the hybrid deity Ptireus (Dijkstra 2008: 211 - 213; Hölbl 2004: 60). This long continuity may be partly ascribed to the steady support by the peoples of the south, such as the Meroites, Blemmyes, and Nobades (Dijkstra 2008: 172 - 173). In the third and fourth centuries CE, Egyptian and Christian religion existed side by side on the island. Later tradition presents their relations as fairly hostile, cf. the Coptic text "Life of Aaron," preserved in a manuscript from the tenth

century, but probably originally from the sixth century. It relates how the aforementioned bishop Macedonius ended the Egyptian cults by killing the last sacred falcon of Philae (Hölbl 2004: 54).

Despite the edict by Theodosius I that had prohibited traditional cults and subjected their followers to prosecution in 391 CE (resumed by Theodosius II in 438/439 CE; Griffiths 1986; Rutherford 1998: 234), the official end of Egyptian religion on Philae did not come before the sixth century CE, when the Temple of Isis was officially closed by general Narses on orders of emperor Justinian (535 - 537 CE). According to Procopius (Pers. I, 19.31 - 37), the temples were destroyed, their priests arrested, and the cult statues sent to Byzantium. This creates the impression that the Philae cults were still in full swing. As recent research has shown, however, Procopius' account seems exaggerated and should be treated as imperial propaganda. Since the last evidence for active traditional officiants on the island dates from 456/457 CE, it is likely that the organized temple cults stopped already in the second half of the fifth century and did not exist anymore when Narses came to Philae; moreover, the temples of Philae were never destroyed. The closure of the temples under Justinian can only have been symbolic (Dijkstra 2008: 217).

The pronaos of the abandoned Isis Temple was turned into a church of St. Stephanos by bishop Theodorus (Cruz-Urbe 2002: 183; Dijkstra 2008: 41; Hahn 2008: 212; Hölbl 2004: 69 - 70). Obviously this was regarded as a remarkable event, as it is recorded in several inscriptions (Grossmann 1970: 40). Some of the minor sanctuaries of Philae were also transformed into churches (temples of Arensnuphis and Hathor, maybe the temple of Imhotep, see Dijkstra 2008: 322 - 323 with n. 85; Giammarusti and Roccati 1980: 79; Krause 1966: 75).

Modern History of Philae

The first known European visitors to Philae are an anonymous Venetian in 1589 (Burri et al. 1971: 125 - 129 and 151; Winter 1976: 7)

and the French Jesuit Claude Sicard in 1720 (Dawson and Uphill 1995: 390; Martin 1982: 88). In the eighteenth century (Winter 1974: 229), Philae attracted a large number of travelers and researchers. In 1799, the Napoleonic expedition copied reliefs and made a ground plan of the site; they were succeeded by early Egyptologists like Rossellini, Champollion (Winter 1974: 230), and Lepsius (1852: 107 - 111, 262 - 264), draftsmen like David Roberts (Guiterman 1978: 9) and Robert Hay (Winter 1974: 230), as well as renowned mid-nineteenth century photographers such as Francis Frith and Maxime du Camp (Grimm 1980: 95 - 105).

In connection with the construction of the first Aswan Dam, the temples were surveyed and thoroughly examined by the British army officer Henry George Lyons (1895 - 1896 and during the first years of the twentieth century). During the same period, the Italian technician Alexandre Barsanti restored and consolidated the buildings in preparation for future damage from flooding. Two photographic missions by the Prussian Academy of Sciences Berlin documented a great number of reliefs and inscriptions in 1908/09 and 1909/10 (1600 photographs and thousands of paper squeezes, see Winter 1974: 230 - 231, 1976: 10).

In an UNESCO rescue campaign from 1972 to 1980, almost all of the historic buildings of Philae were transferred by an Italian-Egyptian mission several hundred meters to the northwest and reerected on the island of Agilkia, whose ground level is 13 meters higher than that of ancient Philae (Winter 1976: 11 and 15 note 11). For dismantling the edifices, the southern and middle part of the already submerged island was encircled by a sand-filled cofferdam covering an area of c. 35,000 square meters (Giammarusti and Roccati 1980: 38 - 53). The deconstruction of Philae offered new insights into the history of the island and its buildings.

