
Naukratis: Greeks in Egypt

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Greek and Latin inscriptions on stone

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The Greek and Latin texts on stone from Naukratis are a very mixed set of about 67 pieces, albeit only one is in Latin, and bilingual at that.¹ The figure cannot be precise since it is debated whether a small number said to be from the site can be firmly assigned that provenance. Of these a few were brought to Petrie or Gardner during their excavations, while some five others in Alexandria, Cairo, New York and Moscow have merely a reported provenance of Naukratis.

Whatever these uncertainties, the great majority of the total corpus is already published, in Petrie 1886a, Gardner 1888, Hogarth *et al.* 1898–1899 and Hogarth *et al.* 1905, followed in particular by Bernard's corpus of 1970, nos 742–68).² Bernard includes all but 18 of the texts; 13 of these are fragmentary at best,³ though the other five are more substantial and may have been oversights on the part of Bernard:

- Petrie 1886a, pl. 31,5
- Gardner 1888, 68–9, nos 20, 21 and pl. 22,17 (the last not mentioned in Gardner's text)
- Roman period tombstone (no. 6 in the list of grave markers below) published both in Petrie 1886a and Marshall 1916.

Of those pieces included by Bernard, six small fragments have not been located since they were first published,⁴ and there is nothing to add to the little that he writes about them, other than that they are indeed not in the British Museum.

All Greek texts are included in the catalogue entries for the individual pieces. Here a selection is given: all those on funerary monuments, those previously unpublished and some others judged to be of greater significance.

Grave markers

This is a small and disparate group, though including our longest text from Naukratis. A problem arises immediately in that the provenance of 'Naukratis' is not entirely secure for nos 2 and especially 5.

1 British Museum, 1886,0401.1 (Petrie 1886a, pl. 30,1; Bernard 1970, no. 32). Τεάω ἐμί| σῆμα. 'I am the marker of Teaos'. Limestone. Found near the temple of the Dioskouroi probably in secondary use, but not far from the southern limit of the cemetery.

¹ Unless otherwise indicated, all images in this chapter are © Trustees of the British Museum.

² His no. 48 is probably not from Naukratis; Hogarth, on whom one can only rely, says (1905, 118) 'I suspect it was imported from elsewhere'.

³ Three 'groups' are treated below: five fragments of perirrhantaria with dedicatory texts; three scraps, probably all architectural with minimal lettering on them; and four of the five pieces included under 'Varia'. To be added are: one architectural notation found more recently by Coulson 1996, 15–16, no. 9 and pl. VIII; *theta* or *eta*; one previously unpublished marble scrap from a possibly substantial text (British Museum, 1886,0401.62;]λησ[); and one fragment only known from Petrie's excavation journal, Petrie 1884–5, p. 73:]μετα[|]ων[|]ρου[, with broken-bar *alpha*.

⁴ Hogarth 1898–9, 42, nos f,g,h,j,k (= Bernard 1970, nos 36–40) and Hogarth 1905, 118, no. b (= Bernard 1970, no. 45).

2 Cairo JE31183 (Milne 1905, 60, no. CG9241; Bernand 1970, no. 33). Μητροδώρου : εἰμι : σῆμα : τῷ πολλωνίδεω Μιλησίῳ. 'I am the marker of Metrodoros, the son of Apollonides from Miletus'. Limestone.



3 Cairo JE27753 (Petrie 1887, 209; *Bulletin de Correspondance Hellénique* 21, 1897, 579, pl. 19.2; Milne 1905, 59–60, no. CG9220, pl. 10; Bernand 1970, no. 31, pl. 40.4). Fig. 1. Ἀπολλῶτος| τῷ Θαλίνο, repeated in fainter lettering above. 'Of Apollos, the son of Thalinos'. Limestone. I follow the reading of Milne for the main text, which is clear in his photo.⁵

4 unlocated (Gardner 1888, 68, no. 20). Ἐνθάδε δὲ ἢ Μελίαν κατέχει χθῶν πουλυβότειρα| Τήιον, ὃς πάσης εὐσεβείης [μ]έτοχ[ο]ς, (ἡ)δὲ ἀρετῆς κλέος ἔσθ(λ)όν. ἀείμνηστον (δ)ὲ τὸδε αὐτῷ μνημεῖον, φανερόν τοῖς ἐπιγινόμενοις. 'Here the bountiful earth covers Melias of Teos, who partook of perfect propriety and [won?] the good repute of virtue, and this is the immortal memorial for him, visible to future generations'. The grammatical problem regarding the lack of verb in the dependent clause is treated by Gardner.

