

IX.—A Ptolemaic Graffito in New York

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This paper is an edition with commentary of a Greek graffito of unknown provenience now in New York City. The text, inscribed on a piece of broken sandstone, consists of 18 lines and is a votive offering in elegiac couplets to Πάνευρος καὶ ἐπήκοος. It was probably dedicated by the leader of an elephant-hunting expedition after his return from a voyage along the Troglodytic coast. The writing and the contents suggest a date in the latter part of the third century B.C.

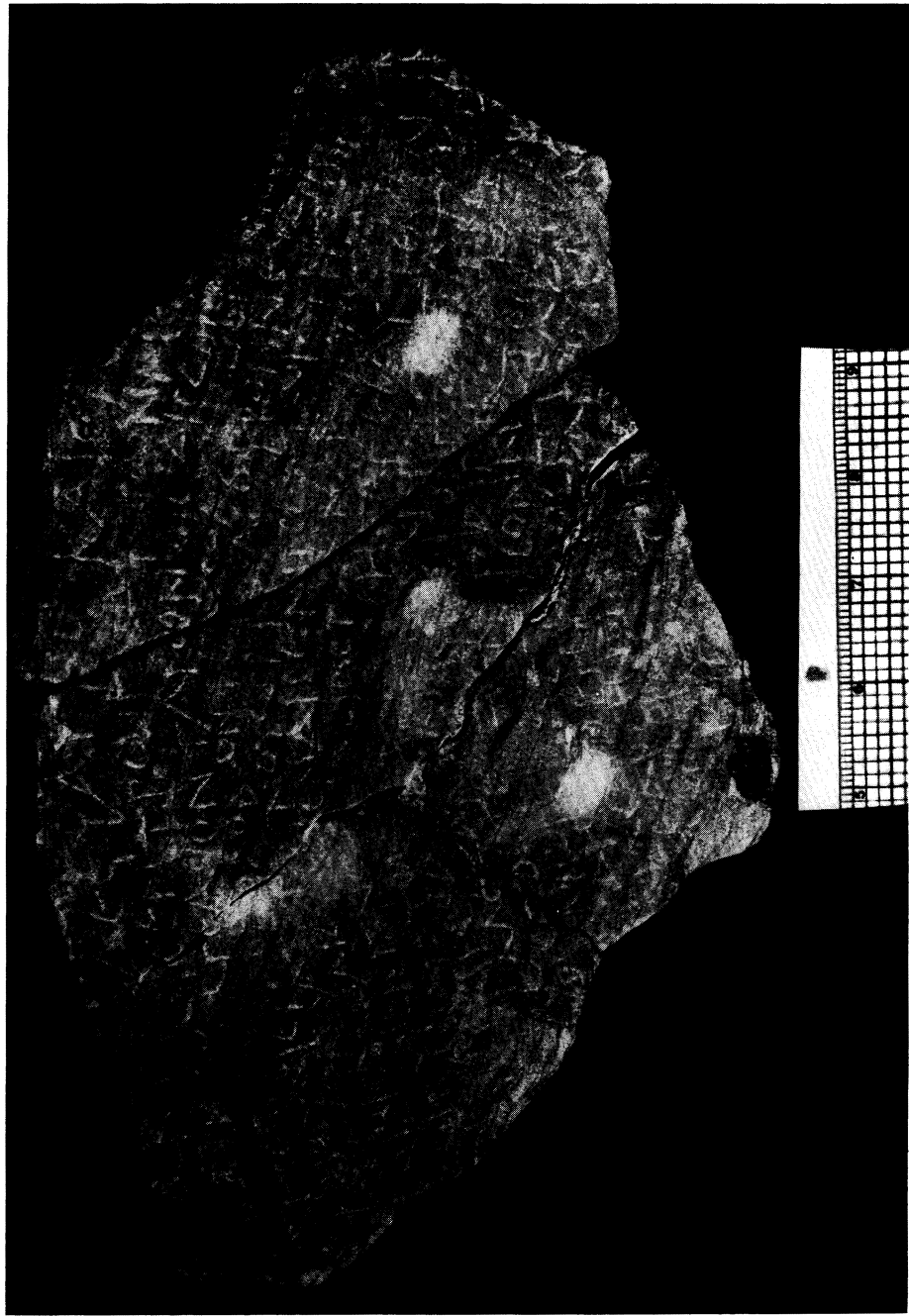
In the private collection of Professor Casper J. Kraemer, Jr.,¹ of New York University is a small Greek graffito which was purchased in New York. The dealer in antiquities from whom it was obtained was unable to provide reliable information about the inscription or its provenience, but we shall later see some reason to believe that it was originally inscribed near Redefieh in Upper Egypt.

