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Title

Coptos

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Journal

UCLA Encyclopedia of Egyptology, 1(1)

Author

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Publication Date

2012-12-16

Peer reviewed

UCLA ENCYCLOPEDIA *of* EGYPTOLOGY

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Short Citation:

Pantalacci, 2012, Coptos. *UEE*.

Full Citation:

Pantalacci, Laure, 2012, Coptos. In Willeke Wendrich (ed), *UCLA Encyclopedia of Egyptology*, Los Angeles. <http://digital2.library.ucla.edu/viewItem.do?ark=21198/zz002dn8zx>

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COPTOS

قفط

Laure Pantalacci

Koptos
Coptos

The modern city of Quft is the location of the ancient town of Coptos, which was a major religious and trade center in Upper Egypt, at the crossroad between the Nile Valley and Eastern Desert routes to the Red Sea. The site was settled from Predynastic times (as witnessed by the Coptos colossi) and remained important until Late Antiquity. The principal buildings currently visible at the site are of Ptolemaic and Roman date: the main temple (dedicated to Min and Isis), the middle temple also called "Osiris" temple, and the southern temple belonging to Geb. The last two were enclosed by their own temenos, as was the main temple, and a huge late Pharaonic wall surrounded the whole sacred area. The remains of the Roman domestic buildings are still poorly known. The elaborate Coptic baptistery and the adjacent structures reuse blocks from Pharaonic and late Ptolemaic buildings. The recent campaigns by the French mission have collected new information mainly about the city's general layout and development.

تقع مدينة قفط الحالية علي أنقاض موقع مدينة كوبتوس القديمة ، والتي كانت تعتبر المركز الديني والتجاري الرئيسي بمصر العليا ، الواقعة على مفترق الطرق ما بين وادي النيل وطرق الصحراء الشرقية المؤدية إلى البحر الأحمر. كان الموقع مأهولا منذ عصر ما قبل التاريخ – كما يشهدا تمثالي كوبتوس – وظل ذا أهمية حتى العصور المتأخرة. تؤرخ المنشآت الرئيسية التي لا تزال صامدة الي اليوم للعصر البطلمي والروماني، وهي: المعبد الرئيسي (والمكرس لعبادة كلا من مين وإيزيس)، المعبد الأوسط والمعروف أيضاً بمعبد «أوزوريس»، والمعبد الجنوبي الذي يخص المعبود جب. كانت المعابد الثلاثة داخل جدار محيط، بالإضافة إلى جدار فرعوني ضخّم أحاط المنطقة المقدسة بأكملها. لا تزال بقايا المنازل الرومانية تحت الدراسة. شيدت المعمودية القبطية والمنشآت المجاورة بأحجاره معاد استخدامها من المباني الفرعونية والبطلمية المتأخرة. أسفرت الحفائر الحديثة من قِبل البعثة الفرنسية عن معلومات جديدة حول التخطيط العام للمدينة وتطوره.



located on the east bank of the Nile river, approximately 40 km north of Luxor, Coptos is situated at the mouth of the nearby Wadi Qena and Wadi Hammamat. Recent geomorphological investigations have

confirmed that the area was originally occupied by a debris fan consisting of a thick accumulation of coarse yellow sands. These sediments were probably deposited in a context of activity of the abovementioned wadis. The raised area was in turn covered by

