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Waterway Fayum-Alexandria : a note on P. Lille I 1 (=P. Zen. Pest., Appendix A)

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WATERWAY FAYUM–ALEXANDRIA

A NOTE ON *P. LILLE I 1* (= *P. ZEN. PEST.*, APPENDIX A)*

THE NILE AND ITS TRIBUTARIES, as well as the largest canals, were the most important communication routes for the inhabitants of Egypt. This statement, though banal, needs to be repeated especially if it concerns a waterway other than the Nile and the Bahr Yusuf. The main subject of this paper is a canal that constituted an extension of the Bahr Yusuf to the north, used as the most convenient waterway connecting the Fayum with the Delta, especially with Alexandria. The awareness of the existence of this waterway is not at all common, although in the past much has been written about it.¹

What is more, the acknowledgement of the existence of a navigable canal running parallel to the Nile, between the Nile Valley and the Fayum, is of key significance for the topography of the Fayum and identifying the location of some villages, whereas a failure to do so infallibly leads to false conclusions. The starting point for my discussion was the issue of locating Syron Kome, a village that belonged to the *komogrammateia* governed

* I am thankful to Dorota DZIERZBIĆKA for correcting my English.

¹ See, above all, E. WIKÉN, 'Zur Topographie des Faijûm. Kerke', [in:] *Corolla Archaeologica Principi hereditario Regni Sueciae Gustavo Adolpho dedicata* (= *Acta Instituti Romani Regni Sueciae* 2), Lund 1932, pp. 270–276; also T. C. SKEAT in *P. Lond.* VII 1973 introd., pp. 62–64; P. PARSONS, *P. Oxy.* XLII 3052, 9 comm.

by Petaus son of Petaus in the 180s AD.² Recently the location of Syron Kome has been discussed by Jairus Banaji, who argues as follows in a somewhat arbitrary way:

Syron was roughly a day's journey south of Ptolemais Hormou, on the Bahr Yusuf, which would mean a location in the neighbourhood of Sidamant el-Gebel. Fayum maps do in fact show a village by the name of El Zeriba at this point on the canal (just north of Sidamant el-Gebel), and it seems plausible to identify this as the approximate site of Syron kome.³

This reasoning brings us back to *P. Petaus* – on the basis of the evidence of *P. Lille 1* (now *P. Zen. Pest.*, Appendix A) the editors concluded that

Syron Kome südlich von Ptolemais Hormou und wahrscheinlich am Bahr Yusuf gelegen hat.⁴

This, however, leads to an internal contradiction: if Syron Kome had been on the Bahr Yusuf, one day's water journey south of Ptolemais Hormou, it could not have been part of the Arsinoite nome, let alone the Meris of Herakleides that included the *komogrammateia* whose capital was Ptolemais Hormou (el-Lahun), governed in the 180s AD by Petaus son of Petaus.⁵ The neighbourhood of Sidamant el-Gebel indicated by Banaji as the area in which Syron Kome was located is in the immediate vicinity of the Arsinoite nome, but the documents say nothing about its affiliation to this administrative unit.⁶ Even if this region, located on the left (western) bank of the Bahr Yusuf, next to the metropolis of Herakleopolis

² See T. DERDA, *Ἀρσινοΐτης Νομός. Administration of the Fayum under Roman Rule* (= *JfurP Supplements 7*), Warsaw 2006, pp. 18–19.

³ J. BANAJI, *Agrarian Change in Late Antiquity: Gold, Labour, and Aristocratic Dominance*, Oxford 2002, pp. 247–248, see also p. 245.

⁴ *P. Petaus*, pp. 27–28.

⁵ For the *komogrammateia* of Petaus, see now my book *Ἀρσινοΐτης Νομός* (cit. *supra*, n. 2), pp. 153–155.

⁶ A phonetic similarity Syron Kome – el-Zeriba suggested by Banaji is problematic and cannot be accepted as conclusive proof.

