

## PTOLEMAIS EUERGETIS AND THE CITY OF THE ARSINOITES\*

That the chief town or capital of the Arsinoite Nome has various names—some even coexisting over intervals of time—has long been noted and accepted by papyrologists. My purpose in this paper is to examine the nomenclature of the site and thus to establish how it was designated at different times and to set forth what light the examination sheds on the history of Roman Egypt during the first two and one half centuries of Roman rule.

The problem—and it is complicated—has puzzled me over a period of time. Some recent events catalyzed my interest and pushed me to pursue the question. Recently Duke University acquired a papyrus on which was inscribed a contract of the mid first century which was drawn up *ἐν Πτολεμαίδι Εὐεργέτιδι*. My colleague at Duke, Prof. William Willis, raised in discussion the problem of the name of the chief town of the Arsinoite nome, and I began an investigation. At this time there appeared Dieter Hagedorn's study of the nomenclature of Oxyrhynchus,<sup>1</sup> Prof. Montevicchi's publication of the very interesting *P.Med.inv.* 70.01<sup>2</sup> and her republication and discussion of OGIS 668.<sup>3</sup> These publications have established the foundation for the work I am attempting in this paper.

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1 "*Ὁξυρύχων πόλις und ἡ Ὁξυρυγχιτῶν πόλις*," *ZPE* 12 (1973) 277–292.

2 "*Nerone a una polis e ai 6475*," *Aegyptus* 50 (1970) 5–33.

3 "*Ἐτους ἑβδόμου ἱεροῦ Νέρωνος*," *Aegyptus* 51 (1971) 212–220.