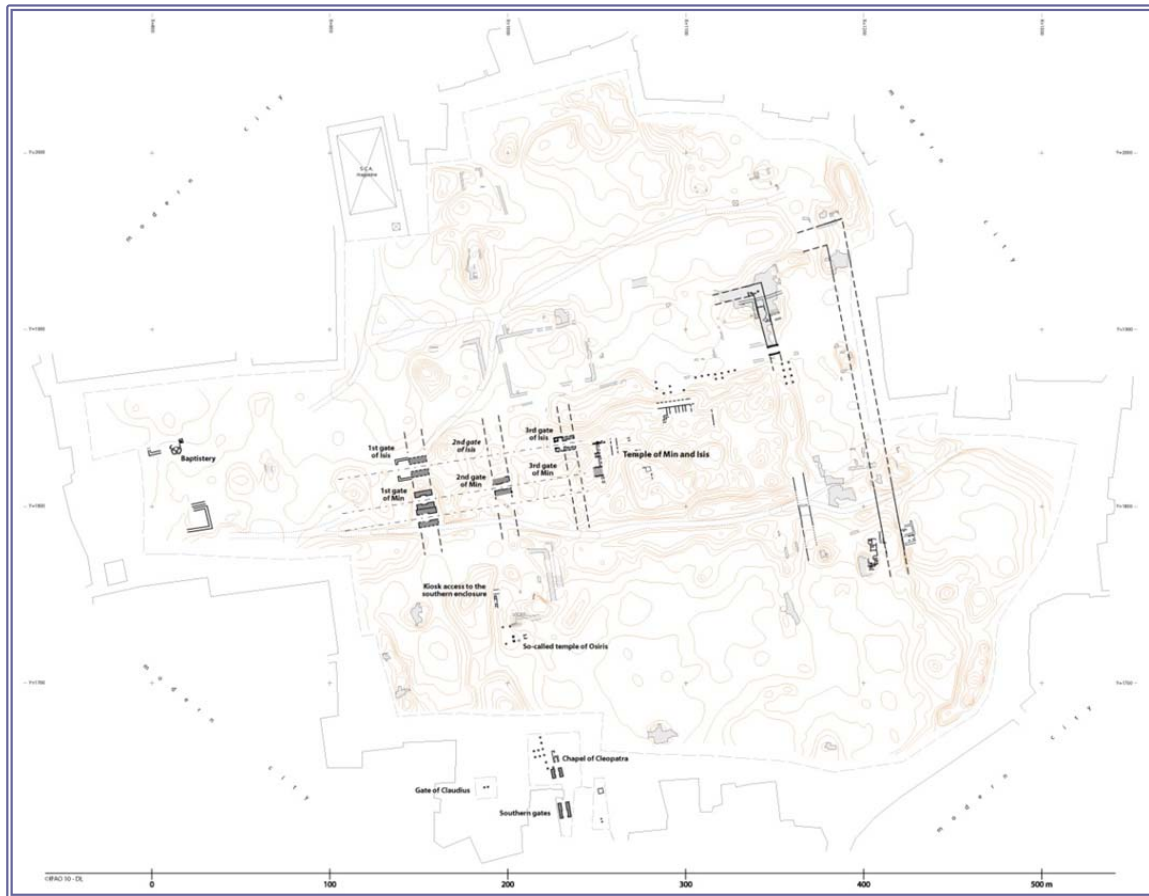


Figure 1. Topographical map of the site (Mission Coptos/Damien Laisney).

light brown to yellow Nile sediments, giving the site the final appearance of a “turtleback” (Ghilardi, et al. 2012: 17 - 19). This alluvial basis was identified as early as 1893/1894 by Petrie (Adams 2002: 10), who called it “basal clay” and recognized its probable presence all over the settlement site (Petrie 1896: 3). Recent coring revealed the lack of human occupation to the north and west of the main temple enclosure. The careful analysis of the sedimentological results confirms the original presence of a waterway to the west and of some kind of water channel to the north. Late into modern times, the site is reported to have featured several channels, bridges, and dams (Hamilton 1809: 181 - 183; Weill 1911: 105 - 107). The location of the First Intermediate Period cemetery (Kom el-Kuffar, toponym recently changed to Kom el-Mumenein) to the south and the small secondary temple at el-

Qala to the north—both presumably established on the desert edge—suggests that the stretch of land on the east bank has always been narrow. The accumulation of occupation strata over the same area for millennia led to a stratigraphical thickness of more than 7 m in some parts of the site. Today the ancient site lies about 1 km away from the river bank and is surrounded by the modern town. A “Byzantine/early Islamic” (?) square precinct is mentioned as the most visible feature of the site by all the nineteenth century travelers until Maspero, who regularly excavated there and sailed by the site every year from the early 1880s onwards (Traunecker 1992: 20 - 21). But its walls have been almost entirely destroyed by the *sebbakheen*. Nowadays, the archeological area is enclosed by a protective wall, built by the SCA in 2003 (fig. 1).