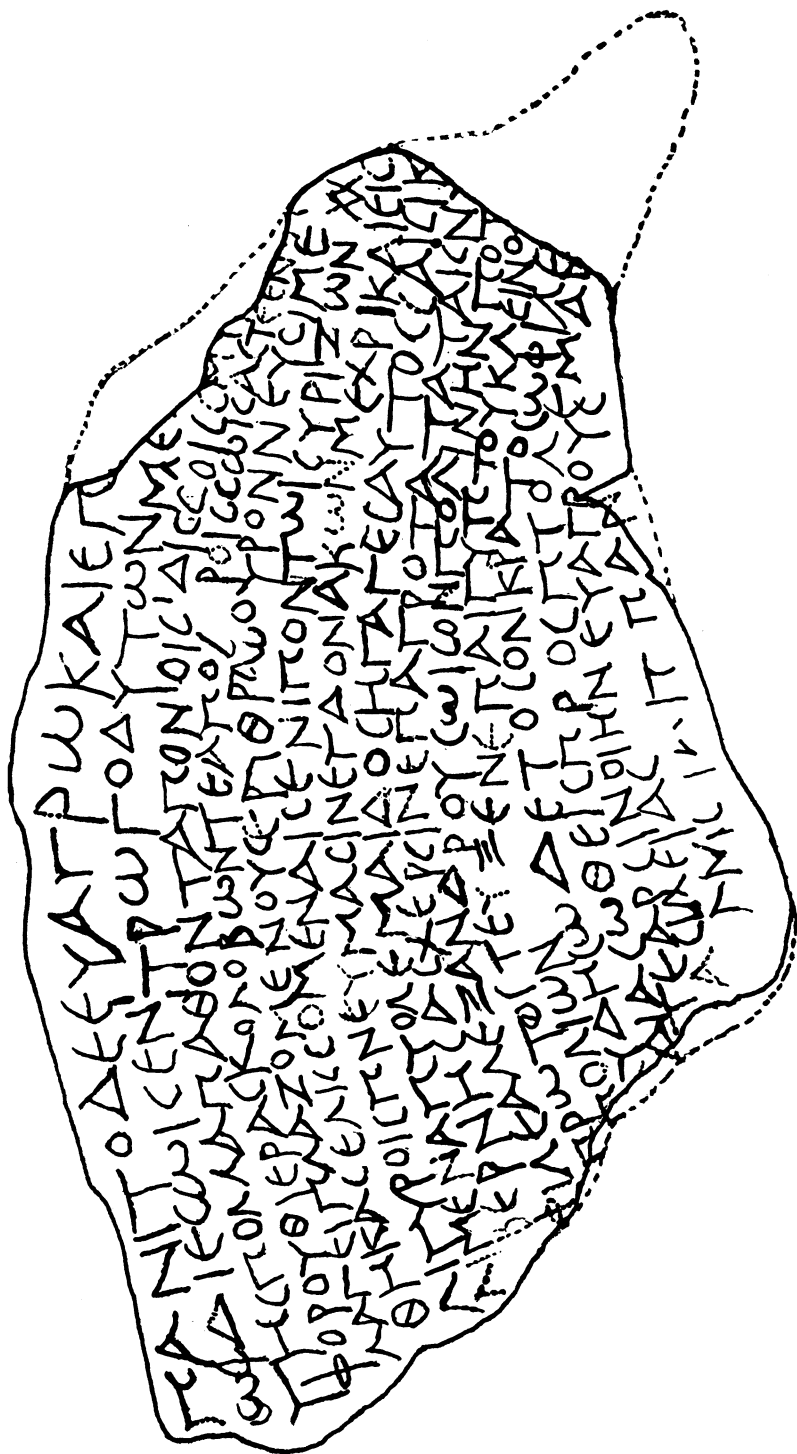
The stone² is of irregular shape and thickness and is inscribed on only one surface. Plainly, no attempt was made to prepare it for receiving the inscription. At the time when the stone was damaged a part of the lower right-hand corner was lost. Similarly a smaller portion disappeared from the upper right-hand corner as well as a chip from the bottom of the middle fragment, containing not more than one or two letters. The original edge of the stone and the more raised portions of the surface have been worn away sufficiently to render some letters illegible. There has also been a small amount of wear on the edges of the longer cracks.