Magna, was indeed at some point a part of the Arsinoite nome, it would have rather belonged to the Meris of Polemon, which it borders.⁷

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Let us now turn to a document of key significance for locating the village of Syron Kome. *P. Lille 11* (= *P. Zen. Pest.*, Appendix A) is a famous document containing a map of the estate of *dioiketes* Apollonios. It describes a plot of land (10,000 arourae) in the Arsinoite nome designated for extensive reclamation works.⁸

From the point of view of topography of the Fayum, the most important are the last five lines of the document, which read as follows:

- 44 ἀπεδήμησεν Ἀπολλώνιος Ἀθὺρ ζ, καὶ συν-
 ἐπλευσα αὐτῶι ἕως Φυλακῆς κάκει ἐξέβην, τῆι δὲ ἡ ἦλθον
 εἰς Τοῦφιν, τῆι θ̄ εἰς Σύρων κώμην, ἰ εἰς Πτολεμαῖδα, ἰα εἰς
 τὸν Λαβύρινθον, καὶ ἐκεῖ εὔρον τοὺς γραμματέας καὶ ἐκομίσαντο
 48 τὴν ἐπιστολὴν καὶ ἀπήλθομεν εἰς πόλιν.

Apollonios left the 7th of Hathyr, and I (Diodoros, Apollonios' director of construction of the estate) sailed back with him as far as Phylake (or rather *phylake*, 'guard-post' – TD, see below), and on the 8th I came to Touphis, on the 9th to Syron Kome, on the 10th to Ptolemais, on the 11th to the Labyrinth, and there I found the secretaries, and they took the letter and I departed for the city.⁹

⁷ Maria Rosaria FALIVENE, *The Herakleopolite Nome. A Catalogue of the Toponyms, with Introduction and Commentary* (= *American Studies in Papyrology* 37), Atlanta 1998, does not record any locality in this area that would have belonged to the Arsinoite nome in any period, see also a map attached to Falivene's book.

⁸ For the document, see also Maria Rosaria FALIVENE, 'Sull'origine del *P. L. Bat. XX Suppl. A* (Progetto di dighe e canali per la δωρεά di Apollonios)', [in:] Simona RUSSO (ed.), *Atti del V Convegno Nazionale di Egittologia e Papirologia. Firenze, 10–12 dicembre 1999*, Firenze 2000, pp. 115–121. The document was also translated into English (R. S. BAGNALL – P. DEROW, *The Hellenistic Period: Historical Sources in Translation*, Oxford 2003, no. 105, pp. 169–172) and French (Cl. ORRIEUX, *Les papyrus de Zénon. L'horizon d'un Grec en Égypte au III^e siècle avant J.-C.*, Paris 1983, pp. 80–81; R. BURNET, *L'Égypte ancienne à travers les papyrus. Vie quotidienne*, Paris 2003, no. 46).

⁹ The English translation is by R. S. BAGNALL and P. DEROW (see the preceding note).

As mentioned above, on the basis of this document the editors of *P. Petaus* concluded that Syron Kome was located on the Bahr Yusuf, south of el-Lahun. ToupHis is a village in the Aphroditopolite nome on the other bank of the Nile (but we do not know in which part of the nome). In all editions of the text and its translations Phylakite was printed with a capital Φ or ‘Ph’, suggesting a village.¹⁰

What was the itinerary of the described journey? The answer highly depends on where Diodoros travelled from. It seems to me that both the reasoning of the editors of *P. Petaus* and that of Banaji is based on a presumption that the waterway to the Fayum led **only** from the south. We do, however, know quite certainly that the Fayum was accessible by water also from the north. *P. Oxy.* XLII 3052 (first cent. AD) contains an itinerary of such a journey from Nikopolis to perhaps Oxyrhynchos: from Nikopolis on the canal to Schedia, then south on the Kanopic branch to Heropolis Mikra, then south again in the main stream to Babylon and Memphis, then to Aphroditopolis, then west to Venne (*Οὐεννέ* in the document)¹¹ and Ptolemais Hormou, and then south on the Bahr Yusuf to Oxyrhynchos (Map 2).¹² What is especially interesting in the context of Diodoros’ journey, the Oxyrhynchite document does not mention Aphroditopolis, but a guard-post of the city (*εἰς φύλακας Ἀφροδείτω* in line 9). This is a good reason, I believe, to assume that *φυλακή* mentioned in *P. Lille* I I (= *P. Zen. Pest.*, Appendix A) quoted above is not a village, but a guard-post at Aphroditopolis.¹³ It is not evident why the two documents speak of a guard-station by the city and not of the city itself. We also do

¹⁰ Phylakai, a village in the Hermopolite nome, was suggested in the *editio princeps*, although this is obviously much too far to the south.

