



Coptic Funerary Stela, No.769 in the Coptic Museum, Cairo

لوحة جنائزية قبطية، رقم ٧٦٩ في المتحف القبطي بالقاهرة

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Abstract

الملخص

Edition of a fragmentary Coptic tombstones that derived from recent excavations in Bawit of the Coptic Museum in Cairo, there is unknown Coptic funerary stela of a monk named Saint Pamun. It is currently preserved in Coptic Museum in Cairo, in hall 9 under registration No. 769 (Fig.1). This stela is suggested that it may have come from a cemetery of the monastery located at Bawit. It is a unique stela, and it is made of sycamore wood with traces of green color. It is measured (35.3 cm L x 32cm w). It is rectangular Coptic funerary stela which consists of two registers of incised engraving. In the upper register, there is a Coptic inscription which consist of a commemorative formula which were commonly used to commemorate the subject of the epitaph. There is a small opening was often executed deeply in the middle upper part of the stela. The lower register is occupied by presentation of a standing person (Jesus the Christ) with one hand on his chest, and the other hand on the shoulder of another kneeling person (Saint Pamun). The Coptic Museum data does not include an accurate description of this Coptic funerary stela. The purpose of this paper is to study the importance of this Coptic funerary stela, and its religious content. The study deal with the stylistic features of the Stela, Coptic text, the commemorative formula, and analysis of the religious scene, and it will be described and dated through other comparative studies.

هناك العديد من شواهد القبور القبطية المستمدة من الحفريات الأخيرة في باويط والتي تم عرضها بالمتحف القبطي بالقاهرة ومتحف اللوفر في باريس، حيث توجد لوحة جنائزية قبطية غير معروفة لراهب يدعى القديس بامون، وهذه اللوحة محفوظة حالياً بالمتحف القبطي بالقاهرة، بالقاعة رقم ٩ ومسجلة برقم ٧٦٩ (شكل ١). هذه اللوحة قد تم إكتشافها في مقبرة الدير الواقعة في منطقة باويط. تعتبر هذه اللوحة فريدة من نوعها وتم تصنيعها من خشب الجميز مع أثار من اللون الاخضر. (المقاس ٣٥.٣ طول x 32سم عرض). وهي عبارة عن لوحة مستطيلة الشكل تتكون من جزئين من نقش محفور، الجزء الأول العلوي للوحة يحتوي على نقش قبطي وهو عبارة عن صيغة تذكارية شاع إستخدامها لإحياء ذكرى صاحب اللوحة وتعود إلى القرن الثامن الميلادي، في منتصف الجزء العلوي للوحة، توجد فتحة صغيرة تم تنفيذها بعمق، بالرغم ان هذه الفتحة ليس لها وظيفة على الإطلاق، إلا أنها صنعت تقليدياً على أساس الإعتقاد بأن الدعاء وحرق البخور قد يصلان إلى روح المتوفى من خلال هذه الفتحة. أما الجزء الثاني من اللوحة يمثل شخص واقف (السيد المسيح) يضع يده على صدره واليد الأخرى على كتف شخص راكع (القديس بامون). المتحف القبطي لا يحتوي على وصف دقيق وتاريخ لهذه اللوحة. الهدف من البحث دراسة أهمية اللوحة ومحتواها الديني، ومناقشة السمات الفنية للوحة، ترجمة النص القبطي، الصيغة التذكارية، تحليل المشهد الديني وإعادة توصيف وتاريخ هذه اللوحة من خلال الدراسات السابقة.

Keywords: Coptic funerary stelae; Coptic Inscription; Coptic Museum

الكلمات الدالة: لوحة قبطية جنائزية؛ النقش القبطي؛ المتحف القبطي

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Introduction

Coptic funerary stelae were found in many regions of upper and Lower Egypt, for instance Alexandria, Antinoé, El Fayoum, Abydos, Bawit, Aswan, Matmar and Mostagad... Etc (DIJKSTRA, 2021, PP.39-36; Pleasa, 2017, P. 2; Munir, (1930-31), PP. 257-300).