5 once Cairo, private collection (Lefebvre 1902, 452–3; Bernand 1970, no. 34). Bilingual Greek and Latin text. L Larteus | Luci Pullea| ave| Λούκει(ος) Λάρτιος | Λούκει(ου) Πολλία | χαίρει. 'Farewell Lucius Lartius, son of Lucius, of the Pollia tribe'. Marble.



Figure 1 False-door stele, Cairo, Egyptian Museum, JE27753; top, after Milne 1905; bottom, Photograph © Egyptian Museum, Cairo

6 British Museum, 1886,0401.3 (Petrie 1886a, pl. 31,11; Marshall 1916, no. 1084). Limestone; above the inscriptions are scant remains of a carved figured scene perhaps representing the deceased and a dog. The following reading is a combination of Gardner's original text, some of which is now lost, and a few letters not given by him or Marshall, but visible still on the stone.

οὐχὶ κρόκω παστός σε διάβροχος οὐδὲν ὑπ'εὐνάς
 ἄγαγον ἔς νύμφας ἡμερόπνουν θάλαμον,
 κ|ροῦρε μέγ'αἰνητοῦ Χαιρήμονος Ἡρακλήδῃ
 ἀλλὰ σε πρὸς Λάθας ἀνιόχησα[ν] ἔδος
 στέ[ρ]να μετ'οἰμωγᾶς δὲ τάφου πέλαις ἀ[ν]τετύπησαν
 ἐ[π]λατάγησε τ'ἔα γηρόκομος γενέτας
 [π]ᾶ[σά] τε σὸν στενάχησε πόλις βαρυκ[α]δέα πτό[μ]ον
 (καί σε) μέγ' Ἑρμείας [μ]ύρατ' ἀνάξ[ια] ἄγων
 (ιάσασθαιδ'οὐκ ἔσθενεν [ο]ύδὲ
 γερετρα [ο]ύ Μοιρῶν νόσφι λέλογχε θανῶν

'I was no chamber suffused with saffron leading you to the love-breathing couch of your bride, Herakleides, son of much respected Chairemon. But I took you in my chariot to the abode of Lethe. Your grizzle-haired father, alas, beat his breast in grief by your tomb, and the whole town mourned your woeful fate. Even Hermes shed tears as he led you away so undeserving. He could not be cured, and in death, not without the Fates' decree, was assigned his place below.'

⁵ While the (rather obviously touched up) photograph in *Bulletin de Correspondance Hellénique* 1897, pl. 19 appears to support Petrie's reading 'Thlaino', the much crisper photograph in Milne (reproduced by Bernand) shows that Petrie was mistaken and that Thalino is the correct reading.

The inscription for Metrodoros (2) is a fine piece of lettering, good stoichedon with punctuation, and would seem to be of c. 500–450 BC in date, *pace* Milne, who suggests 4th century BC. A stele for a Milesian (as for a Teian, 4) would be very much at home at Naukratis, whether before or after the Persian destruction of Miletos in 494 BC.

The earlier tomb marker for Teaos (1), is cut in Ionian script of the 2nd half of the 6th century BC; it is notable for that name and perhaps for the signs of at least one later re-use, recut as a pillar capital, and with a further, eccentric, hollowing. The name, not attested elsewhere, is more likely to be of Egyptian origin than Greek, with its initial Τε- and termination in -ως.

A name more surely typical of Egypt, Apollos, is found on the ‘false door’ stele (3) probably of the 5th century BC. It is our earliest attestation of that name; while there remains some uncertainty of the reading of the fainter of the two similar texts, Milne is surely correct in his reading of the ‘main’ text. The patronymic, Thalinos, and its derivatives, are Greek, albeit very rare. The shape of the tomb marker, too, is intriguingly hybrid, combining an Egyptian cornice (as used on 6th century BC Egyptian-style false-door ‘Caro-Egyptian’ grave markers – e.g. Kammerzell 2001, 251–2 figs 9–10, p. 255 figs 14–15) with a door type more typical of Anatolian/Lybian tomb monuments (Roosevelt 2006, 74 fig. 13).