¹¹ In the Tabula Peutingeriana, Venne is mentioned after Memphis and before ‘Ptolemaidonar’ (i.e., Ptolemais Hormou?) and ‘Heracleo’ (Herakleopolis Magna on the Bahr Yusuf).

¹² The document is heavily damaged, but its general sense raises no doubt, see the editor’s introduction and comments to each locality mentioned.

¹³ For the *phylakai* in Middle Egypt, see *P. Hib.* II 198, columns iii–vi, a royal *diagramma* (late Philadelphos or Euergetes) regulating security measures on transport routes and waterways. On the basis of *P. Oxy.* XLII 3032, P. PARSONS suggested to read [*ἐν Ἀφροδίτῃς πόλει* in the list of *phylakai* in *P. Hib.* II 198 (lines 126–127).

not know how far from the city the guard-station was. Perhaps it was located west of the city, at the bank of the river. On the basis of *P. Lille* 11 (= *P. Zen. Pest.* Appendix A) we may also suggest that Touphis was either at the city or south of it, perhaps at the point where the ship-canal towards the Fayum branched off from the Nile.

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Some more light on the waterway Alexandria–Fayum is shed by another famous papyrus, *P. Lond.* VII 1973 dated to 21 September 254 BC. The document is a letter from Apollonios the *dioiketes* to Zenon, instructing him to make necessary arrangements for a visit of ambassadors of the Bosphoran king and *theoroi* of the Greek city of Argos.

recto

Ἀπολλώνιος Ζήνωνι χαίρειν. ὡς ἂν ἀναγνώις
 τὴν ἐπιστολήν, ἀπόστειλον εἰς Πτολεμαίδα
 τὰ τε ἄρμάτια καὶ τὰ λοιπὰ βαδιστικὰ πορεία
 4 καὶ τὰς νωτοφόρους ἡμιόνουζ ὥστε τοῖς παρὰ
 Παιρισάδου πρεσβευταῖς καὶ τοῖς ἐξ Ἄργους
 θεωροῖς οὓς ἀπέσταλκεν ὁ βασιλεὺς κατὰ θέαν
 τῶν κατὰ τὸν Ἄρσινοίτην. καὶ φρόντισον
 8 ἵνα μὴ καθυστερήσῃ τῆς χρείας· ὅτε γὰρ
 ἐγράφομέν σοι τὴν ἐπιστολήν ἀνεπεπλεύκε{ι}σαν ἤδη.
 ἔρρωσο. (ἔτους) λβ, Πανήμου κς', Μεσορῆ ᾶ.

verso

(ἔτους) λβ, Μεσορῆ [[α]] β, Ἀπολλώνιο[ς] Ζήνωνι.
 ὥρας ι. περὶ τῶν τοῖς
 παρὰ Παιρισάδου καὶ
 Ἀργείοις πρεσβευταῖς
 πορείων.

Apollonios to Zenon greeting. As soon as you read this letter, send off to Ptolemais the chariots and the other carriage-animals (?) and the baggage-

mules for the ambassadors from Pairisades and the delegates from Argos whom the King has sent to see the sights of the Arsinoite nome. And make sure that they do not arrive too late for this purpose: for at the time of writing this letter they have just this moment sailed up. Farewell. Year 32, Panemos 6 Mesore 1.

(Addressed) To Zenon (Docketed) Year 32, Mesore 2, at the 10th hour. Apollonios about the animals for the envoys from Pairisades and Argos.¹⁴

For topography of the Fayum and adjacent regions, it is important that the envoys from Pairisades II (king of Bosphorus) and Argos¹⁵ travelled by water as far as Ptolemais Hormou. There is no doubt that they set off from Alexandria. They must have reached Ptolemais Hormou from the north, by the same canal mentioned in *P. Lille* 11 (= *P. Zen. Pest.*, Appendix A) and *P. Oxy.* XLII 3052, an alternative waterway from Alexandria is difficult to imagine.¹⁶

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¹⁴ The translation is of the original edition by T. C. SKEAT.

