

GURNA

EGYPT

PRELIMINARY REMARKS ON THE COPTIC
OSTRACA FROM SEASONS 2003 AND 2004

Iwona Antoniak

During fieldwork in 2003 and 2004, over a hundred Coptic ostraca were discovered at the site of the Coptic hermitage in Sheikh abd el-Gurna in West Thebes.¹ They were found scattered throughout the hermitage, but the majority came from the dump below the presumed tower.²

The ostraca are inscribed mainly on amphora sherds; still there is a certain number

of texts inscribed on limestone flakes. Almost all were written in Sahidic dialect and most are in fragmentary condition. The group is generally dated to between the 6th and 8th centuries. One ostrakon needs to be mentioned in particular:³ It is K.O.10, which contains the name of a well-known personality, $\varphi\text{P}\alpha\text{N}\rho\epsilon$ ⁴ whose period of activity has been précised to the

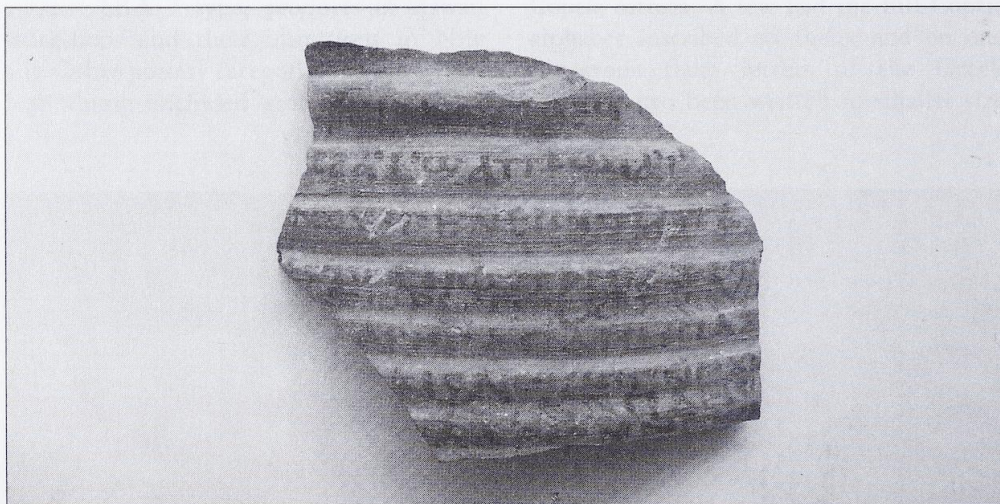


Fig. 1. Ostrakon K.O.10 with the name of Frange, 7th-early 8th century
(Photo T. Górecki)

1 For the report on the Polish Centre's excavations at the site, cf. T. Górecki in this volume.

2 For the plan of the hermitage complex, see the first interim report by T. Górecki, in *PAM XV, Reports 2003* (2004), 173-179 and Fig. 1.

3 I would like to thank Jacques van der Vliet for his kind help.

4 Chantal Heurtel, "Que fait Frange dans la cour de la tombe TT 29? Fouilles dans la cour de la tombe TT 29", *Études Coptes VIII* (2003), 177-204.