Bibliographic Notes

A scholarly general monograph on Philae, its temples, and history is still missing; popular accounts with numerous illustrations were published by Sauneron and Stierlin (1975) and Giammarusti and Roccati (1980). Basic facts about the temples are readily available from Arnold (1992). A much richer source of detailed information is the survey by Hölbl (2004), which also provides an abundance of brilliant photographs. An article by Winter (1982), on which the present contribution is partly modeled, gives a good short overview of the history of the site and its monuments. The archaeological development of the island was summarized in the excellent contribution by Haeny (1985), which also includes valuable illustrations of how the temple complex looked like at different stages (Saitic time; Early, Middle, and Late Ptolemaic era; Roman times). Lyon's *Reports* on Philae (1896, 1908) are still of great value today for their photographs, accurate technical descriptions, maps, plans, soundings of the foundations, and sectional drawings. A substantial bulk of texts and reliefs were copied and edited by Georges Bénédict, who published the decoration of the naos in 1893 and 1895; his work is still of importance, although it contains numerous inaccuracies. For a proper and accurate edition of the inscriptions according to modern standards, the "Philä"-series was initiated by Hermann Junker in the late 1950s, with support by and on behalf of the Austrian Academy of Sciences, Vienna (Winter 1974: 234). Currently, this project is being continued by Erich Winter, in collaboration with the present author. Two volumes with reproductions of the scenes and translations have been published (Junker 1958; Junker and Winter 1965), a third one is close to completion. An exhaustive overview of various published single texts is given by Winter (1974). To this may be added some later edited hymns from the temples on Philae, translated and commented by Žabkar (1981, 1988, 1992), whose renderings need to be revised in various instances however. The many Philae inscriptions that contain allusions to the *Myth of the Sun's Eye* have been collected and discussed by Inconnu-Bocquillon (2001). The rich corpus of Demotic, Greek, Latin, and Meroitic graffiti was published in 1912, the 1930s, and 1960s (Bernand and Bernand 1969; Griffith 1912, 1935 - 1937). The iconography of the reliefs was examined in an art historical study by Vassilika (1989). A reconstruction of the coloration of the temple reliefs of Philae, which was still well preserved at the time of the Napoleonic Expedition, was prepared by Beinlich and Fuchs (2009). The slow transition of Philae from a place of Egyptian religion to Christianity is depicted in the fascinating and well written book by Dijkstra (2008). Standardized architectural plans of many of the buildings on Philae can be downloaded from the website of the Ancient Egyptian Architecture Online ([Aegaron](#)) project.

References

Arnold, Dieter

1992 *Die Tempel Ägyptens: Götterwohnungen, Kultstätten, Baudenkmäler*. Zurich: Artemis & Winkler.

1999 *Temples of the last pharaohs*. New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Baines, John

1997 Temples as symbols, guarantors, and participants in Egyptian civilization. In *The temple in ancient Egypt: New discoveries and recent research*, ed. Stephen Quirke, pp. 216 - 241. London: British Museum Press.

Beinlich, Horst, and Robert Fuchs

- 2009 Rekonstruktion der farblichen Fassung des Tempels von Philae. In *Ausgestattet mit den Schriften des Thot: Festschrift für Irmtraut Munro zu ihrem 65. Geburtstag*, Studien zum Altägyptischen Totenbuch 14, ed. Burkhard Backes, Marcus Müller-Roth, and Simone Stöhr, pp. 53 - 68. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz.

Bénédite, Georges

- 1893- *Le temple de Philae*. 2 volumes (1893 and 1895). Mémoires publiés par les membres de la mission archéologique française au Caire 13. Paris: Ernest Leroux.

Bernand, André, and Étienne Bernand

- 1969 *Les inscriptions grecques de Philae*. 2 volumes. Paris: Éditions du Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique.

Bingen, Jean

- 1997 I. Philae I 4, un moment d'un règne, d'un temple et d'un culte. Akten des 21. Internationalen Papyrologenkongresses, Berlin, 13. - 19.8.1995. *Archiv für Papyrusforschung und verwandte Gebiete Beiheft* 3, pp. 88 - 97.

Burri, Carla, Nadine Sauneron, and Paul Bleser

- 1971 *Voyages en Égypte des années 1589, 1590 & 1591: Le vénitien anonyme, le seigneur de Villamont, le hollandais Jan Sommer*. Cairo: Institut français d'archéologie orientale.