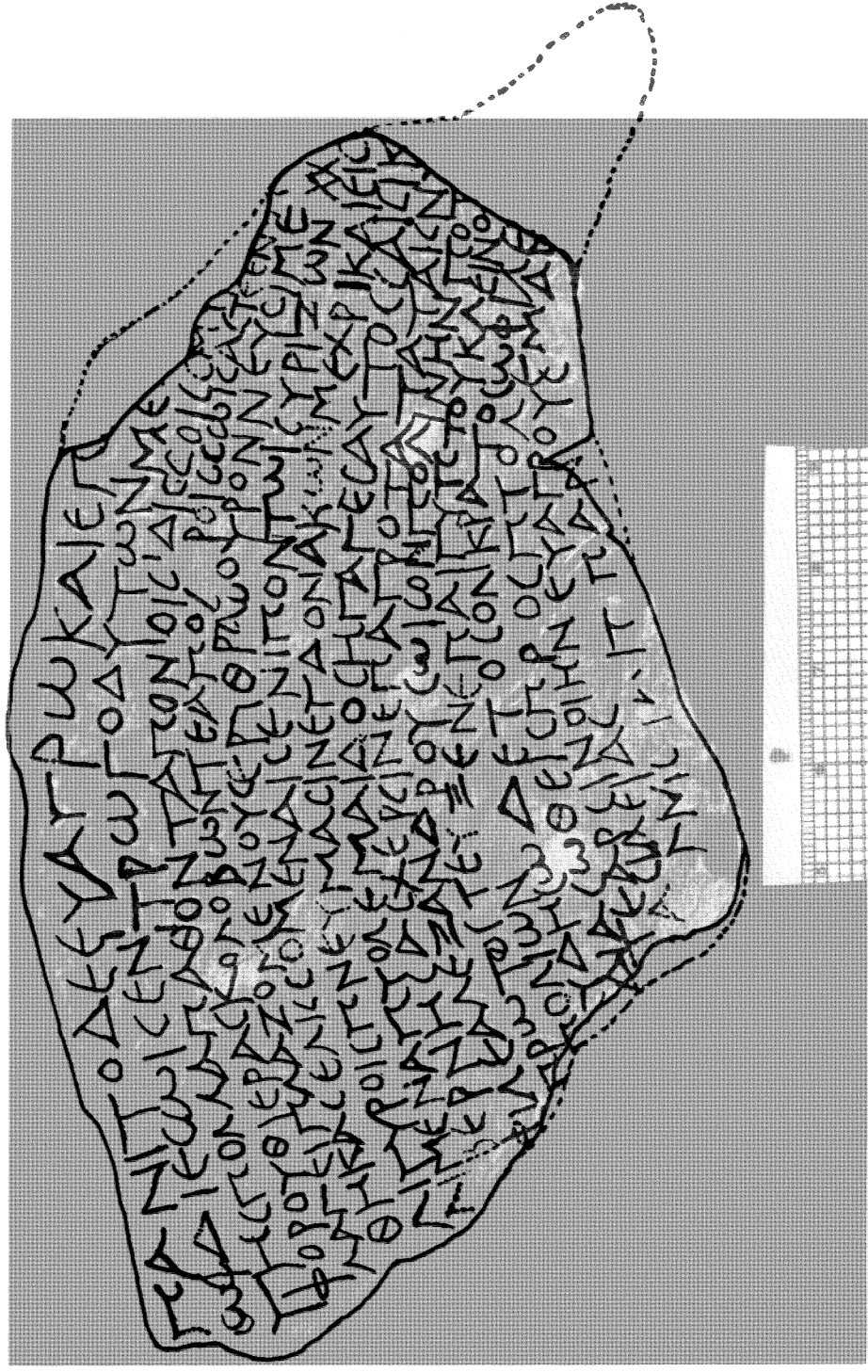
The approximate dimensions are: greatest length, 29.3 cm.; greatest height, 18.1 cm.; length along first inscribed line, 22.2 cm.; length of stone between ends of last complete line (7), 26.5 cm.;

¹ The authors are indebted to Professor Kraemer for his permission to publish the graffito as well as for the assistance that he has given. Prof. Herbert C. Youtie of the University of Michigan has made many helpful criticisms and suggestions.

² The Geology Department of Washington Square College, New York University, examined the graffito and gave the following information: the stone is a specimen of tied dune sand, possibly derived from Nubian sandstone of upper cretaceous age; it is fine grained, delicately cross-bedded, slightly calcareous, aeolian; the inscription is written on a joint (or fracture) surface, at approximately right angles to the bedding; on the back there is a slight efflorescence of calcareous material; there is no evidence as to its geological age or location; the stone was broken on at least two, possibly three, occasions.







greatest thickness, 2.9 cm.; least thickness, 1.1 cm. The letters vary considerably in size, the tallest (kappa in line 1) being about 1.6 cm. in height and the widest (omega in line 1) being about 1.5 cm. in breadth. The smallest letter is probably the gamma in [πε]λάγει (line 5) which is about 0.5 cm. in height and breadth. Because of the shape of the stone the lines generally curve downward and crowd together at the right; by way of compensation lines 12 and 16 are short. The plate reproduced herewith (see Plate II) will give a good idea of its shape and general appearance. The accompanying reconstructed tracing will show the letter forms.³

The inscription is in verse, regular elegiac couplets throughout, as far as we can determine. It evidently consisted originally of seven such couplets (14 verses).