The excavations at Bawit began by Jean Clédat, Chassinat, Palanque, and Gaston Maspero in the beginning of the twentieth century. the Monastery of Apa Apollo from Bawit was established towards the end of the fourth century (385-390), (Minaglou, 2015, P. 229; Bénazeth, 2015, P.1) and it was prosperous in the six century and reached its zenith in the 7th century (Garba, G., 2002, *Coptic Monasteries*, P. 22; Bénazeth, 1997, P.44) . It declined after the Arab conquest of Egypt. Estimates for its decline vary from the tenth to the fourteenth centuries, however, it is currently assumed that the monastery fell into disuse in the twelfth century. (Gabra, G., and Hany N. Takla. 2015, 12; Tudor, 2011, P. 66; Drew & Bear., (1979), p.37).

The first two cemeteries in Bawit date solely from the time of the monastic inhabitation of the site, the southern cemetery was still in use in modern's times (Tudor, 2011, P.66). While the cemetery located in the desert between the kom and the mountain, accommodates male, female and young people's bodies (Clédat, 1999, *MIFAO* 111, PP.189ff), the cemetery from the mountain might have belonged to the monastic community of Apa Apollo¹. J.Clédat, Ch.planque, J. Maspero (Maspero in *CRAIBL* (1913), 287-301), and E. Chassinat (Chassinat, *MIFAO*13, 1911) excavated the site of Bawit in the first half of the twentieth century. The archaeological report of J.Clédat provides information about tomb architecture and paintings but not about the burial customs. J. Clédat noticed that the Bawit graves date from various periods, so that the dates which he assigned to them are uncertain²(Clédat, *MIFAO* 12 (1904-1906), P.VII; Maspero, (1931-1943), PP.1-20; Calament, F., G. Hadji-Minaglou and C. Meurice, 2011, P. 22).

Karl Innemée suggests that these rooms most probably were the place for daily prayers and, in addition to this, had clear references to funerary architecture and its iconography. This fits the ideal of the monk to be "dead to the world" and the metaphor of the cell as a tomb. The cell of the monk, and especially its prayer room, has several connotations, but generally it is considered the place where the monk finds salvation. (Innemée, K., 2015 "Funerary Aspects", P.241).

Coptic litanies inscribed on the funerary stelae from Bawit are addressed to a range of saints invariably including Apa, Apollo, Apa Anup, Apa Phib, Apa Patermute, and Apa Prou in the first place. Apa Pamun is mentioned only once in this group. The funerary inscriptions that have been found in Bawit up to the present time date between the seventh and the eighth centuries (Tudor, 2011, P.229).

1. Historical Background About Coptic Funerary Stelae

The funerary stelae had lost its ancient Egyptian function during the Coptic Period because of the new religion Christianity, yet the Coptic were still affected by the ancient traditions inherited from their grandfather. Coptic artisans soon abandoned the scenes of Egyptian deities, but at the same time, they simply continued some of the traditions of their ancestors (Tudor, 2011, P. 111).

¹ Referring to the monks who cut the shafts beneath the funerary chapels in the "necropole sur la montagne", J. Clédat indirectly suggested that these tombs belonged to the monks from the convent of Apa Apollo, See Clédat (*MIFAO* 12, 1904-1906), p. VII

² the material published by the excavators is fragmentary and leaves many unanswered questions. One of these is the function of the buildings that have been called *chapelles* by Clédat and *salles* by Maspero.

One of the earliest conceptions of the ancient Egyptians was that he regarded the funerary stela as a real door which communicated the burial chamber of the dead with the outer world³, or the opening through which he passed when entering or leaving his eternal life in order that he might receive the offerings which were heaped before the stela. This idea was not forgotten from one generation to another generation (Du Bourget, 1991, P. 280-282).