Calderini, Aristide, and Sergio Daris

- 1987 *Dizionario dei nomi geografici e topografici dell'Egitto greco-romano*. Vol. 5. Milan: Cisalpino-Goliardica.

Chauveau, Michel

- 1995 Review of H. J. Thissen: Die demotischen Graffiti von Medinet Habu. *Revue d'Égyptologie* 46, pp. 250 - 255.

Cruz-Uribe, Eugene

- 2002 The death of Demotic at Philae: A study in pilgrimage and politics. In *A tribute to excellence: Studies offered in honor of Ernő Gáál, Ulrich Luft, and László Török*, Studia Aegyptiaca 17, ed. Tamás Bács, pp. 163 - 184. Budapest: Université Loránd Eötvös.

Daumas, François

- 1968- Les propylées du temple d'Hathor à Philae et le culte de la déesse. *Zeitschrift für Ägyptische Sprache und Altertumskunde* 95 (1968 - 1969), pp. 1 - 17.

Dawson, Warren, and Eric Uphill

- 1995 *Who was who in Egyptology*. 3rd revised edition by Morris Bierbrier. London: Egypt Exploration Society.

Dietze, Gertrud

- 1994 Philae und die Dodekaschoinos in ptolemäischer Zeit: Ein Beitrag zur Frage ptolemäischer Präsenz im Grenzland zwischen Ägypten und Afrika an Hand der architektonischen und epigraphischen Quellen. *Ancient Society* 25, pp. 63 - 110.

Dijkstra, Jitse

- 2008 *Philae and the end of ancient Egyptian religion: A regional study of religious transformation (298 - 642 CE)*. Orientalia Lovaniensia Analecta 173. Leuven, Paris, and Dudley, Mass.: Peeters.

Farag, Sami, Gamal Wahba, and Adel Farid

- 1976 Notizie da File I: Reused blocks from a temple of Amasis at Philae: A preliminary report. *Oriens Antiquus* 16, pp. 315 - 324.
1978 Notizie da File II: Reused blocks of Nectanebo I found at Philae Island. *Oriens Antiquus* 17, pp. 147 - 152.
1979 Notizie da File III: Inscribed blocks of the Ramesside Period and of King Taharqa, found at Philae. *Oriens Antiquus* 18, pp. 281 - 289.

Farid, Adel

- 1980 Re-used blocks from a temple of Amasis at Philae: The final results. *Mitteilungen des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts, Abteilung Kairo* 36, pp. 81 - 103.

Giammarusti, Antonio, and Alessandro Roccati

- 1980 *File: Storia e vita di un santuario egizio*. Novara: Istituto Geografico de Agostini.

Griffith, Francis Llewellyn

- 1912 *Meroitic inscriptions II: Napata to Philae and miscellaneous*. Archaeological Survey of Egypt 20th Memoir. London: Egypt Exploration Society.
1935- *Catalogue of the Demotic graffiti of the Dodecaschoenus*. 2 volumes (1935 - 1937). Oxford: Oxford University Press. (At head of title: Service des antiquités de l'Égypte. Les temples immergés de la Nubie.)

Griffiths, John Gwyn

- 1986 Theodosius I. In *Lexikon der Ägyptologie*, Vol. 6 (column 474), ed. Wolfgang Helck, and Wolfhart Westendorf. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz.

Grimm, Alfred

- 1980 *Ägypten: Die photographische Entdeckung im 19. Jahrhundert*. Munich: Edition Photographica Laterna Magica.

Grossmann, Peter

- 1970 Überlegungen zum Grundriß der Ostkirche von Philae. *Jahrbuch für Antike und Christentum* 13, pp. 29 - 41.

Guiterman, Helen

- 1978 *David Roberts R. A., 1796 - 1864*. London: Dramrite Printers Limited.

Haeny, Gerhard

- 1985 A short architectural history of Philae. *Bulletin de l'Institut français d'archéologie orientale* 85, pp. 197 - 233.

Hahn, Johannes

- 2008 Die Zerstörung der Kulte von Philae: Geschichte und Legende am ersten Nilkatarakt. In *From temple to church: Destruction and renewal of local cultic topography in late antiquity*, Religions in the Graeco-Roman World 163, ed. Johannes Hahn, Stephen Emmel, and Ulrich Gotter, pp. 203 - 242. Leiden and Boston: Brill.