We present first a line by line transcription of the stone in its present condition.⁴

- πανι τοδε ευαγρωκαι επ[
 ρσ } δεισωισεν | τρωγοδυτωνμε[
 ωι }
 γησπολλαπαθονταπονοισ | δισσοισσ[
 5 (.) φορουθιερασκολοβωντξαπολ . ρ . ισσωισασ . [
 (.) λαγειπλαζομενουσερυθρ . ουροννευσιμε
 θηκασελισσ . εναισενιποντωισυριζων
 λιγυροισπνευμασινεγδονακ . μεχρικαιει . [
 . . . εναπτολεμαιδοσηγαγεσαυτοσσαισι . [
 . . ρνησασχε . σι . . παγροτ . ταταισν [
 10] . λεαλεξανδρου . ωισονπολινηνπο[
 πρωτοστε . ξ . ν . παιγυπτουκλεينو[
 . ρλιων
] υδη . . δ . τοσονκρατοσω . ιλε[
 . ιασω . εισπροσπτολεμαι [
 15] . εαρσινοιηνξευαγρουσ . . . [
] . . σιλειασ
] . . α . . ρ . αιτ . παν
] [

³ The dotted extension in the lower right hand corner of the tracing, where 8-12 letters seem to be required to complete verse 12 and 15-20 to complete verse 13, should perhaps be even larger, although the shape seems peculiar.

⁴ A letter without a dot under it is one clearly visible on the stone. A dotted letter is either clearly visible on the photographs or is the most likely one of two or three possible readings. In most places where spaces are indicated, there are enough traces to make many readings impossible and suggest certain ones as very plausible. Our supplements were determined primarily by these traces, and only secondarily by considerations of sense.

2. $\sigma\sigma$ apparently superposed on $\omega\iota$, or perhaps $\omega\sigma$ should be read ($\epsilon\pi[\eta\kappa\acute{\omega}]/\omega\varsigma$) and the ι considered an accidental continuation of the α in the line above. ϕ is very unlikely; compare the ϕ at the beginning of line 4. Professor Kraemer, without reference to the photographs, reads at the beginning of this line: $\omega\phi\omega\epsilon\sigma\omega\iota\sigma$. After $\delta\acute{\iota}\epsilon\sigma\omega\iota\sigma\epsilon\nu$, the two short vertical strokes, one above and one below the line, are a variation of the symbol : used to indicate a verse-end. 3. ϕ (line 4) extends into γ . After $\pi\acute{o}\nu\omega\iota\varsigma$ punctuation similar to that in line 2. 4. The letter after $\tau\epsilon$ $\alpha\pi\omega$ might be χ or α , hardly δ . The following ρ and ι are read from the photographs. Kraemer reads $\tau\epsilon\alpha\pi\rho$ 5. Kraemer reads $\epsilon\lambda\alpha\gamma\epsilon\iota$. After $\pi\lambda\alpha\zeta\omicron\mu\acute{\epsilon}\nu\omega\upsilon\varsigma$ the traces suggest to us $\epsilon\rho\upsilon\theta\rho\alpha\varsigma$. Kraemer reads $\epsilon\rho\upsilon\theta\rho\omega$. 6. Mark at end of line, perhaps λ of $\lambda\iota\gamma\upsilon\rho\omega\iota\varsigma$, apparently deleted. Kraemer remarks, "Looks like μ ." 9. Possible traces of ν after $\alpha\iota\sigma\nu$. 16. The five letter spaces at end are apparently vacant.

Next we offer the following restored text and translation.

Πανὶ τὸδε εὐάγρῳ καὶ ἐπ[ηκό]ωι ᾧς δῖεσωσιν
 Τρωγοδύτων με [ἐκ] γῆς πολλὰ παθόντα πόνους
 δισσοῖς Σ[μυρνο]φόρου θ' ἱερᾶς Κολοβῶν τῇ ἀπὸ λ. ρ. ις
 σώσας [τε ἐν πε]λάγει πλαζόμενους ἐρυθρ.
 5 οὖρον νευσὶ μεθήκας ἐλίσσ[ομ]έναῖς ἐνὶ πόντῳ,
 σφρίξων λιγυροῖς πνεύμασιν ἐγ δονάκ[ων]
 μέχρ'ι καὶ εἰς λιμ[ί]να Πτολεμαῖδος ἡγαγες αὐτὸς
 σαῖσι [κυβε]ρνήσας χε[ρ]σὶν ἐ[π]αγρο[τ.] τάταις.
 ν[ῦν], φί]λε, 'Αλεξάνδρῳ [σ]ώισον πόλιν ἣν πο[τ]ε πρῶτος
 10 τε[ύ]ξε[ι]ν [ἐ]π' Αἰγύπτου κλεινο[τάτην] π[ο]λίω,
 [α]νδρή[σας] δ[ὲ] τὸ σὸν κράτος, ᾧ [φ]ίλε [Πάν, δ]ιασω[θ]εῖς
 πρὸς Πτολεμαῖον (ν) — — ν ν τῇ 'Αρσινόῃ.
 εὐάγρους [ν — ν — ν — βα]σιλέας
 . . α . . ρ. αἰτ. παν [— ν — ν —].