The other sepulchral texts are longer. 4 must belong to the Ptolemaic period, while 5 and 6 are later, perhaps 1st century AD, 5 being the only Latin text from the site other than on pottery; the Roman tribal affiliation, Pollia, is the norm in Egypt (Vandorpe 2012, 262). One can only echo Marshall’s words (1916, 211) that 6 is a poorly composed epitaph, merely adding that the stone-cutting is no better, whatever the strong emotive content.

The only other certain grave marker from Naukratis, a Hellenistic funerary banquet relief, preserves no inscription (British Museum, 1888,0601.35; Gardner 1888 p. 22). Whether the richly carved 4th-century BC Athenian-style tombstone acquired by Petrie at Teh el Barud is from Naukratis has to remain uncertain (Petrie 1884–5, 49; Petrie photograph Delta series 401).

Dedicated objects

Of the 40 or so texts that may be termed dedicatory perhaps eleven fall into the category of worked objects given dedicatory texts. Five are marble perirrhanteria (or louteria, water basins for ritual washing), four limestone figures, one a limestone dish and one a marble figurine; all but the last are of the Archaic period.

The **perirrhanterion** fragments are all relatively small, but there is little to suggest that they belong to fewer than five objects. Most appear to preserve part of a dedicatory formula to Apollo.

- British Museum, 1886,0401.7 (Petrie 1886a, pl. 14A).]τω[. From the Apollo sanctuary.
- British Museum, 1886,0401.984 (Petrie 1886a, pl. 35, no. 699).]ος :][. The probability is that a dedicator’s name was cited

here. Said by Petrie to have been found in the 'scarab factory', hence probably from the Aphrodite sanctuary.

- British Museum, 1886,0401.1524 (noted by Gardner in his diary, but previously unpublished). Fig. 2. Two joining fragments. vac Ἄπο[



Figure 2 Louterion rim, British Museum, 1886,0401.1524

- Heidelberg, Ägyptologisches Institut der Universität, 1722.]Ἄπ[
- Heidelberg, Ägyptologisches Institut der Universität, 3247. Fig. 3. Much worn.]πολλων[



Figure 3 Louterion rim, Heidelberg, Ägyptologisches Institut der Universität, 3247.
© Ägyptologisches Institut der Universität Heidelberg, Foto: Robert Ajtai

They add a new group to the hitherto-known corpus of inscribed perirrhanteria in Archaic and later sanctuaries (of Apollo, Artemis, Aphaia, Athena, Hera and other deities: Pimpl 1997, 89–105; Krauskopf 2005) and may refer to ritual cleansing being important especially in Apollo's cult at the site.

Figurines with Greek votive dedications are of greater epigraphic interest and difficulty, comprising both Cypriot and Egyptian type figurines.

1 British Museum, 1888,0601.20 (Sculpture B118) (Gardner 1888, pl. 13,5; Marshall 1916, no. 1080; Bernand 1970, no. 6). Cypriot figure of huntsman, from the sanctuary of Aphrodite, 6th century BC. Καλλι[ας Ἀφροδῖ]τηι. For the reading see Johnston 2003, 164.

2 Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, Res.88.48 (Gardner 1888, 66, no. 794; Bernand 1970, no. 4). Fig. 4. Cypriot female figurine, from the sanctuary of Aphrodite, 6th century BC. Πολύερμος μ' ἀν[]] τ ἡ Ἀφροδῖτηι[.

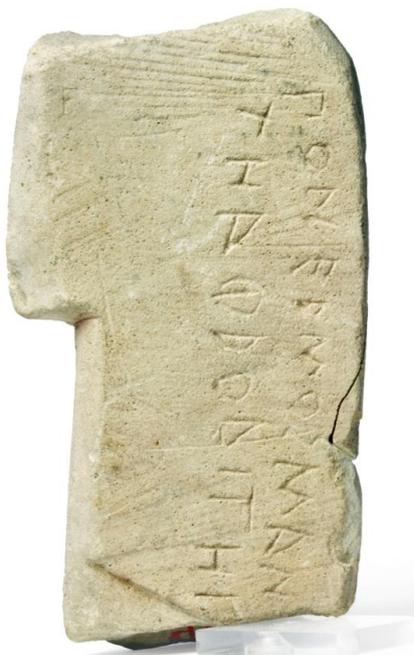


Figure 4 Limestone figurine, Boston, MFA, Res.88.48.
Photograph © Museum of Fine Arts, Boston