Significance

One of the most ancient religious centers of Upper Egypt, Coptos was home to the god Min, protector of the mining areas of the Eastern Desert. In the course of the second millennium, Min lent his guise to Amun of Karnak, generating a syncretic shape (Amun-Min), which increased his popularity. Starting from the New Kingdom, Min was gradually assimilated into Osiris, partaking in the development of Osirian funerary beliefs and cults as the partner of the goddess Isis (whose cult is attested here only from the New Kingdom in the specific form of “Isis from Coptos,” described as a mourning widow). Symmetrically, the cult of “Osiris from Coptos” was celebrated in various places at least from the Saite Period on (Yoyotte 1977 - 1978: 168 - 169). The rise of the Osirian beliefs and, later on, the preference for the cult of the mother-goddess and her child prompted the appearance in Coptos of a specific form of the sun-god, Harpocrates (Meeks 1977: 1005 - 1006). Even after the end of pagan cults, Coptos remained the seat of a major Upper Egyptian bishopric at least from the beginning of the fourth until the seventh century (Seeliger and Krumeich 2007: 80).

In addition to this prominent religious significance, the city enjoyed a leading economic position during more than 4000 years, due to its location at the crossroad between the Nile Valley and the shortest and easiest desert roads linking the valley to this rich mining area and to the Red Sea coast, through Wadi Qena and Wadi Hammamat (Fischer 1980: 737). The region also seems to have benefited from specific agricultural and vegetal resources (Gabolde 2002: 137 - 145; Hamilton 1809: 182 - 183), and the city must have been densely settled at all times. Its economic weight was considerable, particularly during the Ptolemaic and Roman Periods (Rathbone 2002: 179 - 198). A famous imperial stela known as the “Coptos Tarif” and dated to the reign of Domitian (90 CE) assesses the toll to be paid by various categories of users of the desert roads to or from the Red Sea ports (Burkhalter-Arce

2002: 199 - 233; see Hogarth in Petrie 1896: 27 - 33). At that time, the Eastern Desert quarries and roads to the Red Sea (Brun 2002: 395 - 414), to Punt (Meeks 2002: 267 - 335), and further on to the Indian Ocean (Grzybek 2002: 337 - 347) were extensively used to meet the demand for exotic luxury goods, first of the Greek, and later of the Roman Empire, raising the prosperity of Coptos to its climax.

Historical Context

Coptos was a capital and the residence of local power from the Predynastic to the Byzantine era. The famous colossi (Petrie 1896: 7 - 9) already point to a major center of political and economic power. Dating back to the Old Kingdom, remains exposed by Petrie in the vicinity of the main temple showed a paved floor with an elaborate drainage system (Petrie 1896: 4), presumably belonging to palace or temple architecture. At the end of the Old Kingdom, the Memphite kings of the 6th - 8th Dynasties allied with the powerful Coptite nomarchs through marriage links. This is attested by a series of legal texts known as the “Coptos Decrees” (Goedicke 1967; Weill 1912). The necropolis in Kom el-Kuffar still preserves the remains of the tomb of vizier Shemay (fig. 2; Mostafa 1987, 2005) and his wife, the king’s daughter Nubet; stelae were also dedicated there by their attendants (Gilbert 2004). The Theban kings of the 11th - 13th Dynasties erected high quality stone buildings, attesting that Coptos remained a major religious center. In 2009/2010, modest mud-brick remains from the same period were exposed to the southeast of the main temple. During the 18th Dynasty, the prestige of the city was confirmed by the renewal of the temple (numerous blocks and foundation deposits of Thutmose III, see Adams 1975) and the erection of a number of granite buildings (jambs and pillars of Thutmose III and Amenhotep II). After this blossoming, the archaeological evidence for the Ramesside, Third Intermediate, and Late Periods seems rather unimpressive. But Coptos remained undoubtedly a major Upper Egyptian city throughout the second and first millennia. Indeed, the largest number of Coptite object



Figure 2. Relief from the tomb of Shemay and Nebet at Kom el-Kuffar, east wall.

and inscriptions comes from the Ptolemaic and Roman Periods. Particularly impressive is the activity of Parthenios, lesonis (i.e., main temple administrator) of Isis during the second third of the first century CE; he remained in charge under Roman emperors Tiberius, Caligula, Claudius, and Nero. About 25 inscriptions regarding his activities were collected: (re)building walls, doorways, various chapels, and sanctuaries for Isis and Horus/Harpokrates, as well as Geb and Nut (Farid 1988; Reinach and Weill 1912; Vleeming 2001). The last significant remains, lying to the west of the site, are the baptistery (fifth - sixth century) and the foundations of a couple of poorly preserved, rectangular structures. The deterioration of the city's status probably began as soon as the third century CE as a result of its spirit of rebellion against Roman rule and the insecure situation in the Eastern Desert (mainly from the sixth century onwards, due to various nomad tribes), maybe also combined with unfavorable environmental changes. In the tenth century CE, the shift of commercial and religious routes to the neighboring city of Qus, 10 km further south (Garcin 1976: 67), marked the decline of Coptos forevermore.