In the Coptic Stela, a small opening was often executed deeply in the middle upper part of it. Concerning the doctrines of Christianity, this aperture has no function at all, but it was traditionally made under the belief that the invocations and the incense burnt at the funeral service might reach then soul of the deceased through this opening. You can trace these apertures on Stelae in Catalogue general (A. Kamel, 1987, p.13.Nos, 320-8019-8593-8615-8629-8663-8670 and 8673).

During the early centuries of Christianity, Copts were much affected by the tradition of Ancient Egyptian, and they executed their funerary stelae in the form of a big slab of stone, in the center of which is a cavity enclosing a life size statue of the deceased or half the body of the dead (Pleasa, 2017, P. 2,3).

It could be noted that the imitation is quite remarkable, although there are some slight changes which are hardly observed. These changes include the outer frame surrounding the statue. The frame had a pointed top like an obelisk with a cross depicted or the frame might consist of two outward carving columns with foliate capitals and a flat arch decorated with laurels. It is noted generally that the Christian symbols were always add to such stelae (Tudor, 2011, P. 26).

In Room 18B of the Coptic Museum, there are stelae nos. 8024, 8026, 8029, 8034 and 8616 which are good examples. Indeed, such funerary stelae erected in a Coptic cemetery, when visited by the relatives of the deceased would have given the sensation of the actual presence of the dead among the living (Badawy, A., (1949) *l'art de la Copte*. P. 59-60).

It is noted that all the scenes and the texts engraved on the Coptic stelae, which were executed in the so-called low relief, or the sunken relief. This kind of sculpture which were carefully treated has been attributed to the native influence and was copied from ancient Egyptian art (A. Kamel, 1987, p. 15; Badawy, A.,1978, *Coptic Art and Archeology*, P. 66).

2. Material

In the Coptic period, funerary stelae were part of the architectural layout of tombs, and funerary inscriptions kept alive the memory of the deceased among the living. they were usually placed inside a niche dug out of the mound that covered the tomb or arranged within burial chapels but were at times placed directly on the ground to cover the pit. (Tudor, 2011, P.214).

Coptic funerary stelae were usually cut out of limestone and of sandstone, they were rarely made of marble, wood, clay, terracotta, pottery (Tudor, 2011, P.214, see notes; 1422,1423,1424). Epitaphs written on ostraca most probably served as preliminary drafts for the guidance of the stone cutters (Crum and Bell, 1922, PP.59ff).

The Information about the owners of the stelae is brief, only the name of the deceased and the date of death are given. Rarely, a statement of the age of the deceased and a mention of his or her place of provenance, status, and profession during their lifetime were added (Tudor, 2011, P.69).

³ As the ancient Egyptian stela was the fictitious opening, as to the belief explained above, the space in the middle part of the stela was not left empty, but the image of the deceased was often carved on it. This image represented the double of the deceased to whom the offerings were forward sometimes half the body was shown, or the head only which looked as it was emerging from the slab of stone.: See (Kamel, 1986, p.22)

3. Content And Date of The Coptic Funerary Stelae

Formula of the Stelae

Most of the Christian funerary inscriptions from Egypt are dated by the indiction year in which the commemorated people died. The chronological system by the Era of Diocletian was used in funerary inscriptions between the beginning of the fifth and the middle of the 9th centuries, though not as often as the dating by indiction year. From the middle of the 9th century AD onwards absolute dates were reckoned according to the Era of the Martyrs, a new notion of reckoning which used for absolute dating. Absolute dated Greek epitaphs range between fifth and ninth centuries, while absolute dated Coptic epitaphs cover approximately 800 years, from the 7th to 14th century (Tudor, 2011, P.143; Munir, In *Agyptus*, 1949, P. 136).

The dating by indiction year is not expected before the papyri since the first Egyptian papyri dated by indiction year are not older than the middle of the fifth and the beginning of the 6th century. As a matter of delineation from Arab society and as a statement of their own cultural and religious identity, Christians made more frequent use of their own absolute dating system in their inscriptions after the Arab conquest than they did before it. Christians population made use of the dating system by the Era of Diocletian, later the Era of Martyrs. (Tudor, 2011, pp143ff; Habib, 1955, P. 57-60; Bagnal and Worb ,2004, P. 67, Munir, in *Agyptus*, 1949, 136)).