Figure 5 Limestone horse and rider, British Museum, 1900,0214.27

3 British Museum, 1900,0214.27 (Hogarth 1898–9, 55, no 58; Bernard 1970, no. 58). Fig. 5. Horse and rider statuette, from the Hellenion, c. 450–350 BC. Νυμφαι| .c.3. εἰμι| ι... ος.

4 unlocated or (most likely) misidentified (Hogarth 1898–9, 55, no. 59; Bernard 1970, no. 582). Horse, from the Hellenion. Few letters. They may, however, be a misreading of the faint scratches (part of the saddle cloth?) on the horse in the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford, AN1896-1908-G.109, c. 450–350 BC.

The reading of **3** – a figurine of Egyptian manufacture probably representing Harpokrates as the rider (see the chapter on [Late Period figures](#)) – is very difficult in view of the wear and scratching of the surface. The last line reads either ΙΠΠΟΣ or ΙΕΡΟΣ; the last letter of the first line is rather *iota* than *gamma*, making a dedication to the Muses a possibility, but one hard to square with the clear εἰμί in line 2. The unusual ‘crasis’ of τῆ Ἀφροδίτῃ on the Cypriot statuette **2** may be noted, as may the phenomenon of Greeks dedicating Cypriot figurines to Aphrodite, which brings to mind Athenaios’s famous anecdote of the Naukratite trader Herostratos dedicating a Cypriot figurine in his local sanctuary of Aphrodite (Athen. 15.675–6).

To these we may add two further votive offerings.

- **5** unlocated (Gardner 1888, 66, no. 795). Limestone dish.]ην]ς
Ναυκρατιν]].καὶ Κο[.
- **6** British Museum, 1900,0214.22 (Hogarth 1898–9, 32; Marshall 1916, no. 1081; Bernard 1970, no. 9). Σίκω[ν ἐπ]οίη|σε Κύπ[ριος |
Ἄριστίωγ Ἡρακλεῖ.

5 clearly refers to the town of Naukratis, though with mis-spelling, but the context is not easy to construe; the lettering suggest a date around the mid-6th century BC. Gardner notes that the inscription is on the rim of the dish, with the third line inside the dish. Together with the slightly earlier inscription painted on an East Greek vase (British Museum, 1888,0601.531) this is the earliest attestation of the Greek name of the site. **6** is the lower part and base of a statuette of Herakles in marble, dating to the 4th century BC, according to its inscription a dedication by Aristion signed by the sculptor Sikon from Cyprus. It is ably discussed by Höckmann and Möller 2006, 13; see also Höckmann 2010, 27.

Bases and related dedications

There is a broad variety of texts under this heading, virtually all of which are well published epigraphically; they range in date from the later Archaic period to late Hellenistic. Some very fragmentary pieces again make it difficult to give precise numbers, as it is unclear whether they come from bases or stelai. A striking feature is that even in this relatively small group there is a very broad range of deities (and/or Ptolemies!) named, enhancing the set known from mainly earlier ceramic texts.

The series begins with some Late Archaic scraps that appear to be from dedications, though the original form of the stones is impossible to estimate. One of them (British Museum, 2012,5021.1) was clearly reused for a second text, no doubt a reflection on the lack of good stone in the locality. British Museum, 1886,0401.1365 is the other, but little more than a datival ending supports the interpretation as a dedicatory text:]ωι δ[|]ρτο[|]σ[.⁶

For later material, in alphabetical order of deity, we have:

Apollo in the guise of Phoibos in a fragmentary Ptolemaic text (British Museum, 1886,0401.1569; Marshall 1916, no. 1091; not in Bernand 1970), and as himself as recipient of a palaestra as recorded on a fine Ionian marble block (British Museum, 1886,1005.21; Marshall 1916, no. 1083; Bernand 1970, no. 20. Fig. 6), just one part of a larger base, with lettering of the 4th century BC (*pace* Bernand).



