

The Alexandrian Tychaion: a Pantheon?

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The Tychaion of Alexandria, named for the city goddess of Fortune, is the only temple in the city other than the Serapeum for which a detailed description survives. Notably, it includes its sculptural programme.* The ekphrasis, in Greek, is by an unknown author, apparently writing in the late 4th or the 5th c. A.D. It is also of interest because the Tychaion adjoined the 'Temenos of the Muses' which can now probably be identified as the large educational complex at Kom el-Dikka excavated in the late-antique city centre (figs. 1-2).¹ A reconstruction of the Serapeum, based on detailed re-examination of the archaeological evidence, has revealed that the descriptions of it by Aphthonius and Rufinus, written around the time of its destruction by Christians in 392, were more accurate than had been appreciated.² They describe the Roman version which replaced the Ptolemaic one (of Ptolemy III Euergetes I, 246-221 B.C.) which burnt down in A.D. 181 and was re-built by 218 (with most of the work probably being done during the reign of Septimius Severus).³

* Frequently cited abbreviations:

<i>Alexandria auditoria</i>	T. Derda, T. Markiewicz and E. Wipszycka (edd.), <i>Alexandria: auditoria of Kom el-Dikka and late antique education</i> (JJurPap Suppl. 8; Warsaw 2007).
Dattari	G. Dattari, <i>Monete imperiali greche, numi Augg. Alexandrini</i> (Cairo 1901).
Emmett	K. Emmett, <i>Alexandrian coins</i> (Lodi, WI 2001).
Fraser, <i>Ptol. Alex.</i>	P. M. Fraser, <i>Ptolemaic Alexandria</i> (Oxford 1973).
Geissen	A. Geissen, <i>Katalog Alexandrinischer Kaisermünzen der Sammlung des Instituts für Altertumskunde der Universität zu Köln 2</i> (Opladen 1978).
Gibson, <i>GRBS</i> 2007	C. A. Gibson, "Alexander in the Tychaion: Ps.-Libanius on the statues," <i>GRBS</i> 47 (2007) 431-54.
Gibson 2008	C. A. Gibson, <i>Libanius's Progymnasmata: model exercises in Greek prose composition and rhetoric</i> (Atlanta, GA 2008).
Gibson, <i>CQ</i> 2009	C. A. Gibson, "The Alexandrian Tychaion and the date of Ps.-Nicolaus <i>Progymnasmata</i> ," <i>CQ</i> 59 (2009) 608-23.
Hebert, <i>Beschreibung</i>	B. D. Hebert, <i>Spätantike Beschreibung von Kunstwerken: Archäologischer Kommentar zu den Ekphraseis des Libanios und Nikolaos</i> (Diss. Graz 1983).
McKenzie, <i>Alexandria</i>	J. McKenzie, <i>The architecture of Alexandria and Egypt 300 BC-AD 700</i> (London 2007).
<i>Pantheon I</i>	G. Grasshoff, M. Heinzelmann and M. Wäfler (edd.), <i>The Pantheon in Rome, contributions to the conference, Bern 2006</i> (Bern 2009).
Poole, <i>BMC</i>	R. S. Poole, <i>Catalogue of Greek coins in the British Museum. Catalogue of the coins of Alexandria and the nomes</i> (London 1892).
<i>RPC</i>	<i>Roman provincial coinage Online</i> (http://rpc.ashmus.ox.ac.uk/) [coins can be found by entering the numbers given here into the search box].
Stewart, <i>Faces</i>	A. Stewart, <i>Faces of power: Hellenistic politics</i> (Berkeley, CA 1993).

1 See the detailed report on the educational complex by G. Majcherek, "The late Roman auditoria of Alexandria: an archaeological overview," in *Alexandria auditoria* 11-50. On earlier work at Kom el-Dikka summarized and illustrated, with references to Polish excavation reports: J. S. McKenzie, "Glimpses of Alexandria from archaeological evidence," *JRA* 16 (2003) 58-61; ead. in *Alexandria auditoria* 69-79, figs. 6-11; ead., *Alexandria* 209-17, figs. 356-71. On late-antique Alexandria, with bibliographies: McKenzie, *Alexandria* 20-24 and 236-60; ead., "The place in late antique Alexandria 'where the alchemists and scholars sit ... was like stairs'," in *Alexandria auditoria* 53-69.

2 J. McKenzie, S. Gibson and A. T. Reyes, "Reconstructing the Serapeum in Alexandria from the archaeological evidence," *JRS* 94 (2004) 90-99 and 104-6, figs. 10-14, pl. 1.

3 *Ibid.* 98.