Coptos Colossi (Predynastic)

Presumably located in the same area for millennia, the sanctuary dedicated to Min featured—near the end of the fourth

millennium—at least three limestone colossi, originally more than 4 m high and weighing about 2 tons each. They were deposited under the foundation sand of the Ptolemaic temple and unearthed by Petrie (Petrie 1896: 7 - 9), whose primary aim was to bring to light testimonies of Pre- and Protodynastic Egypt. He succeeded brilliantly in his project, unearthing a unique range of objects from earliest Egypt (Adams 1997: 10 - 12). The bearded, ithyphallic god statues were already broken when buried. On their legs are engraved enigmatic signs, which have given rise to different interpretations (Baqué Manzano 2002, 2004; Williams 1988). According to some scholars, they might belong to a cultural horizon different from the ones that gave birth to the Pharaonic civilization. Kemp has suggested that the colossal figures were types of totems protecting Min's sacred enclosure (Kemp et al. 2000). No archaeological remains of this original structure have been recognized so far; actually the hut- or tent-like chapel depicted behind the god Min in classical Pharaonic iconography might refer to a light architectural structure dating back to the Predynastic Period.

Northern Temple of Min and Isis (Middle Kingdom to Early Roman Period)

A central landmark in the archaeological landscape, all the temple remains currently

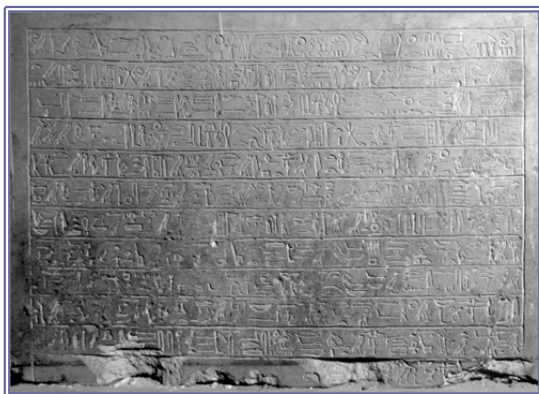


Figure 3. "Intef Decree."

exposed date to the late Ptolemaic to early Roman Periods. From the previous stages of its development, only a few elements are preserved. The discovery of some unique ceramics decorated with high relief, as well as the abovementioned colossi, suggest that the temple had been located in this area already in Predynastic times (Adams 1986). The famous "Coptos Decrees" (most of them now kept in the Egyptian Museum in Cairo), limestone slabs bearing legal texts, give details about cultic and administrative procedures in the temple during the 6th - 13th Dynasties (fig. 3; Polz 2007: 331 - 333; Weill 1912). Most of them were reused in late Ptolemaic times to the south of the temple, together with limestone blocks from a monumental gateway of Senusret I (several blocks of which are kept in the Museum of Fine Arts in Lyon, see Gabolde 1990). This same king also equipped the temple with granite and calcite doorways (one granite jamb still remains in situ, see fig. 4; Petrie 1896: 11). During the Second Intermediate Period, the Theban king Nebkheperre Intef V, in addition to issuing one of the decrees (fig. 3), dedicated a bark sanctuary or chapel from which some nicely carved reliefs have been preserved (Eder 2002: 57 - 79, and pl. 40; Petrie 1896: pl. VII; Polz 2007: 71 - 75). The building policy of Thutmose III must have been very active, since Petrie retrieved seven foundation deposits in his name still in situ (Petrie 1896: 13 - 15, pls. XIV - XVI). Moreover, a number of his finely carved sandstone blocks were



Figure 4. Granite doorjamb of Senusret I in situ.



Figure 5. Sandstone blocks of Thutmose III reused in the Ptolemaic chapels.

reused in the walls of the northern row of chapels in the Ptolemaic temple (fig. 5). However, very little is known about the architectural layout of the New Kingdom temple. Its dimensions were estimated by Petrie, who found four of the foundation deposits untouched at the corners of the building, to be about 27 x 35 m (Petrie 1896: 13, pl. I), but it is impossible to determine



Figure 6. The stairs leading to the inner part of Min temple.