Figure 6 Marble base, British Museum, 1886,1005.21

Aphrodite appears on an unlocated stone base from the Hellenion area (Hogarth 1898–9, 38; Bernand 1970, no. 7), a dedication of a Mytilenian, ‘of the Classical period’ (Bernand).

Artemis may be described by the adjective *polymorphos* preserved on another unlocated piece (Gardner 1888, pl. 22.16; Bernand 1970, no. 28). She appears clearly, in the genitive, as Artemis Pergaie, on Cairo CG9230 (Milne 1901, 285; Bernand 1970, no. 8), probably of the 4th century BC, but of purely conjectural association with Naukratis.



Figure 7 Limestone base (below Cairo JE26810), location unknown, Petrie photograph

Athena is known from the honours given to her priest-for-life in the unlocated limestone base of the mid-2nd century BC that identified the site for Petrie (1886a, pl. 30, 3; Bernand 1970, no. 15; Redon 2012, 84, no. 25. Fig.7):

Ἡ πόλις ἡ Ναυκρατιτ[ῶν] | Ἡλιόδωρον Δωρίωνος Φιλο[.....] | τὸν ἱερέα
τῆς Ἀθηνᾶς διὰ βίου [καί] | συγγραφοφύλακα, ἀρετῆς καὶ [εὐνοίας] ἔνεκα
τῆς εἰς αὐτήν. ‘The polis of the Naukratites (honours) Heliodoros, son of Dorion, the priest-for-life of Athena and archivist, for his virtue and goodwill towards it’.

Demeter is the recipient of an offering of uncertain character (Cairo JE33597; Hogarth 1898–9, 41; Bernand 1970, no. 21) of early to mid-Hellenistic date, to judge from the lettering; whether the piece suffices to

⁶ Highly likely to be from Naukratis is part of a probable dedication on marble to Apollo, Ashmolean Museum, Oxford, AN1896-1908-G1224 (Eidinow 2006), c. 525–500 BC.



Figure 8 Marble stele fragment, British Museum, 1900,0214.26

concur with Hogarth in identifying the find-spot – southeast of the Hellenion – as a Demeter sanctuary remains questionable.⁷

Dionysos appears in the dative, along with θεοῖς in a fragmentary marble stele from the western, river-facing edge of the site, British Museum, 1900,0214.26 (Hogarth 1898–9, 40 no. c; Bernand 1970, no. 25). Fig.8. Probably late Ptolemaic.

British Museum, 1886,0401.1364 (Marshall 1916, 1092; Bernand 1970, no. 23), *vac* Ἡρακλ[] .ος Λακ[]]ιοδωρος .[; the structure of the text does suggest a dedication to *Herakles*, a cult known from earlier texts incised on ceramics (Ceramic Inscriptions, 2.1; Höckmann and Möller 2006; Höckmann 2010, 2013).

Hermes receives from Philiskos an offering, as inscribed on a small marble plaque of the Classical period, British Museum, 1886,0401.6 (Petrie 1886a, pl. 20, 35; Bernand 1970, no. 3).



Figure 9a–b Front and detail of top of limestone base, British Museum, 1886,1005.22

Zeus appears as *Apotropaios* and *Thebaios* on stone texts, not Hellenios as in the ceramic graffiti (Ceramic Inscriptions, 9.2). The former is found on a fragment of a small Classical limestone stele, British Museum, 2012,5021.3 (Gardner 1888, pl. 22,14; Marshall 1916, no. 1089; Bernand 1970, no. 30); ἱερὸν Δι[ὸς Ἄπ]οτροπ[αίου], found in the area of the Heraion.⁸ *Thebaios* is his Egyptianizing epithet on a Pentelic marble base, British Museum, 1886,1005 (Marshall 1916, no. 1088; Bernand 1970, no. 12. Fig. 9a–b), a dedication by Ampelion, son of Sosikrates, of probable 4th century BC to judge from the lettering. The block was found by Petrie outside the gate to the sanctuary of the Egyptian god Amun-Ra, long equated by Greeks with Zeus (Vittmann 2003, 230–1). Unusually for Naukratis, the cutting on top of the base preserves part of the lead used in securing the dedicated object into an asymmetric cutting near its centre. Höckmann suggests (2012, 460, n. 63) that an animal figure stood on the base, in accordance with Egyptian offerings to Amun. The preserved part of the cutting and the lead in it do not rule this out, though the depth of the base is not known, *pace* Höckmann; but if this were the case, the inscription would be on the narrow side of the base, with the animal facing towards it, not what one might have expected.