Hoffmann, Friedhelm, Martina Minas-Nerpel, and Stefan Pfeiffer

- 2009 Die dreisprachige Stele des C. Cornelius Gallus: Übersetzung und Kommentar. *Archiv für Papyrusforschung und verwandte Gebiete Beiheft* 9. Stuttgart and Leipzig: B. G. Teubner.

Hölbl, Günther

- 1994 *Geschichte des Ptolemäerreiches: Politik, Ideologie und religiöse Kultur von Alexander dem Großen bis zur römischen Eroberung*. Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft.
2004 *Altägypten im Römischen Reich: Der römische Pharao und seine Tempel, Vol. II: Die Tempel des römischen Nubien*. Mainz: Philipp von Zabern.

Inconnu-Bocquillon, Danielle

- 2001 *Le mythe de la Déesse Lointaine à Philae*. Bibliothèque d'étude 132. Cairo: Institut français d'archéologie orientale.

Jaritz, Horst

- 1991 Die Westkolonnade von Philae: Bauliches Bindeglied der kultischen Beziehung zwischen Philae und Bigga. *Mitteilungen des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts, Abteilung Kairo* 47 (Fs Werner Kaiser), pp. 179 - 186.

Junker, Hermann

- 1913 *Das Götterdekret über das Abaton*. Wien: Holder.

- 1924 Schenkung von Weingärten an die Isis von Philae unter Marc Aurel. *Wiener Zeitschrift zur Kunde des Morgenlandes* 31, pp. 53 - 81.
 - 1958 *Der grosse Pylon des Tempels der Isis in Philä*. Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften: Philosophisch-Historische Klasse, Denkschriften: Sonderband. Wien: Rohrer.
- Junker, Hermann, and Erich Winter (eds.)
- 1965 *Das Geburtshaus des Tempels der Isis in Philä*. Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften: Philosophisch-Historische Klasse, Denkschriften: Sonderband. Wien: Herman Böhlau.
- Kadry, Ahmed
- 1980 Remains of a kiosk of Psammetikhos II on Philae Island. *Mitteilungen des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts, Abteilung Kairo* 36, pp. 293 - 297.
- Kákósy, László
- 1968 Zu einer Etymologie von Philä: Die "Insel der Zeit". *Acta Antiqua Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae* 16, pp. 39 - 48.
- Krause, Martin
- 1966 Ägypten. In *Reallexikon zur byzantinischen Kunst*, Vol. 1 (columns 61 - 94), ed. Klaus Wessel. Stuttgart: Anton Hiersemann.
- Lanciers, Eddy
- 1986 Die ägyptischen Tempelbauten zur Zeit des Ptolemaios V. Epiphanes (204 - 180 v. Chr.). *Mitteilungen des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts, Abteilung Kairo* 42, pp. 81 - 98.
- Lepsius, Carl Richard
- 1852 *Briefe aus Aegypten, Aethiopien und der Halbinsel des Sinai*. Berlin: Wilhelm Hertz.
 - 1901 *Denkmäler aus Aegypten und Aethiopien: Text, Vol. IV: Oberägypten*. ed. Édouard Naville, and revised by Kurt Sethe. Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs'sche Buchhandlung.
- Locher, Josef
- 1999 *Topographie und Geschichte der Region am ersten Nilkatarakt in griechisch-römischer Zeit*. Archiv für Papyrusforschung und verwandte Gebiete Beiheft 5. Stuttgart and Leipzig: B. G. Teubner.
- Lyons, Henry George
- 1896 *A report on the island and temples of Philae*. London: Waterlow.
 - 1908 *A report on the temples of Philae*. Cairo: National Printing Department.
- Martin, Maurice (ed.)
- 1982 *Claude Sicard. Œuvres I: Lettres et relations inédites*. Bibliothèque d'étude 83. Cairo: Institut français d'archéologie orientale.
- Minas, Martina
- 1997 Die Dekorationstätigkeit von Ptolemaios VI. Philometor und Ptolemaios VIII. Euergetes II. an ägyptischen Tempeln: Part 2. *Orientalia Lovaniensia Periodica* 28, pp. 87 - 121.
- Morardet, Bernard
- 1981 Notizie da File IV: Matériaux pour servir à la reconstitution du temple d'Hathor à Philae. *Oriens Antiquus* 20, pp. 139 - 155.
- Roccati, Alessandro
- 1981 Iscrizioni greche da File. In *Scritti in onore di Orsolina Montevicchi*, ed. Edda Bresciani, Giovanni Geraci, Sergio Pernigotti, and Giancarlo Susini, pp. 323 - 333. Bologna: CLUEB.
- Rutherford, Ian
- 1998 Island of the extremity: Space, language and power in the pilgrimage traditions of Philae. In *Pilgrimage and holy space in late antique Egypt*, Religions in the Graeco-Roman World 134, ed. David Frankfurter, pp. 229 - 256. Leiden, Boston, and Cologne: Brill.
- Sauneron, Serge, and Henri Stierlin
- 1975 *Derniers temples d'Égypte: Edfou et Philae*. Paris: Chêne.