¹⁵ For the guests of Ptolemy II on a sight-seeing tour to the Fayum and historical circumstances of their visit, see *P. Lond.* VII 1973 introd., and M. I. ROSTOVITZEFF, 'Greek Sight-seers in Egypt', *JEA* 14 (1928), pp. 13–15.

¹⁶ See the editor's remarks in the introduction to *P. Lond.* VII 1973 (p. 64).

On Map 75 in *The Barrington Atlas*, its author drew a canal connecting the Bahr Yusuf with the Nile and passing through Kos some 7 km south of el-Lahun. Kos is perhaps to be identified with Qai; see *The Barrington Atlas*, Map 75 (1:500,000): Memphis – Oxyrhynchus; for a list of both mapped and unidentified toponyms, see *Map-By-Map Directory*, vol. II, pp. 1125–1137, for Kos identified with Qai, see p. 1127. The identification is after F. GOMAA, Renate MÜLLER-WOLLERMANN, W. SCHENKEL, H. HEINEN, *Mittelägypten zwischen Samalüt und dem Gabal Abü Sir. Beiträge zur historischen Topographie der pharaonischen Zeit* (= *Beihfte zum Tübinger Atlas des Vorderen Orients*, Reihe B: *Geisteswissenschaften* 69), Wiesbaden 1991, p. 95. This area belonged to the Herakleopolite nome in the Graeco-Roman period, although, surprisingly enough, the village is not listed in Falivene's catalogue (FALIVENE, *The Herakleopolite Nome* [cit. *supra*, n. 7], Atlanta 1998).

But *P. Lille* 11 (= *P. Zen. Pest.*, Appendix A) quoted above shows that the waterway to Alexandria led past Syron Kome. The canal south of el-Lahun, even if navigable, primarily served for transporting water during inundation season (see Danielle BONNEAU, 'La terre "arrosée par le Nil": "Neilobrochos"', *BASP* 16 [1979], pp. 13–24, at p. 20) and was not, I believe, a real alternative route.

In another papyrus from the Zenon archive (*P. Mich. Zen.* 48 of 19 September 251 BC), Apollonios instructs the manager of his estate (lines 3–5):

καλῶς οὖν πο(ι)ήσεις ἀγοράσας ἡμῖν καὶ ἀποστείλας εἰς
 4 Πτολεμαίδα τὴν ἐπὶ τοῦ διστόμου πρὸς Διοσκουρίδην
 τὸν παρ' ἡμῶν.

Kindly then buy them (400 fowls for fattening and 100 hens) for us and send them to Ptolemais on the fork of the canal to our agent Dioskourides (transl. C. C. Edgar).

The town in question is Ptolemais at the entrance to the Fayum (el-Lahun), in the third century BC not named Ptolemais Hormou yet. Apollonios refers to its location at *distomon*, i.e. at the point where the canal continuing to the north separates from the Bahr Yusuf where the latter turns to the west.¹⁷ The two canals were controlled by sluices that regulated the amount of water entering the Fayum.¹⁸ The *distomon* at el-Lahun is also mentioned by Strabo (XVII 1, 35), although at this point he is not precise in his account.¹⁹

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To conclude what was said above, we may say that the existence of a canal being an extension of the Bahr Yusuf, separating from it at a point

¹⁷ See also *P. Lond.* VII 1990, a fragment of another letter from Apollonios to Zenon written on the same day and by the same scribe as *P. Mich. Zen.* 48: line 4 reads as follows: τὴν ἐπὶ τοῦ δ[ιστόμου], which is a plausible reading. These are the only occurrences of the word *δίστομον* in papyri except for very uncertain evidence of *P. IFAO* II 31, 8 (see BONNEAU, 'Neilobrochos' [cit. *supra*, n. 16], p. 20 n. 25).