(I dedicate) this to Pan, helper in the hunt, propitious one, for bringing me safely from the land of the Trogodytes, where I suffered many hardships during two enterprises, from the holy Myrrh-land and the Colobi. And you saved (us) as we wandered on the [Red?] Sea, by sending a fair wind to our ships when they were drifting around in the sea, piping with shrill blasts from your reeds; until at last you brought us yourself into the harbor of Ptolemaïs, piloting us with the sure grasp of your hunter's hands.

Now, O friendly god, save the city of Alexander, most famous of cities, which he long ago founded on the coast of Egypt, and I will proclaim your power, dear Pan, when I come through safely to Ptolem[y] and . . . Arsinoe. . . .

NOTES⁵

Verse 1. Πανὶ . . . εὐάγρω: There are about twenty inscriptions addressed to Pan (also one to Ares) in which the epithets εὐάγρος, ἐπήκοος⁶ or εὐόδος occur. Πανὶ εὐάγρω: SB 4031 (Lepsius 131), SB 4053 (Lepsius 161); Πανὶ εὐόδω: SB 4034 (Lepsius 134), SB 4035 (Lepsius 137), SB 4046 (Lepsius 153), SB 4049 (Lepsius 157), SB 4054 (Lepsius 162), SB 4058 (Lepsius 169), SB 4059 (Lepsius 171), OGIS 38 (Lepsius 125), OGIS 71 (Lepsius 122). All these are from Redesieh. SB 1558 is from Wadi Abad, near Coptos. Ἀρηι νικηφόρῳ εὐάγρωι: Br. Mus. Inscr. 1064 (OGIS 86). Εὐόδε Πάν: Lepsius 124 (App. Anth. 1.156 [verse]). Πανὶ εὐόδω καὶ ἐπηκόω: SB 4056 (Lepsius 164), Lepsius 166, OGIS 72 (Lepsius 167). These are from Redesieh. Πανὶ εὐόδω σωτήρι: OGIS 70 (Lepsius 170), from Redesieh. Πανὶ εὐόδω καὶ θεῷ σωτήρι: SB 3448 (Lepsius 207), from Philae. Ἡρώα εὐόδον: Lepsius 135 (App. Anth. 1.157.1-2 [verse]), from Redesieh.

This Pan represents the Egyptian god Min, who has many aspects and functions, in particular to care for travelers crossing the desert for the land of Punt, for hunters, and for travelers on the Red Sea. He is also a fertility god, a war god, a sun god, etc., syncretistically identified with Horus, Amon, Re, and other divinities. Hieroglyphic inscriptions connecting him with Punt and the Red Sea date from the XIIIth dynasty (Breasted, *Ancient Records* 1.275.604-5). From the XIth dynasty he was associated with Wadi Hammamat on the caravan route from Coptos to the Red Sea (*ibid.* 1.213-5.442, 443, 448; 313.707).

Verse 2. Τρωγοδυτῶν: In the following inscriptions from Redesieh occurs the phrase σωθεῖς ἐκ Τρωγοδυτῶν: SB 4033 (Lepsius 133), SB 4049 (Lepsius 157), SB 4050 (Lepsius 158), OGIS 70 (Lepsius 170), OGIS 71 (Lepsius 122). Cf. App. Anth. 1.156 (Lepsius 124): σωθεῖς γῆς ἀπὸ τῆς Σαβαίων (reading disputed). The Trogodytic country lay on the west side of the Red Sea and extended southward from Heroonpolis at least as far as Saba and possibly as far as Notu Ceras. See Strabo 16.4.4-18. The northern and southern boundaries of this country are seldom precisely defined and vary with different authorities. For Marcianus of Heraclea (GGM 1.523) the Trogodyte country is coterminous with the Red Sea coast, and the Red Sea ends at the straits near Deire. Ptolemy (4.7.10) makes it include the whole coast as far as Mt. Elephas. The writer of this epigram may have used Τρωγοδυτῶν . . . γῆς to indicate the whole west coast of the Red Sea south of his port of debarkation (Myus Hormus or Berenice?).

⁵ The following abbreviations are used in addition to the familiar ones: SB = F. Preisigke and F. Bilabel, *Sammelbuch griechischer Urkunden aus Ägypten* (Berlin, Leipzig, and Heidelberg, 1913-1934); App. Anth. = E. Cougny, *Appendix Nova Epigrammatum* (Paris, 1890); Lepsius = C. R. Lepsius, *Denkmäler aus Aegypten und Aethiopien* (12 vols. [plates], Berlin, 1849-56).

⁶ See the study of ἐπήκοος by O. Weinreich, Θεοὶ Ἐπήκοοι, *Mitt. d. K. D. Arch. Inst., Ath. Abt.* 37 (1912) 1-68.

με: After this word either ἐκ or ἀπό can be restored.

πολλὰ παθόντα: Cf. *Od.* 7.224, 13.131, etc.

Verses 2–3. πόνους διισοῖς: This expression probably refers to two stops (and hunts inland) at different points on the same trip, i.e. at the Σμυρνοφόρος γῆ and among the Κολοβοί.