Inside the Coptic Museum, there are many collections of funerary stelae and tombstones, there is a rare Coptic funerary stela of Saint Pamun in the Coptic Museum. No. No.796, (Fig.1), hall.9 it is not known for us. This Coptic stela is made of sycamore wood, and this rarely in Coptic art. The study will be discussing the stylistic features of the stela (Fig.1), Coptic text, the commemorative formula, and analysis of the religious scene, and it will be described and dated through other comparative studies



Fig.1. Coptic Funerary Stela, No. 796. Hall.9. Coptic Museum ©Mervat Maher

Provenance: It was excavated in Bawitⁱ. It is preserved in Coptic Museum under registration. No. 796. Hall.9

Dimensions: It is measured (35.3 cm L x 32 cm W).

Material: It is made of Sycamore Wood and executed on tempera, compared to another Coptic funeral Stelae discovered in different regions of Egypt which are made of wood (CF, regarding two funerary stelae of Latopolite type which located at the museum of Port Said In; Bénazeth and Gabra , *BSAC* 33 (1994), PP.67 ff, Pl.III-Pl. VII); BoudHors and Calament in *OLA* 133 (2004), P.463: Stela of Pantoleos from Tebtynis; Cledat *MIFAQ* 111, 1999. P.187, fig.31 and Pl. 167; Meinardus, in *BSAC* 18(1965-66), PP.270-271, and no.113 (a wooden cross =stela located at the Benaki Museum in Athens); Petrie, (1889), Pl.8, no.8; Rutschowskaya, 1986, P. 101, no. 341(= stela AF 6975, Louvre

Museum, Paris)- this stela is considered to have a funerary character although it does not present any explicit evidence in this regard, see Boud'Hors and Calament in *OLA* 133, 2004, P.448, footnote 6; stela 9669, SMPK, Berlin; Badawy, 1976, PP. 210-221 and Pls 3.199-3.218).⁴

Description: It is rectangular stela which consists of two registers of incised engraving.

(Upper register of the stela)

In the upper register of the stela, there is a Coptic inscription which consist of a commemorative formula which were commonly used to commemorate the subject of the epitaph.

Coptic text

- 1- (...)ΧC ΠΑΜΩΝ ΚΥ ΝCΟΥ Ζ
- 2- ΤΩΒΕ ΓΟΕ (text inside the square)

The Full Translation of The Text After the Contribution of The Researcher as Follows⁵:

Christ, Pamun (the younger), in the 7th month of Tuba, year 457.

Comment on the Text:

1. This funerary stela is composed of the invocation formula Jesus the Christ (IC XC). Opening Formula, commemorative Formula (Pamun), then date formula (on which he went to rest).
2. The text is engraved but also painted in red. The letters on the first line are significantly broken than the rest of the text. XC clearly meant the first two letter of the abbreviation of Jesus the Christ (IC XC) the ALPHA and the OMEGA are symbolic Christ who is the beginning and the end. This usage is based upon Revelation 1:8 which reads "I am the ALPHA and the OMEGA, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord (Kamel, 1986, P.17, and Cf: *Coptic funerary stela from Abydos in BM EA 54358* in: Martin., 2022, PP. 1-9; Munir, H., (1930-31) "Les Stèles Coptes du Monastère de Saint Simon a Aswan", in *Aegyptus* 11, PP. 257-300 and PP. 433-484; Tudor, 2011, P.173; Munir, (1930-31), P.280. no. 36; Munir, 1923, "Stèles Coptes du Fayoum", in *ASAE*, pp. 53-58 (regarding four stelae located by the time of their publication at the Cairo Museum inv. Nos. 47114, 47396, 47519, 47520; Munir, 1949, "Stèles Chrétiennes d' Antioné", in *Aegyptus* 29, P.126-136 (concerning four Greek and ten Coptic epitaphs that were found by Breccia and S.Donadoni in the necropolis of Antinoupolis in 1936; Łajtar, 2003, "Catalogue of the Greek Inscriptions, *OLA* 122, P.18,19; Łajtar, 1996, "Varia Nubica IV" *ZPE* 113, 101-108).
3. Pamun the elder, it seems that Pamun whose epitaph this, was a monk (Förster, 2002, P.531). According to Tudor, there are approximately 5000 monks in the time of the mountain Apollo in Bawit, for this reason, I think that Saint Pamun is one of the monks of Mountain Apollo, and Tudor mentioned that there are Coptic litanies inscribed on the funerary stelae from Bawit are addressed to a range of saints invariably including Apa, Apollo, Apa Anup, Apa Phib, Apa Patermute, and Apa Prou in the first place. Apa Pamun is mentioned only once in this group. The funerary inscriptions that have been found in Bawit up to the present time date between the seventh and the eighth centuries (Tudor, 2011, P.229; Hidding, 2020, P.61). Förster, H., 2002, P.101.
4. The text is dated to year 457 from The Diocletian era which would be 759 AD. This meaning the date of death of the Monk. The monk on which he went to rest (is) Twbi 7 of twelfth