¹⁸ See Danielle BONNEAU, *Le régime administratif de l'eau du Nil dans l'Égypte grecque, romaine et byzantine* (= *Probleme der Ägyptologie* 8), Leiden 1993, p. 69. Not far from the *distomon*, at Hawara, there was a *tristomon* – the place where the Bahr Yusuf crosses the canal that encircles the Fayum (see *ibidem*, pp. 71–72).

¹⁹ See J. YOYOTTE, P. CHARVET, S. GOMPERTZ, *Strabon. Le voyage en Égypte. Un regard romain*, Paris 1997, pp. 141–143 with n. 346. See also WIKÉN, 'Zur Topographie des Faijûm' (cit. *supra*, n. 1), pp. 272–273 and BONNEAU, *Le régime administratif de l'eau* (cit. *supra*, n. 18), p. 69.

called *distomon* and continuing to the north parallel to the Nile, is proven for the period from the third century BC (Zenon papyri) till at least the first century AD (*P. Oxy.* XLII 3052). The canal constituted a 'natural' border between the Herakleopolites and the Arsinoites; Syron Kome on its eastern bank belonged to the latter. Strabo also travelled on this canal when touring the Egyptian *chora* in 26 BC,²⁰ as it can be assumed from the order he adopted for his description of the Egyptian nomes – he described first the Aphroditopolites and then the Arsinoites and the Herakleopolites.²¹ But the waterway parallel to the Nile had a much longer history: it was created as early as in the Old Kingdom, before the construction of the pyramids. An investigation of remains of a series of harbours located close to the pyramids in Giza revealed that the material used for their construction was transported aboard ships following this route and not the Nile.²² On the other hand, the history of the canal (called $\Phi\chi\acute{\eta}\tau$ in some Ptolemaic documents,²³ hence referred to as the Phchet canal in modern literature, or Canal of Memphis in Arabic sources) did not end in antiquity. It was still in use in the tenth century AD.²⁴ According to Goyon, the canal continued as far to the north as Lake Mareotis at Alexandria and was still visible in the beginning of the nineteenth century; its extension to the north was known as the el-Asara canal. Goyon argued that the canal was used continuously from the pharaonic period till modern times, but this is not the way described in *P. Oxy.* XLII 3052, as the travellers went, let us recall, on the Kanopic branch passing through Hermopolis Mikra. As a matter of fact, there is

²⁰ Jean YOYOTTE, the author of the introduction to a commented translation of Strabo's account on Egypt, dates Strabo's journey into the Egyptian *chora* to the period between December of 27 BC and April of 26 BC (YOYOTTE *et alii*, *Strabon. Le voyage en Égypte* [cit. *supra*, n. 19], p. 18).

²¹ This was suggested already by WIKÉN, 'Zur Topographie des Faijûm' (cit. *supra*, n. 1), p. 273.

²² G. GOYON, 'Les ports des pyramides et le grand canal de Memphis', *Revue d'égyptologie* 23 (1971), pp. 137–153.

²³ The documents are listed in A. CALDERINI – S. DARIS, *Dizionario dei nomi geografici e topografici dell'Egitto greco-romano*, vol. V: *Titkois – Ophites*, Milano 1987, p. 103.

²⁴ GOYON, 'Les ports des pyramides' (cit. *supra*, n. 22), pp. 149–150.

no evidence for the use of the el-Asara canal as a waterway to Alexandria in the Graeco-Roman period.²⁵