Timm, Stefan

- 1984 *Das christlich-koptische Ägypten in arabischer Zeit*. Part 1 (A - C). Beihefte zum Tübinger Atlas des Vorderen Orients: Reihe B (Geisteswissenschaften) 41/1. Wiesbaden: L. Reichert.

Vassilika, Eleni

- 1989 *Ptolemaic Philae*. *Orientalia Lovaniensia Analecta* 34. Leuven: Peeters.

Winter, Erich

- 1974 Philae. In *Textes et langages de l'Égypte pharaonique: Cent cinquante années de recherches: 1822 - 1972 (Hommage à Jean-François Champollion)*, Vol. III., Bibliothèque d'étude 64.3, pp. 229 - 237. Cairo: Institut français d'archéologie orientale.
- 1976 Die Tempel von Philae und das Problem ihrer Rettung. *Antike Welt* 7(3), pp. 2 - 15.
- 1981 Ergamenes II., seine Datierung und seine Bautätigkeit in Nubien. *Mitteilungen des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts, Abteilung Kairo* 37 (Fs Labib Habachi), pp. 509 - 513.
- 1982 Philae. In *Lexikon der Ägyptologie*, Vol. 4 (columns 1022 - 1027), ed. Wolfgang Helck, and Wolfhart Westendorf. Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz.

Žabkar, Louis

- 1981 A hymn to Osiris Pantocrator at Philae: A study of the main functions of the *sdm.n.f* form in Egyptian religious hymns. *Zeitschrift für Ägyptische Sprache und Altertumskunde* 108, pp. 141 - 171.
- 1988 *Hymns to Isis in her temple at Philae*. Hanover: University Press of New England.
- 1992 A hymn to incense in the temple of Arensnuphis at Philae. In *Studies in Pharaonic religion and society in honour of J. Gwyn Griffiths*, Occasional Publications 8, ed. Alan Lloyd, pp. 236 - 245. London: Egypt Exploration Society.

External Links

Aegaron

Ancient Egyptian Architecture Online: A repository for standardized architectural information & drawings. (Internet resource: <http://dai.aegaron.ucla.edu>. Accession date: February 2011.)

Image Credits

- Figure 1. Plan of Philae island, the letter designation follows Lyons: A. Gate of Nectanebo/1st Pylon, B. Temple of Arensnuphis, D. Chapel of Mandulis, F. Temple of Imhotep, G. Temple of Hathor, I. "Gate of Hadrian," K. Kiosk of Trajan, L. Prostyle Temple Augustus, M. Great Temple of Isis, O. Temple of Harendotes, P. Western Church, Q. Eastern Church, R. Gate of Diocletian, Y. Eastern Colonnade, Z. Western Colonnade. Courtesy of Ancient Egyptian Architecture Online (Aegaron).
- Figure 2. The temples of Philae at their new location on Agilkia island seen from the southeast. Photograph by the author.
- Figure 3. Kiosk of Nectanebo seen from the northeast. Photograph by the author.
- Figure 4. Forecourt of the Temple of Isis with western colonnade seen from the northeast (top) and first eastern colonnade with first pylon of Isis from the southwest (bottom). Photograph by the author.
- Figure 5. Gate of Philadelphus from the southwest. Photograph by the author.
- Figure 6. Gate of Hadrian from the south. Photograph by the author.
- Figure 7. Temple of Harendotes from the southeast. Photograph by the author.
- Figure 8. Temple of Hathor from the southwest. Photograph by the author.
- Figure 9. Kiosk of Trajan from the west. In the background, relicts of the cofferdam, which was built around Old Philae, emerging from the water. Photograph by the author.
- Figure 10. Temple of Augustus and Gate of Diocletian from the west. Photograph by the author.