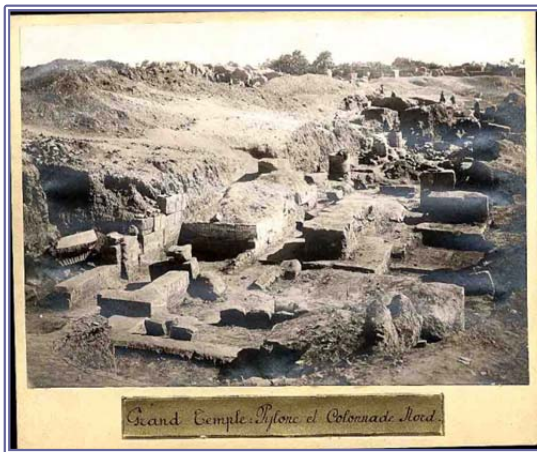


Figure 7. The hypostyle hall of the Isis sanctuary in 1910.

whether Thutmose III entirely rebuilt, or merely enlarged, the previous monument. From Amenhotep II, two granite doorjambs of excellent craftsmanship are known, also reused in Ptolemaic and Roman times (Reinach 1912: 51 - 52, fig. 7). Information about the history of the building between the 18th Dynasty and the last indigenous kings is lacking; stelae and statues of different dynasties were retrieved from the site and display the high standards of the local workshops (Adams 1997: 6 - 7; Petrie 1896: 15 - 17). It might be surmised that the core of the building itself underwent no major architectural change until the reign of Ptolemy II. At that time, supervision of the work was entrusted to Esnun (name

previously read “Sennuseri” or “Sennushepsi,” cf. Guérmeur 2003: 336, maybe a Greek actually named Xenon), majordomo of queen Arsinoë II, who spent some time in Coptos, or, according to some scholars, even a number of years (Derchain 2000: 27 - 29).

Several foundation courses of this last temple are still partly preserved. They are built both of sandstone and of Hegaza limestone of poor quality, including many fossil shells. The temple featured two parallel axes running east-west, the main (southern) axis devoted to Min, the northern one to Isis. The twin sanctuaries were entered from the west through a series of three twin doors and pylons separated by two courtyards. Remains of small chapels and statuary were found in these courtyards. During the last stage of use, the main sanctuary rose about 1 m above the level of the western entrance and was accessed by a flight of stairs (fig. 6). According to Petrie, the Isis axis was similarly raised towards the intimate part of the temple (Petrie 1896: 19), passing through a small hypostyle hall with Hathoric columns (fig. 7), which is completely destroyed today. The presence of a propylon (*sbht*) in front of the first pylon of Isis to the west (fig. 8), as well as a ritual text preserved on the façade of the second courtyard, suggest that this axis was regularly used during processions, involving both Isis and Osiris. The two sanctuaries are now completely destroyed, but broken slabs, decorated with stars, from their twin ceilings (fig. 9) still lie not far from their original position. These naoi made in the local, conchiferous pink sandstone can be dated to the late Hellenistic/early Roman Period.

As expected, the temple was enclosed by a temenos; this mud-brick enclosure, still well preserved today at its northeast corner, is 5.90 m wide and dates from the late Ptolemaic Period (fig. 10; Herbert and Berlin 2002: 81, 84). In its southwest section, a monumental north-south gateway connecting it with the “southern precinct” (*Ntrj šm*) must have existed.



Figure 8. The entrance *sbht* to Isis temple.