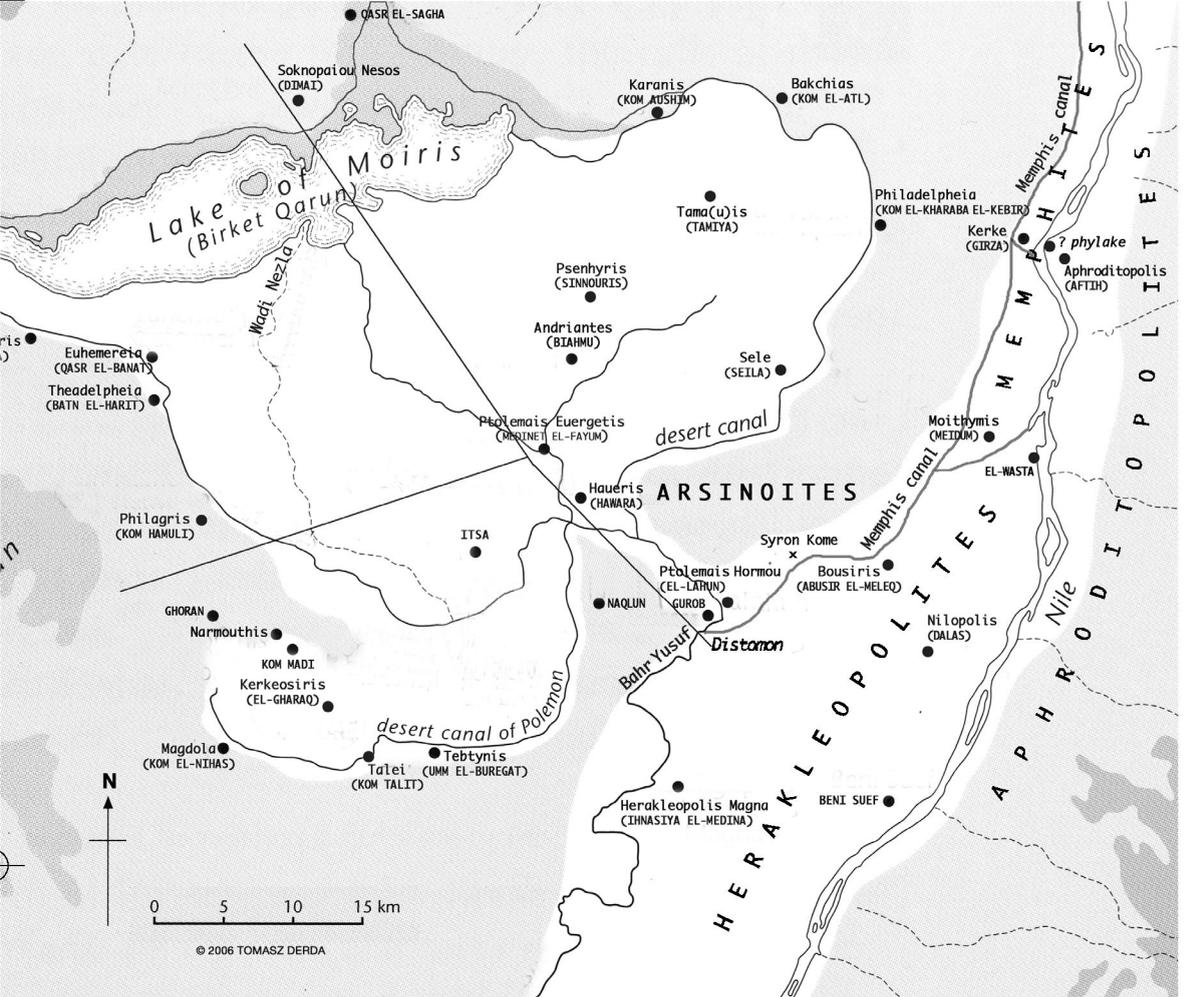
If, therefore, ships did not sail on the el-Asara canal, what remains to be discussed is the point where they passed from the Fayum–Memphis canal to the main stream of the Nile. The quoted documents that reported journeys on the canal did not mention Kerke (modern Girza), which served as a harbour for Philadelpheia,²⁶ and – what is perhaps more significant – Akanthonpolis, an important city located slightly further to the north.²⁷ We also know that Strabo travelled from Memphis through Akanthonpolis to Aphrodito.²⁸ Therefore, we may perhaps assume that the connection between the Fayum–Memphis canal and the Nile was somewhere south of Kerke, where the distance between them was the shortest. According to the editor of *P. Oxy.* XLII 3052, this was at the city of Aphrodito, but in the text we find *φύλακαι Ἀφροδειτώ*, as in *P. Lille I 1 = P. Zen. Pest.*, Appendix A (with the difference that here the word is used in singular). Perhaps, therefore, the travellers going south did not reach the city of Aphrodito (modern Aftih), but turned westward at a point called *pylake* (or *phylakai*). The point could have been located somewhat to the north or west of the city of Aphrodito (modern Aftih is located at some distance from the Nile bank), slightly south of Kerke, and some 10 km north of el-Wasta.