Verse 3. Σ[μυρνο]φόρου: Cf. Strab. 16.4.4 (from Eratosthenes) and Ptol. 6.7.23, 26. The elephant-hunting country of Lichas lay in this region (Artemidorus *apud* Strab. 16.4.14).

ιερᾶς: a frequent epithet of countries and cities in epigrams. The Myrrh-country is quite probably the Punt of hieroglyphic records, and as such, ιερᾶς has a special appropriateness. In documents from the xith, xviiith, xixth and xxth dynasties (i.e. from before 2000 to around 1200 B.C.) Punt is regularly called by the alternative name "God's-Land." (See Breasted, *Ancient Records*, Index, s.v. "Punt").

Κολοβῶν: The Κολοβοί here mentioned are probably the natives of the Red Sea coast between the harbor of Antiphilus and the promontory of Pytholaus (Artemidorus *apud* Strab. 16.4.9–13), in particular the southern portion around 13 degrees north latitude where Strabo mentions several elephant-hunting grounds. Agatharchides (5.62, *apud* Diod. 3.32) places them on the straits, i.e. near Deire. This is the region immediately north of the Myrrh-bearing country, which is just beyond the straits.

λ.ρ.ις: We have considered χώρης and ἀγροῖο, "from the land of the Colobi," as well as λυγροῖς (modifying πόνους), "baneful toils." The best reading is probably ἄκροιο, "Colobi Cape." Ptolemy (4.7.1) mentions a Κολοβῶν ἄκρον about half-way between Ptolemais Epitheras and Deire, i.e. somewhere near Saba, where Strabo (16.4.8) mentions a hunting-ground for elephants.

Verse 4. [ἐν πε]λάγει: Cf. *Od.* 3.91.

πλαζομένους: Πλαζομένους (sc. ἡμᾶς, the dedicator and his companions) and ἐλισσο[μ]έναις (5) do not in themselves indicate whether a storm or a calm is to be understood. Οὖρον (5) points to the latter interpretation, in which case the trip may have been in September. See the *Encyc. Brit.* s.v. "Red Sea."

ερυθρ. . . : Professor Kraemer reads ἐρυθρῶ, the form expected here: ἐρυθρᾶς can be read but makes virtually impossible grammar. We have also considered Ἐρύθρεω, the genitive of the name of the hero Erythras, after whom (according to Agatharchides 1.5, cf. Strab. 16.4.20) the sea was named.

Verse 5. νενσι: for νησι. On the form, see *LSJ* s.v. ναῦς.

μεθήκας: Homer uses προίημι, not μεθήμι, of winds. *Od.* 3.183, 5.268: οὖρον δὲ προίηκεν, 7.266, 10.25. The shift from third to second person here is abrupt but is otherwise common in dedicatory epigrams. Cf. *A.P.* 6.11, 15, 34, etc.

ἐνὶ πόντῳ: very frequent in the *Odyssey*, e.g. 4.354, 4.821, etc.

Verse 6. *συρίζων*: Cf. Euripides, *I.T.* 430–4:

πλησιστίοισι πνοαῖς
συριζόντων κατὰ πρύμναν
εὐναίων πηδαλίων
αὔραις σὺν νοτίαις
ἢ πνεύμασι Ζεφύρου . . .

and 1125–7:

συρίζων θ' ὁ κηροδέτας
κάλαμος οὐρέιου Πανός
κώπαις ἐπιωῶξει.

A.P. 7.703.2 (Myrinus): Θύρσις ὁ συρίζων Πανός ἴσον δόνακι.

λιγυροῖς πνεύμασιν: Cf. *πνοιῇ λιγυρῇ*, *Il.* 13.590, 23.215 and *πνοιῇσιν λιγυρῇσι*, *Il.* 5.526. *Στυγεροῖς πνεύμασι* (in this position) occurs in *Aῤῥ. Anth.* 1.66.4 (from Ephorus *apud* Diod. 13.41).

ἐγ: For this assimilation see Mayser, *Grammatik der griech. Papyri* (Leipzig-Berlin, 1926–1938), 1.1.226.53.3 and Meisterhans-Schwyzer, *Gramm. d. att. Inschr.* (Berlin, 1900), 107.41.4.

Verse 7. *εἰς λιμ]ένα*: For the phrase in this position, cf. *Od.* 10.87, 141; 13.279; 15.472.

Πτολεμαῖδος: This is probably Ptolemaïs Epitheras, established (between 270 and 264) under Ptolemy Philadelphus as a station for elephant-hunting expeditions. The dedicator was presumably sailing north after completing his hunting when his ships were becalmed.

ἦγαγες αὐτός: Cf. *ἦγαγες αὐτή*, *Od.* 13.323.

Verse 8. *σαῦσι [κυβε]ρνήσας χε[ρ]σὶ[ν]*: Cf. Soph. *Aj.* 35: *σῇ κυβερνῶμαι χερί.*

[ἐ]παγρο{τ.}τάταις: Cf. *χεῖρες ἑπαγροί* (of thieves), Call. *Hec.* 1.4.10. The adjective is rare, the superlative being unexampled elsewhere.