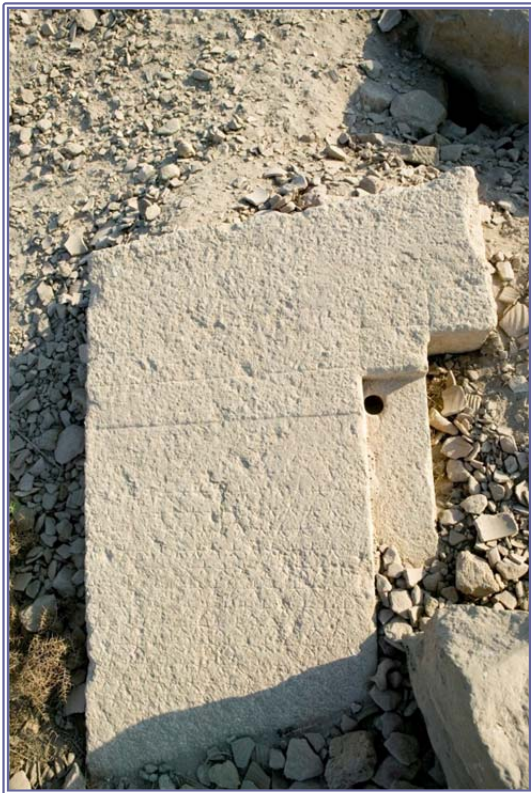


Figure 9. Ceiling of a naos, to the east of the temple area.

Both the main temenos and the *Ntrj šm* were protected by a larger enclosure, usually identified as the “city wall” and dated to the Late Period (Nectanebo? Herbert and Berlin 2002: 75 - 77). This wall is partly preserved in its eastern section and seems to be aligned with the first pylons of Min and Isis to the

west. Elsewhere it is utterly destroyed, except for the monumental southern entrance, decorated by the last Ptolemies (façade) and Caligula (passage; fig. 11; Traunecker 1992: 41 - 44).



Figure 10. Northeast corner of the late Ptolemaic precinct, preserved under a Roman residential building.



Figure 11. Southern door of the “city wall,” view north-south in the 1970s.

“Middle Temple” (“Édifices du centre,” “Osiris temple,” Ptolemaic to Roman Period)

To the south, the *Ntrj šm* was entered by a large door, presumably built by the last Ptolemies and decorated by Caligula (Traunecker 1992: 46 - 47). Of its mud-brick structure, nothing seems to have survived. Inside the *Ntrj šm* precinct, at least two buildings were identified by Weill and Reinach. The northernmost (so-called “middle”) temple is frequently called “Osiris

temple,” while the southernmost (southern) temple was dedicated to Geb. Both were oriented west-east, their axis running parallel to that of the main temple (Traunecker 1992: 32 - 37).



Figure 12. The “Osiris temple,” with re-used Thutmose III door-jambs.

The eastern entrance to the “Osiris temple” is marked by a pair of granite pillars, originally the jambs of a doorway dedicated by Thutmose III to Amun, oddly erected on huge circular quartzite bases. They were originally set in mud-brick walls and flanked the entrance to a small hypostyle hall with a repository, dedicated by Ptolemy II, and open on both sides (fig. 12; Weill 1911: 118). Texts from the doorjambs of this repository point to an Osirian context (Coptos 2000: 94 - 95); the inscription on the western doorway names a king Osorkon “beloved of Osiris,” thus corroborating the Osirian reference. Nothing remains of the eastern part of this complex. To the west, Claudius embellished its façade with a portico joining the northern kiosk, also attributed to him (Traunecker 1992: 36). Both monuments marked the impressive processional alley linking the southern gate to the main temenos.

Southern Temple (Nectanebo II to Roman Period)

Nowadays nothing remains of the layout of this temple dedicated to Geb and Isis, except the southern jamb of its western entrance (Nectanebo II, Ptolemy VII, see Traunecker 1992: 47). A portico and colonnade, similar

and apparently contemporary with the ones in front of the “Osiris temple” (i.e., built by Claudius), were laid in front of this entrance. An original feature consists of a small oracular chapel (3 x 5.5 m) built by Cleopatra VII and Ptolemy XIV into the southwest corner of the temple and opening to the south. Carved on the blocks of the rear wall, a relief replicating a frontal view of the divine bark on its stand was permanently available for oracular consultations (fig. 13; Traunecker 1992: 49 - 53).

Epigraphic sources also point to the existence of a late Ptolemaic-early Roman temple dedicated to Harpokrates as the son-god of the Osirian triad, and to Isis, the mother-goddess. This building may have been built inside the *Ntrj šm* or may lie further west, in the “churches” area.



Figure 13. The oracular chapel of Cleopatra in the 1970s.