One dedication that involves both a *Ptolemy* and other deities is one not surely from Naukratis, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, 89.2.262

⁷ Bernand takes the base as an offering table of Egyptian type. Without autopsy it is not easy to be categorical on the matter; a stele base seems more likely, though the placement of the text on the upper surface would be unusual.

⁸ For the cult title at Cyrene, see Luni 2011, 247–52 (with discussion and bibliography of the *epiclesis*).

(Bernand 1970, no. 13, with comment on p. 775), datable to the reign of Ptolemy Philopator, 209–204 BC, a dedication on his behalf to Isis, Sarapis and Apollo by Komon, son of Asklepiodoros, steward of the Naukratis district.

Other *Ptolemies* are honoured in six texts:

- two surely or probably for Ptolemy II Philadelphos: British Museum, 1886,0401.1522 (Marshall 1916, no. 1086; Bernand 1970, no. 10; see also Redon 2012, 63) from the Great Temenos gate; Greco-Roman Museum, Alexandria, 21; Bernand 1970, no. 11.
- one, fragmentary, marble, probably to Ptolemy IV (Greco-Roman Museum, Alexandria, 27; Bernand 1970, no. 14).
- two to Ptolemy XII, also fragmentary: British Museum, 2012,5021.2, basalt (Gardner 1888, pl. 22.18; *Inscriptions* 1087; Bernand 1970, no. 16); Cairo JE26810 (Fig. 7. Bernand 1970, no. 17), given as granite in the *Journal d'entrée*, but Petrie in his excavation journal (Petrie 1884–5, p.18) specifically notes it as being of the same *limestone* as the 'Naukratis' base.
- one well-preserved granite base, Greco-Roman Museum, Alexandria, 19016 (Bernand 1970, no. 18), a dedication by 'those from the polis' to the nurse of Ptolemy XIII, Tryphaina, from 58 BC:
 Τρύφαιναν τὴν τροφὸν βασιλέως | Πτολεμαίου μεγάλου θεοῦ νέου |
 Διονύσου Φιλοπάτορος | Φιλαδέλφου π..... ἀδε | Ἀμμώνιος
 γένους, | οἱ ἀπὸ τῆς πόλεως ἐπὶ προστατοῦ | Ἡφαιστίωνος τοῦ
 Ἀλεξάνδρου, | γραμματέως Διονυσίου Λκβ

Two pieces are dedicatory in nature but no deity's name is given:

- British Museum, 1886,0401.2 (Marshall 1916, 1091a; Bernand 1970, no. 1), miniature limestone stele, Παρμενίσκος | Θεοφι[. See Bernand for a brief discussion of the possible full reading, probably a patronymic. Classical period.
- unlocated, Gardner 1888, 69, no 21, commemorating the worthy nature of setting up statues of both parents by their children in a temenos. Probably Hellenistic.

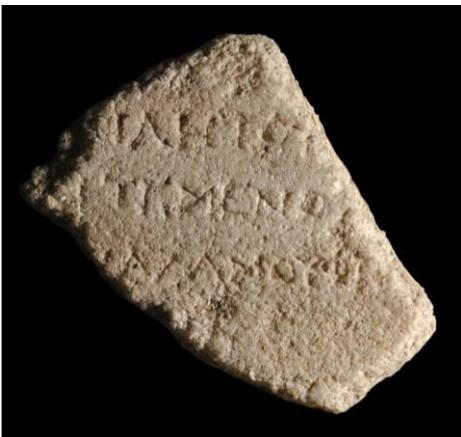


Figure 10 Fragment of stele, British Museum, 1886,0401.1363

Temenos is one of the few legible words on British Museum, 1886,0401.1363 (Petrie 1886a, 34, pl. 31.9; Marshall 1916, no. 1093; Bernand 1970, no. 22. Fig.10), of the Hellenistic period, where Miletos is also mentioned.