Verse 9. *ν[ῖν φί]λε*: The phrase occurs (as the second foot) in *Il.* 15.221, 16.667. Cf. also Call. *Ep.* 33.4: *ναὶ φίλε* (at the beginning of the line). Cf. *infra*, 11.

'Αλεξάνδρου . . . πόλιν: Cf. *τὴν 'Αλεξάνδρου πόλιν*, *A.P.* 9.202.13 (Leon), and Calderini, *Dizionario Geografico* (Cairo, 1935) 1.1.57–8.

[σ]ῶισον: The use of the aorist may imply some immediate danger to Alexandria. See below, p. 116.

Verse 10. *κλεινο[τάτην π]ολίων*: Cf. *IG*² 2–3.8523.4 (= *Aῤῥ. Anth.* 2.33.4): *κλεινοτάτη πόλεων*, and *IG* 12 (1) 806.2 (= *Aῤῥ. Anth.* 1.123.2): *πρεσβυτάτα πολίων* in the same position in the verse.

Verse 11. *[α]νδ[ή]σ[ω]*: Cf. Theocr. *Ep.* 23.1 (= *A.P.* 7.262.1).

τὸ σὸν κράτος: Cf. *IG* 11 (4) 1105.3 (= *Aῤῥ. Anth.* 1.140.3): *οἷ τὸ σὸν ἐξενέπονσι μέγα κράτος.*

ῶ [φί]λε [Πάν]: Cf. Nonn. *Dion.* 6.319, 16.218, 47.292: *Πάν φίλε*; Theocr. *Id.* 7.106: *ῶ Πάν φίλε*; *A.P.* 6.78.2: *Πανὶ φίλω.*

Verse 12. Of the two possible supplements, *πρὸς Πτολεμαῖ[δα]* or *πρὸς Πτολεμαῖ[ον]*, the second is to be preferred. Presumably the dedicator was a high official. The absence of any title referring to the rulers is perhaps surprising, although we may supplement the line in some such manner as this:

πρὸς Πτολεμαῖ[ον] ἀνακτα εὐνιδά τ]ε Ἀρσινόην.

The meter of the second half of the line requires a word or words of dactylic form, and of the few possibilities *εὐνίδα* seems the most likely. On this supplement, cf. *A.P.* 9.355.3 (Leonidas) and *App. Anth.* 2.173 (= *IG*² 2-3.11907.2).

On the superfluous and unmetrical iota, see Mayser, *I.1.110.15.5* and Meisterhans-Schwyzler, *58.16.c*.

Verse 13. *εὐάγρους*: This adjective may apply to a place or a region as in *A.P.* 9.555.5 (Crinagoras) and 6.106.10 (Zonas [reading *εὐαγρεῖ* or *εὐάγρω*]), to a person as in *A.P.* 6.34.6 (Rhianus) and 6.106.10 (reading *εὐάγρον*), or to a tool or weapon as in *A.P.* 6.89.5 (Maecius Quintus).

Redesieh is a small village on the east bank of the Nile about five miles from Edfu, the ancient Apollonopolis Magna, in Upper Egypt. Approximately 37 miles from and almost due east of Redesieh in the desert is a rock temple which was built by Seti I (xixth dynasty) in the ninth year of his reign (ca. 1304 B.C., according to Breasted's chronology), in connection with a watering station on the road to the mines of Jebel Zubara, and dedicated to Amon-Re.⁷ It was repaired, probably under Ptolemy II, as a watering station on the caravan route from Apollonopolis Magna to some port on the Red Sea, presumably Berenice. The passage in Strabo (17.1.45) which deals with caravan routes is very confused, and the identification of the various ports, on the basis of the accounts in Ptolemy, Strabo, Pliny, Agatharchides, and the *Periplus*, is difficult. It seems at least possible, however, that Strabo's source, Artemidorus, knew of and mentioned the route through Redesieh. A Greek inscription (*CIG* 4837) near the temple speaks of it as a *Πανέϊον* opposite (*κατά*) Apollonopolis. There are graffiti and inscriptions on the walls and columns of the temple; some are on the cliffs nearby, and still others are inscribed on architectural fragments lying about. The graffiti, though mostly Ptolemaic, show that the watering station may have been in use down into Roman times.

⁷ There is a picture in Maspero, *Struggle of Nations*, 375, and a plan in Lepsius, *Denkmäler aus Aegypten und Aethiopien* (Leipzig, 1897-1913 [5 vols. text and suppl. vol. plates]), iv.75.