⁴ Bawit is situated on the western bank of the Nile bank, 15 km south of Dayrut and about 30 km south of Hermopolis Magna (Tudor, 2011, P.66)

⁵ I would like to thank Dr Youhanna. N. Youssef (Professor of Coptic Studies) for helping me to translate the Coptic text.

indication year of (Diocletian) 475). The Era of Diocletian was reckoned from the 1st Thot= 29th of August) 283/284, the first year of the reign of Emperor Diocletian (Tudor, 2011, P. 144; MacCOULL, L.S.B., and WORP, K.A., 1990, PP. 375-408; Förster, 2002, P. 103.

5. The presence of this formula has become more common on tombstones that were written from the eighth to the tenth centuryⁱⁱ. From the latter half of the eighth century until the end of the tenth century, this formula has become prevalent on the tombstones of Nubia (Tudor, 2011, P. 174, 211; Mina, 1942, 83 no. 180; Junker, 1925, PP. 128-133; Auber de Lapierre, (2017) "Le Musée Copte du Caire, une utopie architecturale" *AnIsI* 50, P.235-266).

The Small Opening Hole

There is a small opening hole was often executed deeply in the middle upper part of it (Tudor, 2011, 228). Concerning the doctrines of Christianity, this aperture has no function at all, but it was traditionally made under the belief that the invocations and the incense burnt at the funeral service might reach then soul of the deceased through this opening. This hole which found on most Coptic funerary stelae, for instance, there is a Coptic Funerary stela from Hormonthis (British Museum, EA 1759 (**Fig.2**)). You can trace these apertures on Stelae in Catalogue general (Cf. A. Kamel, 1987, Nos. 55 Pl. XXV, 109 PLXLIX, 166 PL. LXXIX, 171 PL. LXXXI, 188 PL. LXXXVIII, 186 PLXCII). Also, CF (Rutschowscaja, 1986, Nos. 201, 202 Pl. XCV and No. 208 Pl. C).

The Cross

There is a carved cross in the middle upper part of the stela (the collection of the funerary stelae which kept in the Coptic Museum show different kinds and forms of crosses, this is due to the various influences which affected the Coptic art from the fifth to the seventh centuries AD, and to the workmanship which varied from one provenance to other (Cf; Coptic funerary Stelae (Kamel, 1986, Nos. 8560, 8584, 8607, 8609, 8673, 8674, and 8685; Tudor, 2011, Pl. 422, 423).

The Second Register

The second register is showing the Christ standing in frontal attitude beside Saint Pamun, he appointed one hand on his chest, and the other hand on the shoulder of another kneeling person (Saint Pamun). This scene is similar to the wooden panel which conserved in the Louvre Museum in Paris (**Fig.3**), (El Gendi, 2004, Bois, I, P. 308, II, PP. 133-134, fig. CXII)⁶.

