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Egypt beyond representation : materials and materiality of Aegyptiaca Romana

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1. Analysis

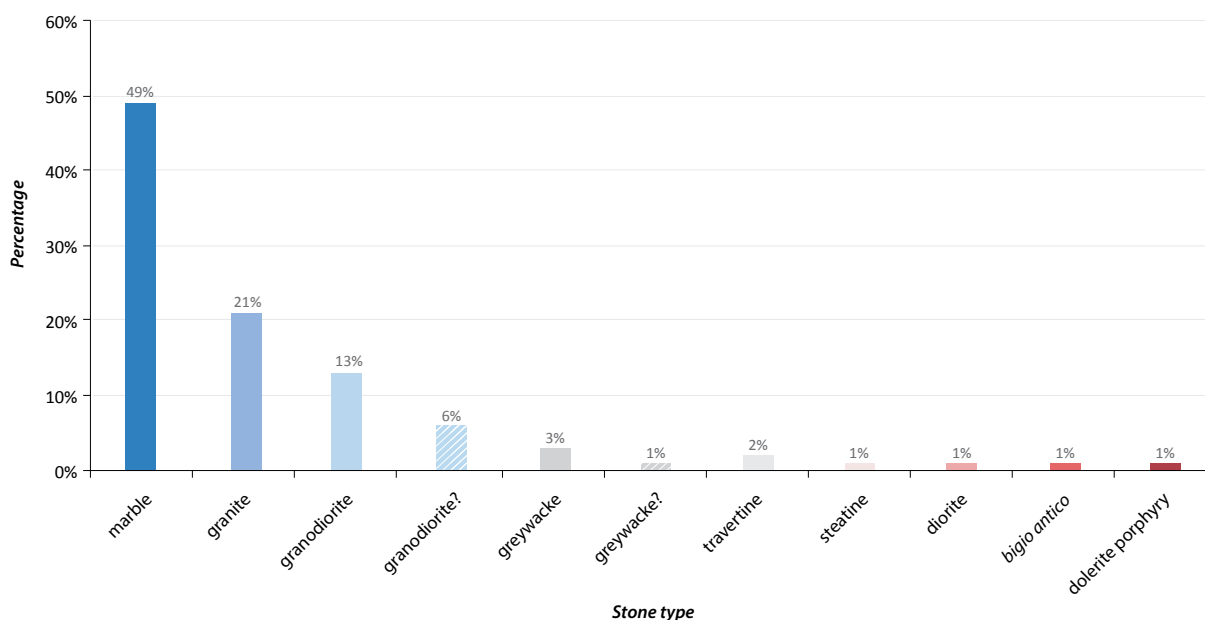


Fig. 4.1.1. General distribution of stone types (n = 140).

1.1 DISTRIBUTION OF STONE TYPES AND MATERIAL CHARACTERISTICS

1.1.1 Distribution of stone types

At least nine different lithotypes are present in our sample.³⁵² Fig. 4.1.1 gives an overview of these types and their distribution. Marble is by far the most frequently used stone in the studied sample, constituting approximately half of the entire sample (n = 69). Other

common materials are granite (n = 29) and granodiorite (n = 19 or 28 depending on characterisation). Greywacke (n = 5 or 6 depending on characterisation), travertine (n = 3), steatite (n = 2), diorite (n = 1), dolerite porphyry (n = 1), and *bigio antico* (n = 1) occur markedly less frequent. Based on these data, the initial inference can be made that, despite the considerable variation in the stone types of studied objects, the large majority is made from one of the three dominant material groups, namely, marble, granite, or granodiorite.

1.1.2 Material characteristics: geological provenance

The distribution of the geological provenance of the studied materials is graphically represented in Fig.

352. For ten objects in the studied sample stone classifications are uncertain. These uncertainties are mainly due to the fact that most of these artefacts could not be examined in person. The undetermined stones all have dark colours and relatively homogeneous textures. These indistinct visual characteristics are shared by some of the most frequently used (and confused) stone types of so-called Aegyptiaca, including granodiorite, greywacke and, although this stone was used to a lesser extent, basalt; cf. *supra*, 71 and n. 297.