The evidence that this graffito originally came from the neighborhood of Redesiēh may be summarized as follows: (1) All known inscriptions to Πανὶ εὐάγρῳ as well as those dedicated by persons σωθέντες ἐκ τῶν Τρωγοδυτῶν are from the temple near Redesiēh. (See notes on verses 1 and 2). (2) The temple is built in and of native Nubian sandstone, and fragments of this material are lying round about. There is no geological difficulty in presuming, in view of the above statements, that the graffito is from the vicinity of Redesiēh. (See footnote 2). (3) One important caravan route from the Red Sea to the Nile passed by this temple and its well. The dedicator was traveling northward, presumably to Alexandria, and could conveniently have taken this route from his port of debarkation. (4) Presumably better methods and materials would be available to the inscriber at Coptos or Berenice. The peculiarities of the stone have already been pointed out. It might also be observed that, to the best of our knowledge, the use of such a small rough stone for an epigram of this nature is unparalleled. The obvious explanation is that the present graffito is only a rough draft, which was designed to be copied later in a more conspicuous form and position.

The letters of this graffito are manuscript rather than epigraphical in character, although the material no doubt has caused some modifications. The hand is a kind of compromise between a pure cursive and a regular epigraphical script resembling that manuscript compromise between cursive and book-hands which Schubart calls the "Geschäftsschrift." There is a strong resemblance in all respects, including the very unusual theta with a diagonal (upper left to lower right) crossbar, to some letters of the family of Cleon in *P. Petr.* 1.30.1, 2.11.1, 2, etc., one of which is reproduced by Schubart, *Gr. Palaeographie*, Abb. 2 (page 26). These date from ca. 260 B.C. Although the compromise character of the hand makes precise dating impossible, we may be certain that it is Ptolemaic and not earlier than 300 or later than 100 B.C. Professor Youtie gives as his opinion that "the hand is certainly not earlier than 300 B.C. and very unlikely to be later than 200 B.C."

The language and contents of the graffito suggest that the dedicator was a member and possibly a leader of an elephant-hunting expedition. First, the epithet εὐάγρῳ (verse 1)⁸ is inappropriate unless the dedicator had been hunting. The inscription of Alex-

⁸ Cf. also [ἐ]παγο[ι]τ. } ταῖς (verse 8) and εὐάγρους (verse 13).

ander (*Br. Mus. Inscr.* 1064), who was second-in-command to Charimortus, the στρατηγὸς ἐπὶ τὴν θήραν τῶν ἐλεφάντων, is dedicated to Ἀρηι . . . εὐάγρωι. Satyros, another known elephant-hunter, has a dedication (*OGIS* 30 = Lepsius 128) at the temple near Redesiēh. Secondly, Strabo (16.4.14) mentions several Ptolemaic elephant-hunting grounds in each of the regions named in verse 3. The exploration of the Trogodytic coast beginning under Ptolemy Philadelphus had as its chief purpose the establishment of a supply of elephants, and the city of Ptolemaïs (verse 7) was founded to serve this same end. Thirdly, the dedicator speaks of several ships (νευσί, verse 5), a fact which fits an elephant-hunting expedition better than an ordinary trading voyage. The elephant-hunting activities of the early Ptolemies are fully discussed by Rostovtzeff and others.⁹

In view of this probability we may make certain inferences about the date. The mention of Ptolemaïs Epitheras, founded between 270 and 264 B.C. according to the evidence of the Pithom stele,¹⁰ gives us a *terminus post quem*. The reference to Σ[μυρνο]φόρος (verse 3), outside Bab-el-Mandeb, provides a still later one, about 230 B.C., derived from the explorers' names cited by Strabo.¹¹ The first known expeditions outside Bab-el-Mandeb were under Euergetes. A possible *terminus ante quem* in the first half of the second century B.C. is given by the fact that no elephant-hunting or hunters are known to us later than the reign of Philopator.

The text offers two bits of evidence to narrow these limits. First, if, as we believe, verse 12 mentions Ptolemy and Arsinoe, 217–203 B.C. are the outside limits. Secondly, if verse 9 alludes to a specific threat to Alexandria, either the period 220–203 B.C. (4th Syrian War, native rebellions, revolution in Alexandria) or 170–168 B.C. (invasion of Epiphanes, quarrels between Physcon and Philometor) is indicated. On the basis then of the historical and epigraphical evidence, we propose the period 217–203 B.C. as the date of this graffito.

⁹ M. Rostovtzeff, *Social and Economic History of the Hellenistic World* (Oxford, 1941) 1.383–4 and note 183; "Foreign Commerce in Ptolemaic Egypt," *Journal of Economic and Business History* 4 (1932) 740–3; "Zur Geschichte des Ost- und Südhandels im ptolemäisch-römischen Ägypten," *Arch. Pap.* 4 (1908) 301 ff.; H. Kortenbeutel, *Der ägyptische Süd- und Osthandel* (Diss., Berlin, 1931) 16–41; U. Wilcken, "Puntfahrten in der Ptolemäerzeit," *Zeitschrift für ägyptische Sprache* 60 (1925) 86 ff.; C. Préaux, *L'Économie royale des Lagides* (Bruxelles, 1939) 34–7, 357.

¹⁰ Cf. Kortenbeutel, *op. cit.* 27.

¹¹ Cf. Kortenbeutel, *op. cit.* 27, 34.