Jesus the Christ is showing with wide open eyes with the vague look under the arched eyebrows, the high cheekbones, pointed nose, thin moustache under of which the small, closed mouth, with little shadow below eyes pointed nose. his features were in almost took the Byzantine styled featuresⁱⁱⁱ⁷.

⁶ The presence of this formula has become more common on tombstones that were written from the eighth to the tenth century. See (H. Munier, 'Les stèles coptes du Monastère de Saint-Siméon à Assouan', *Aegyptus* 11 (1930-31), 280 no. 36, 293 no. 66. 6 Munier, *Aegyptus* 11, 447 no. 107, 450, no. 112.), Furthermore, many studies have also pointed to the spread of this formula on the Greek and Coptic tombstones of Nubia. see (H. Junker, 1925, *ZÄS* 60 (1925), 128, 133; A. Łajtar, Catalogue of the Greek Inscriptions in the Sudan National Museum at Khartoum (I. Khartoum Greek) (OLA 122; Leuven 2003), 10-11, 28. Aswan where approximately 200 gravestones were found in excavations in the 19, 20th century and the church of Dayr Anba Hadra

⁷ By the 4th century the garments worn at liturgical functions had been separated from those in ordinary use, though still identical in form. It is in the 4th century, too, that the first distinctive vestment makes its appearance, the ὀμοφόριον (*Ōmophóron*) worn by all bishops in the East; in the 5th century we find this in use at Rome under the name of *pallium*, as the distinctive ornament of the pope (see the mosaic image of Honorius I). About the same time the *orarium*, or *stole*, becomes fixed in liturgical use. The main development and definition of the ecclesiastical vestments, however, took place between the 6th and the 9th centuries. See; Beshara, A., (2020) *Egyptian Women in Coptic Orthodox Church of Egypt*, United States of America. 36; Mikhail, S. A. & Moussa, Mark (2009) *Christianity and monasticism in Wadi al-Natrun: essays*

On both sides of the Christ's head, his name is written in abbreviation (Jesus the Christ). He is wearing a blue-grey long tunic *sticharion* with folds of the drapery (Innemée, 1992, *Ecclesiastical dress*, 44) with folds of the drapery (Abdallah, 1983, p. 407,408). This might be the first form of the Christ in Coptic art.

Jesus Christ is appeared on Bawit monuments in his different life stage he appeared as a baby, youth and mature but in all representations the artist approved his professionalism (Wishahy & Kadus and....., 2018, P. 42). The oldest annunciation scene of the Christ is the one decorating the small damaged wooden panel conserved in Louvre Museum (RUTSCHOWSCAY, 1986, 113, NO. 368)

Saint Pamun is presented in the form of kneeling position behind the feet of the Christ, he is showing with features of monks in Bawit (carving open eyes, delicate nose, and small mouth). The style of tunic with folds drapery resembles the tunic of monks from six century to 8th century. (Cf; Auber de La Pierre, Cat. No 58,57. He is wearing along tunic with fold of drapery with mantle (*Pallium*), a hood like headdress covering his head. This dress is similar to the dress of monks from 6th century to 8th century (CF; Wooden panel of a monk from Akhmim (**Fig.4**), and another Wooden panel, its provenance unknown (**Fig.5**).

The Orant Figure

Saint Pamun raising his hand in orant figure. According to S.J.P. Du Bourget, the orant of the praying position which appears in the decoration of several Coptic funerary stelae and wall paintings is originally taken from the ancient Egyptian sign Ka. That's why it continued to appear in Coptic art and for this reason A. Badawy assert that the orant attitude was frequent in the ancient Egyptian art. This position usually depicts a human figure stretching out or bending his two arms (Badawy, 1976, P. 211).

the orant figures are decorating different doorways from Ancient Egypt preserved now in many European museums). The idea of showing the defunct inside symbolic religious niches is not new but it may be evident in some ancient Egyptian funerary stelae. some Coptic funerary stelae are graced by a human head with an Egyptian style between two pillars (Badawy, 1978, PP. 66-68, Figs. 49-50; CF; scenes of Monks on limestone tombstones in Praying attitude in Coptic Museum; Du Bourget, 1991 "Christian Subjects in Coptic Art", Orant", *CoptEnc*, II, PP.536-538).