Roman Settlement

Very little is known about the general layout of the city in Roman times. Several inscriptions of Parthenios suggest a thorough reorganization of the walls and street layout, a situation confirmed by the high number of doors, colonnades, and porticos erected inside and around the sacred precincts between the reigns of Caligula and Nero (Traunecker 1992: 55). It might have been under Claudius that porticos were also added along the main streets, such as the colonnade along the north wall of the Min temenos, or the smaller, ruined portico overlooking the east street. On a block reused in this portico, the dedicatory

inscription of a tradesman from Aden, Arabia, dated to 70 CE was found in the mid-seventies (Wagner 1976). Strabo (XVII, 815) stresses the cosmopolitan character of the population, “a mix of Egyptians and Arabs.” This “melting-pot” aspect is also attested by various texts and artifacts found in Coptos and all along the Red Sea routes (Bernand 1972: 33, 1984: 193 - 195; Cuvigny 2003: 427 - 436, 639 - 640).



Figure 14. The octagonal font of the baptistery.

On the whole, remains of Roman domestic architecture in Coptos are scarce. The huge building situated on the northeast corner of the Ptolemaic precinct (fig. 10), including a large hypostyle hall, could be tentatively identified as a prestige residence and could date to the first half of the second century CE (Herbert and Berlin 2002: 84). A number of Roman and Byzantine houses were excavated by Reinach and Weill, outside Min’s precinct wall, mainly to the southeast and south of the main temple. Most of them were located in the area of the “Red hill,” a dump of Roman pottery workshops (first - third century CE), and on top of the *Ntrj šm* (Weill 1911: 130 - 131). Still well preserved at the beginning of the twentieth century, these structures have vanished since then (Coptos 2000: 176 - 177).

From the Roman Period are also known a few cultic constructions squeezed into the few vacant slots. Near the southeast corner of the Min precinct, impressive chapels (first - second century CE) installed on top of the leveled Ptolemaic wall and built with reused

blocks were recently exposed (Pantalacci 2007: 287, fig. 20). To the south of the *Ntrj šm* precinct, as well as in the open area in front of the external gate (designated *parvis des bienheureux*, “forecourt of the blessed”), several tombs and a unique funerary (?) chapel decorated with paintings and stelae (called “the house of Palmyrenians” and dated to the second century CE by Reinach 1912: 61 - 65) were obviously in connection with the great processional alley leading through the *parvis des bienheureux* to the southern cemeteries (Traunecker 1992: 37 - 41).

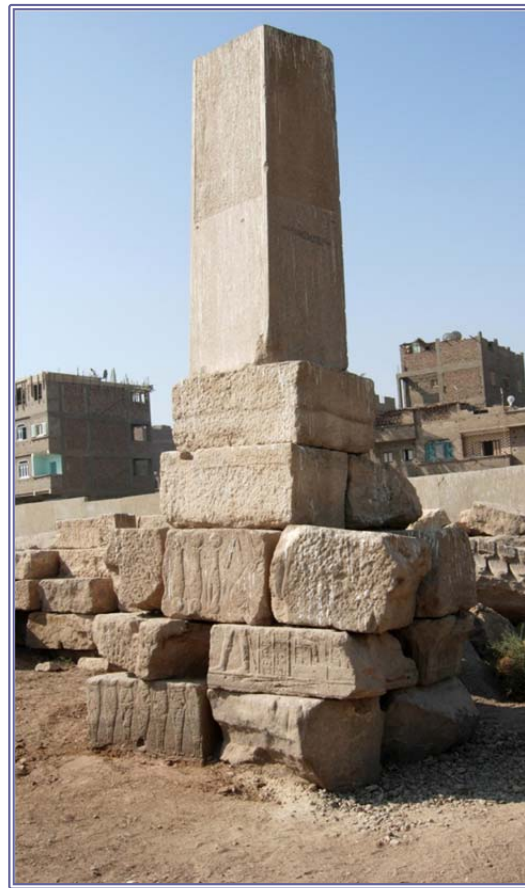


Figure 15. Granite pillar of Thutmose III and late Ptolemaic sandstone blocks reused in the ciborium.