One text has part of a name which has been suggested to be of a divine dedicant but is that of a human: Cairo JE26809 (Bernand 1970, no. 35), from the Great Temenos. Petrie wrote in his *Journal* (Petrie 1884–5, 73) that it was 'probably a dedication to Asklepios by a Greek', but both he and Bernand read a possible *alpha*, pointing to the name Asklepiades, and as the text includes a date it is unlikely to be a dedication.

One clear dedication to *Boubastis* is on a base not surely found at Naukratis, British Museum, 1905,0612.20 (Marshall 1916, 1079a); Γαλατεία Θευδότου | Βουβάσι. Early Ptolemaic? The cutting on top was for a cat figure. The sculptural pieces from this same purchase by Petrie are noted in the chapter on **Material culture**, fig. 45.

Sui generis is an unlocated base, Bernand 1970, no. 28 (Gardner 1888, pl. 22.15), specifically dated to Phamenoth 7, in the reign of a Caesar, and recording an apparent dedication by the convenor to a Sabbath society. See Bernand 1970, 774–5 for comment on this apparently Jewish group.

Decrees

Redon 2012, 61–2 notes that only one decree is known from Naukratis, Bernand 1970, no. 15, honouring Athena's priest. The assumption here is that the polis could not honour Athena's priest without the matter being the subject of a decree, a reasonable argument. Other texts, also lacking any clear indication of their nature, may be fragments of decrees:

- unlocated (Hogarth *et al.* 1905, 118,a; Bernand 1970, no. 44), marble fragment mentioning a report, *anagraphe*, and the treasurer. 3rd century BC.
- Alexandria University (Bernand 1970, no. 19) and Hamburg, private collection (Scholl 1997; Bresson 2005, 142–4), basalt stele with two columns of names of *bouleutai* under tribal headings for the polis of Naukratis preserved. 3rd century BC (Fig. 11).



Figure 11 Basalt stele, Alexandria, University and Hamburg, art market. After Scholl 1997, pl. 18

- and perhaps British Museum, 1886,0401.1521 (Petrie 1886a, pl. 31,6; Marshall 1916, no. 1085; Bernand 1970, no. 42), marble fragment with list of names. Hellenistic.

Somewhat different is a copy of a decree of the Rhodian polis of Lindos. The basalt stele was bought in Cairo before 1908 and is now in the Pushkin Museum, Moscow (I.i.a.3019); more recent bibliography is Blinkenberg 1941, 212-4, appendix to n.16 and Bresson 2000, 27-36. It dates to the mid-fifth century BC and honours as proxenos and benefactor of the Lindians a 'resident in Egypt', Damoxenos son of Hermon, and orders the publication of the decree in the sanctuary of Athena at Lindos (where it has not been found) and in Egypt in the 'Ellanion'. While the case is not watertight, it is highly likely that this refers to the known Hellenion at Naukratis. The fact that Damoxenos is not labelled 'Naukratite' raises questions as to whether the town was recognised as a full *polis* at this period.

Inscriptions on architecture

The texts on architectural blocks, or probably so, are minor, mixed and uninformative.

- The letters on a fluted column, found re-used in the village of el-Baradany and published by Coulson (1996, 15–16, no. 9. pl. 8) is the most ‘regular’ – a fitting mark of some kind by means of a single letter.
- British Museum, 1886,0401.983. Small marble fragment, 3.3 cm thick; vertical line on one side; vertical line and part of circular letter on the other.
- British Museum, 1886,0401.63. Marble fragment. H cut on a stippled surface; at right angles to it a smoothed surface.
- British Museum, 1886,0401.8 (Petrie 1886a, pl. 14A; Pryce 1928, 178 no. B427; Bernand 1970, no. 427; Koenigs 2007, 338 no. 37, fig. 7). An assured marble architectural fragment. *vac* Αρτ[.

Varia

It is worth noting four further pieces.⁹ The first because it has only appeared in print in Gardner 1888, pl. 22, 17 and is unlocated; Gardner’s reading presents a challenging text, which probably accounts for its neglect: [αἰων] [αγγαισαμε] ταις πολυ]. The second is legible, but again unusual – a small fragment of steatite used as an ostrakon for a graffito (British Museum, 1886,0401.5; Petrie 1886a, pl. 20, 32; Bernand 1970, no. 2. Fig. 12); Ηρ Ηρακλειδης Καλλιχω is my reading, emending previous versions (for which see Bernand); the naming of a male and a female points to some personal milieu. The third is another fragment of steatite, of a plate or lid, probably used also as an ostrakon for a range of minor graffiti in several hands (Ashmolean Museum, Oxford, AN1925.608k; Hogarth 1898-1899, 42, no. I. Fig. 13); on one side ξεν.ερ.αμφιατος.η, on the other μ.οστυρ.χ.λιρ.