4. Conclusion

No doubt that this Coptic wooden funerary Stela (Fig.1) is a unique in the Coptic art, and it is considered one of the rare Coptic funerary stelae which discovered in Bawit because of most Coptic funerary stelae were usually cut out of limestone and of sandstone, but according to Bénazeth and Gabra, there are two Coptic funerary stela made of wood, and these two funerary stelae of Latopolite type located at the museum of Port Said (Bénazeth and Gabra, *BSAC* 3, 1994, PP.67 ff).

Jesus the Christ is appeared in different forms in the monuments of Bawit which is displayed in the Coptic Museum in Cairo and other important international archeological museums in Europe and in the United States of America. The Christ is appeared as a mature man with mustache and complete men's features or appeared with youth features. His hair took two styles sometimes long divided into two parts on his shoulders or took the rounded short shape, his features were in almost took the Byzantine styled features represented on the wide oval eyes, pointed nose, thin mustache under of which the small closed mouth, appeared in Coptic Funerary stela (Fig.1), for this reason it could be

said that this might be the first form of the Christ compared to the Icon of the Christ and Apa Mina which conserved in Louvre Museum (Fig.3), (Du Bourget, 1964, *Musée du Louvre*, PP.20-21, no.30).

It is worthy noted that there is a small opening hole was often executed deeply in the middle upper part of Coptic funerary stela of Saint Pamun. Although this aperture has no function at all, but it was traditionally made under the belief that the invocations and the incense burnt at the funeral service might reach then soul of the deceased through this opening.

Through Coptic text proves no doubt that this stela could be dated to the 8th century AD. It is noted that the scene of (Jesus the Christ and Saint Pamun) and the Coptic text engraved on the Coptic stela, which was executed in the so-called the sunken relief. This kind of sculpture which were more or less carefully treated has been attributed to the native influence and was copied from ancient Egyptian art, and the effect of Byzantine Art.

According to Tudor, there are approximately 5000 monks in the time of the mountain Apollo in Bawit. Saint Pamun one of the monks who lived during the time of the mountain of Apa Apollo in Bawit, and the name of Pamun is inscribed with Coptic litany on funerary stela from Bawit.

The stela under consideration exhibits average quality of workmanship, and they show the standard contemporary workmanship. The presence of this formula has become more common on tombstones that were written from the eighth to the tenth century.

LIST of ABBREVIATIONS

ASAE: Annales du Service des Antiquités d'Égypte.

BIFAO: Bulletin de l'Institut Français d'Archéologie Orientale. (Cairo).

CoptEnc: Coptic Encyclopedia, 8 vols. (New York).

BSAC: Bulletin de la société d'archéologie copte.

OLA: Orientalia lovanientia analecta.

MIFAO: Mémoires publiés par les membres de l'Institut français d'archéologie orientale. (Le Caire).

ParOr.: Parole de l'Orient (Paris).

ZPE: Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik. (Bonn).

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Fig.2. Coptic Funerary stela from Hormonthis (British Museum, EA 1759) © Tudor.B., (2011) *Christians Funerary Stelae*, P. 420)

Fig.3. Wooden Icon of Jesus the Christ and St. Abu Mena, © Rutschowskaya, M.H, (1986) Musée du Louvre. Bois de l'Égypte Copte, Paris. 113, no. 368



Fig.4 Wooden panel © Auber de LaPierre, J.A & Jeudy, A., (2018) *Catalogue Général du Musée Copte du Caire*, Cat.57.



Fig.5. Wooden panel of a monk © Auber de LaPierre, J. & Jeudy, A., (2018) *Catalogue Général du Musée Copte du Caire*, Cat.58