²⁵ El-Asara canal is neither marked in *The Barrington Atlas* (Map 74) nor mentioned by André BERNAND, *Le Delta égyptien d'après les textes grecs. 1. Les confins libyques* (= *Mémoires publiés par les membres de l'Institut français d'Archéologie orientale* 91), Le Caire 1970. Goyon argued that the 'Memphic branch' appearing in some medieval Arabic sources as one of the seven branches of the Nile has to be identified with the el-Asara canal (GOYON, 'Les ports des pyramides' [cit. *supra*, n. 22], p. 149 n. 5).

²⁶ For Kerke and its connection with Philadelpheia, see W. CLARYSSE, 'Philadelpheia and the Memphites in the Zenon Archive', [in:] Dorothy J. CRAWFORD, J. QUAEGBEUR and W. CLARYSSE, *Studies on Ptolemaic Memphis* (= *Studia Hellenistica* 24), Leuven 1980, pp. 91–122, at pp. 96–97. See also J. YOYOTTE, 'Études géographiques. II. Les localités méridionales de la région memphite et le "Péhou d'Héracléopolis', *Revue d'égyptologie* 14 (1962) pp. 75–111, at pp. 79–89.

²⁷ For Akanthonpolis, but also for the topography of the entire area between Memphis and Herakleopolis Magna, see two important studies by J. YOYOTTE: 'Études géographiques. I. La "cité des acacias" (Kafr Ammar)', *Revue d'égyptologie* 13 (1961), pp. 71–105, and 'Études géographiques. II. Les localités méridionales' (cit. in the preceding note).

²⁸ See WIKÉN, 'Zur Topographie des Faijûm' (cit. *supra*, n. 1), p. 272.