Figure 12 Steatite ostrakon, British Museum, 1886,0401.5



Figure 13 Steatite ostrakon, Ashmolean Museum, Oxford, AN1925.608k.
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Finally, British Museum, 1886,0401.1525 is a previously unpublished limestone slab with one edge preserved, found in the sanctuary of Apollo; there are lines on both sides, as for gaming tables or Egyptian relief

⁹ A further piece should be noted, though much concerning it is uncertain. Boston MFA S.1312 has not been located; according to the Register and the distribution record of the Egypt Exploration Fund it is a limestone altar or stand, with a text whose location is far from clear. A rough drawing indicates a casual text, ΑΠ.ΟΣ, seemingly not long enough for a dedication to Apollo, while the *omicron* rules out the personal name Apollon.

sculpture ‘templates’, and some lettering on one side, and a single sign, perhaps a letter, cut in a large square on the other.

Appendix: a stone from Plinthine

An inscription of possible relevance to Naukratis has recently been republished from Plinthine, on the north shore of Lake Mareotis, west of Alexandria (Greco-Roman Museum, Alexandria, 28898; Boussac 2007, 447, fig. 2a and 450, n.15). It is a stone disc with the spiralling text Ζώϊλος με ἀγ[-----]Κλειοστρ[(Zoilos (son of?) Kleiostr(atos) dedicated). The lettering is not closely diagnostic unfortunately, 550–450 BC being a probable range. One’s thoughts go to ‘the’ Zoilos at Naukratis (discussed in more detail in the [Ceramic inscriptions](#), section 12.1), the Chian who dedicated more pots than anybody else, c. 560–530 BC, *if* he was one person. Therein lies the problem with any equation with the son of Kleiostratos at Plinthine. Naukratite Zoilos does not give his patronymic; in a sense he would not need to if he were the same person as the man at Plinthine, since his father may have been known at the time by his very rare name. Our preserved record (*LGPN*) has only one example of the name, and that in the feminine equivalent.

Stones and people: a summary

The corpus of stone texts from Naukratis is for the most part highly fragmentary and varied. The funerary texts could scarcely be more different from each other, but include some of the earliest Greek funerary inscriptions known from Egypt.¹⁰ Worthy of note is the fact that already during the first few centuries of the site’s existence we catch glimpses of individuals of both Greek and, seemingly, Egyptian or mixed descent living – and dying – at Naukratis, and being commemorated in at least one instance with a hybrid Greek-Anatolian style grave marker.

The Greek dedicatory material rarely repeats the names of deities of heroes known from the substantial ceramic record. It does, however, highlight some dedicatory peculiarities: a cluster of Greek perirrhanteria for Apollo; Cypriot figurines given by Greeks to Aphrodite; Egyptian riders (Harpokrates) dedicated in the Hellenion. More generally it demonstrates the wide range of cults at the site in the Classical and Hellenistic periods, whether traditional Greek (Apollo, Artemis, Athena, Hermes, Zeus Apotropaïos), Egyptian inspired (Zeus Thebaïos, Isis) or Jewish in early Roman times. As in other Egyptian towns, the cult of the Ptolemies is the one that bulks largest.

The material also gives hints about the administration of the area, whether as an independent polis or within the Ptolemaic kingdom; but they remain hints, patchy and isolated over time, and particularly thin for the pre-Hellenistic period. They feed the debate on the status of the town at the time, but do not by any means sate the appetite, as can be seen from the hesitation of researchers to assign to Naukratis any form of continuous political history (for the earlier period see Scholl 1997 and Bresson 2005, esp. 142–5; for the later Redon 2012).

¹⁰ Cf. the Archaic false door stele of Exekestos, Brooklyn 37.1354E (Herbert 1972, 11–12 no. 1, pl. 1) and the mid-5th century BC grave marker of Kobon (Wagner 1973).