Coptic Baptistery and “Western Churches”

To the west of the archaeological site, the most conspicuous monument is the baptistery. Built in the fifth or sixth century from reused blocks, it featured an octagonal

font accessible by three steps (fig. 14). The ciborium floor was about 90 cm higher than the surrounding ground level. It was roofed by a canopy resting on four granite pillars originally decorated by Thutmose III, one of which still stands in situ. To the west of the baptistery stood two other pillars reused as doorjambs, which were taken to the Egyptian Museum in Cairo; one of them was erected, and still stands, in the garden in front of the façade. Fragments of a second pillar were brought to the Louvre (Weill 1911: 133). A church adjoined the baptistery, presumably to the west (Grossmann, personal communication Nov. 2009), but practically nothing remains of its layout (Reinach 1910: 25 - 26). To the south, only the foundation layers of one or maybe two small, quadrangular buildings are probably contemporaneous with the baptistery, though they show no clear architectural connection with it.

The foundations of the ciborium are made of reused sandstone blocks from the upper parts and pavement of one or several late Ptolemaic building(s) (fig. 15; Coptos 2000: 99

- 105). Hundreds of decorated blocks lying in this area (mostly of conchiferous limestone) presumably also belong to the same huge Hellenistic building. The scenes and texts of the reused blocks convey an Osirian tonality (Coptos 2000: 102 - 103), but the number, nature, and function of the dismantled structures still escape us.

Pharaonic	 Gbtyw
	
	
New Kingdom	
	
	
Greek	Κόπτος, Κοπτώ
Coptic	ⲕⲉⲃⲧⲱ, ⲕⲏⲃⲧ, ⲕⲃⲧ, ⲕⲉⲃⲧ
Arabic	Qeft, Quft قفط

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The pioneering excavation reports by Petrie (1896), Weill (1911), and Reinach (1910, 1912) are still essential reading. Excavations were resumed recently on a limited scale by several missions: Egyptian-American (Herbert and Berlin 2003), Australian (Gilbert 2004), and currently French (<http://www.ifao.egnet.net/archeologie/coptos/>). To these reports must be added a few far-reaching studies focused on limited periods and/or categories of material (Adams 1986; Fischer 1964; Kemp et al. 2000; Traunecker 1992). In 2000 an exhibition (Coptos 2000) and an international conference (Boussac et al. 2002) held in Lyon, France, assessed the current state of knowledge. A convenient overview of objects from Coptos, kept at University College London, is accessible online (<http://www.digitalegypt.ucl.ac.uk/coptos/index.html>).

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Figure 1. Topographical map of the site (Mission Coptos/Damien Laisney). Courtesy of Mission Coptos (IFAO/univ. Lumière-Lyon 2).

Figure 2. Relief from the tomb of Shemay and Nebet at Kom el-Kuffar, east wall. Photograph by L. Pantalacci.

Figure 3. "Intef Decree." Photograph by P. Windszus. Copyright DAIK, courtesy of D. Polz.

Figure 4. Granite doorjamb of Senusret I in situ. Courtesy of Mission Coptos (IFAO/univ. Lumière-Lyon 2).

Figure 5. Sandstone blocks of Thutmose III reused in the Ptolemaic chapels. Courtesy of Mission Coptos (IFAO/univ. Lumière-Lyon 2).

Figure 6. The stairs leading to the inner part of Min temple. Courtesy of Mission Coptos (IFAO/univ. Lumière-Lyon 2).

Figure 7. The hypostyle hall of the Isis sanctuary in 1910. Courtesy of Musée des Beaux-Arts de Lyon.

Figure 8. The entrance sbxt to Isis temple. Courtesy of Mission Coptos (IFAO/univ. Lumière-Lyon 2).

Figure 9. Ceiling of a naos, to the east of the temple area. Courtesy of Mission Coptos (IFAO/univ. Lumière-Lyon 2).

Figure 10. Northeast corner of the late Ptolemaic precinct, preserved under a Roman residential building. Courtesy of Mission Coptos (IFAO/univ. Lumière-Lyon 2).

Figure 11. Southern door of the "city wall," view north-south in the 1970s. Photograph by Claude Traunecker.

Figure 12. The "Osiris temple," with re-used Thutmose III door-jambs. Courtesy of Mission Coptos (IFAO/univ. Lumière-Lyon 2).

Figure 13. The oracular chapel of Cleopatra in the 1970s. Photograph by Claude Traunecker.

Figure 14. The octagonal font of the baptistery. Courtesy of Mission Coptos (IFAO/univ. Lumière-Lyon 2).

Figure 15. Granite pillar of Thutmose III and late Ptolemaic sandstone blocks reused in the ciborium. Courtesy of Mission Coptos (IFAO/univ. Lumière-Lyon 2).