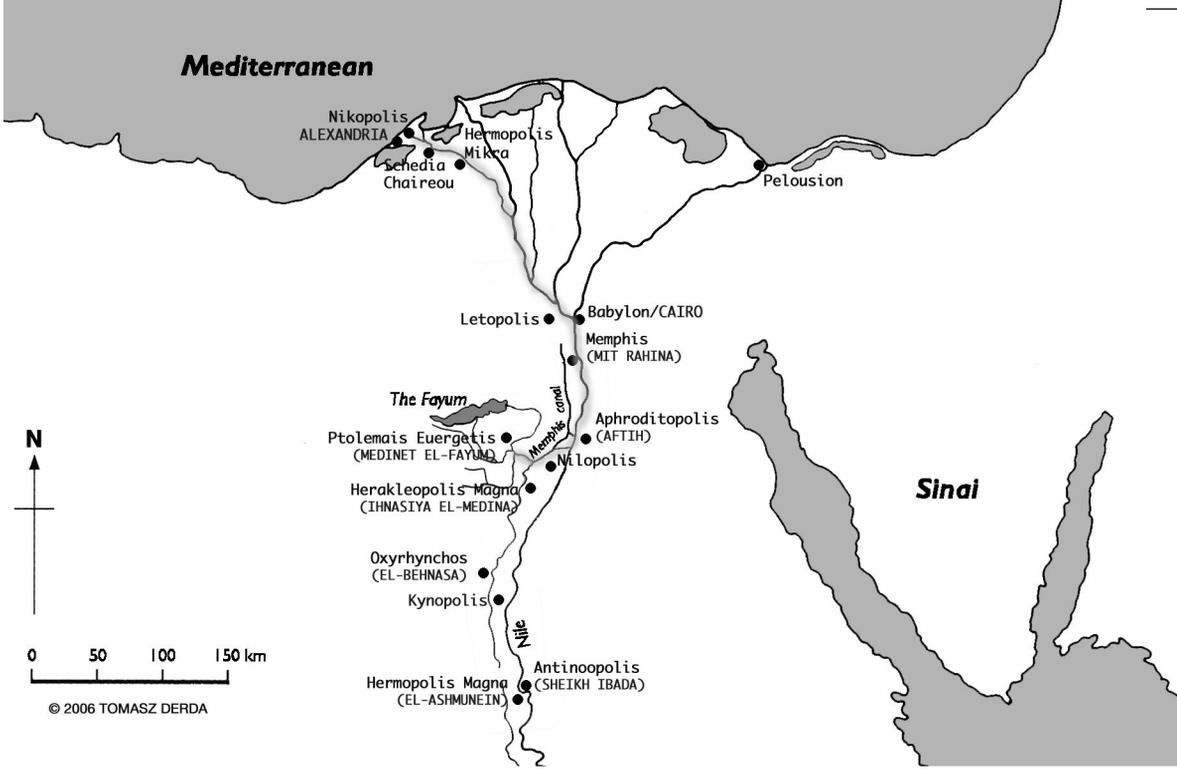


Map 1. Memphis canal and its connections with the Nile

According to Wikén, however, the waterway from the Fayum did not go so far to the north, but joined the Nile at el-Wasta.²⁹ If so, the canal could have constituted a ‘natural’ border between the Memphites and the Herakleopolites.³⁰ And indeed we know that Meidum (Moithymis in

²⁹ WIKÉN, ‘Zur Topographie des Faijûm’ (cit. *supra*, n. 1), pp. 272–273 pointed at el-Wasta following Claudius Ptolemaeus (iv 5): ‘Then the river divides into two separate branches, forming an island, the Herakleopolite nome’. For Ptolemaeus’ account of Middle Egypt (the Heptanomia), see my book *Ἀριστοῦτοῦ Νομός* (cit. *supra*, n. 2), pp. 32–36.

³⁰ Unfortunately, Maria Rosaria Falivene discussed the point neither in her Copenhagen paper (‘The Herakleopolite Nome: Internal and External Borders’ [in:] *Proceedings of the*



Map 2. Waterway Fayum–Alexandria (after *P. Oxy.* XLII 3052)

Greek documents), only five km northwest of el-Wasta, belonged to the Memphites, being perhaps the southernmost locality of the nome.³¹

In my opinion it is quite possible that there were in fact two navigable connections between the Memphis canal and the Nile, at the *phylake* of Aphrodito and at el-Wasta, and that they existed contemporaneously (Map 1). The southern one (at modern el-Wasta) was used by travellers coming from the south (from the Fayum, but also from other localities on

20th International Congress of Papyrologists, Copenhagen 1994, pp. 204–209), nor in her book *The Herakleopolite Nome* (cit. *supra*, n. 7).

Contrary to what is shown in *The Barrington Atlas* (Map 75), the Aphroditopolite nome did not include any area on the left (western) bank of the Nile.

³¹ In the first decades of the third century AD, the northern part of the Herakleopolites was a separate nome with Nilopolis (Dalas) as its metropolis. At that time, the canal joining the Nile at el-Wasta might have constituted the border between the Memphites and the Nilopolites, if the latter was set apart from the Herakleopolite nome only and did not include the southern part of the Memphites. For Nilopolis and its metropolitan status, see FALIVENE, *The Herakleopolite Nome* (cit. *supra*, n. 7), pp. 137–138.

the Bahr Yusuf, including Herakleopolis Magna and Oxyrhynchos), while the northern one served those coming from the north, e.g. from Memphis via Akanthon Polis to Aphrodito (e.g., Strabo).

Let us now return to *P. Lille* 11 (= *P. Zen. Pest.* Appendix A). We may assume that the sequence of facts in the beginning of Hathyr 259 BC was as follows: Apollonios, after he had inspected his newly organised estate, sailed back north, most probably to Alexandria. The most convenient way led past Ptolemais Hormou, and then north on the canal being an extension of the Bahr Yusuf. At a certain point (at Meidum, or at *Oὑεννέ/Venne?* but this toponym is known only from *P. Oxy.* XLII 3052 and *Tabula Peutingeriana*), the ship sailed eastward, toward the main stream of the Nile, which it reached at Aphroditopolis, or rather at the *phylake* of the city. At this point Diodoros left his master and sailed back (on his own ship or a hired one) following the same route to the Fayum. At the Labyrinth he disembarked and went to the city, i.e., the capital of the Arsinoite nome and not Alexandria, as it was suggested in the *editio princeps*.

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