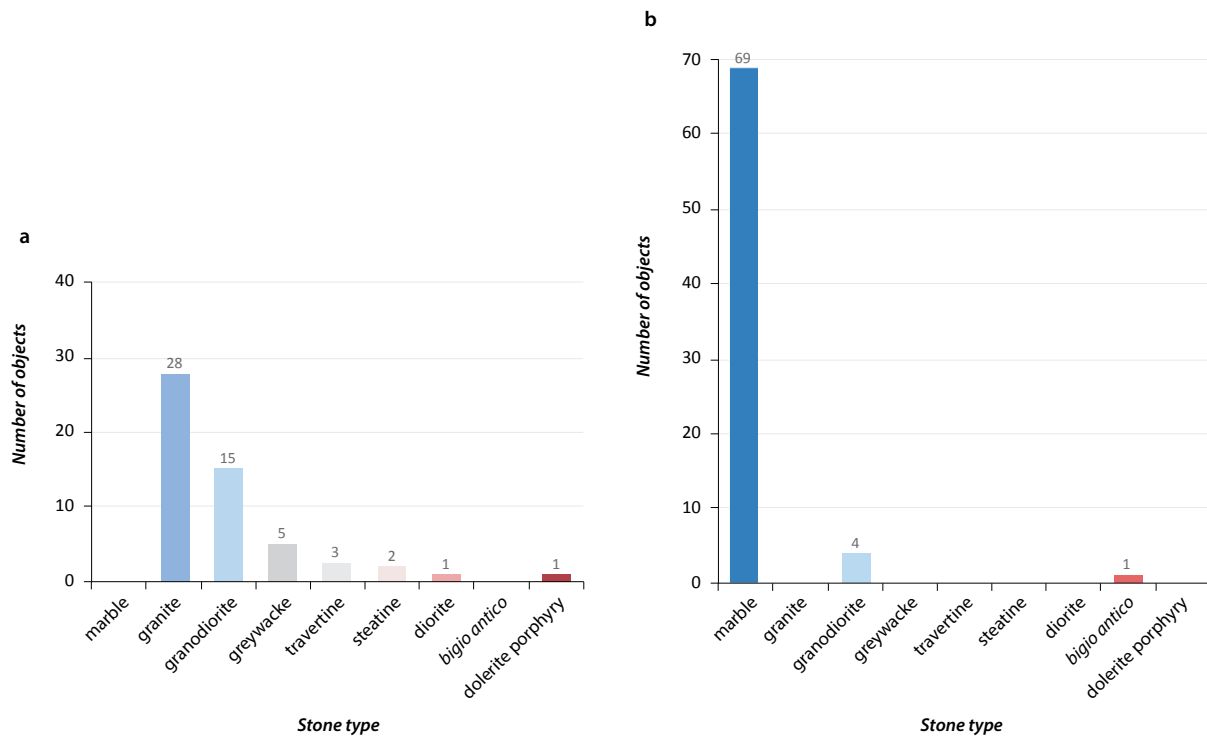


Fig. 4.1.2. Geological provenance of stone types: a. stones of Egyptian origin (n = 55); b. stones of non-Egyptian origin (n = 74).

Table 4.1.1. Specification of geological provenance of studied materials (n = 129).

Provenance	Characterisation	Site	Total
Egypt	granite	Aswan	28
	granodiorite	Aswan	15
	greywacke	Wadi Hammamat	5
	travertine	Eastern Nile Valley	3
	steatite	Rod el-Barram District	2
	diorite	Aswan	1
	dolerite porphyry	Rod el-Gamra	1
not Egypt	marble	various sites	69
	granodiorite	Elba Island, Italy	4
	<i>bigio antico</i>	various sites in Greece, Turkey, France, Spain	1

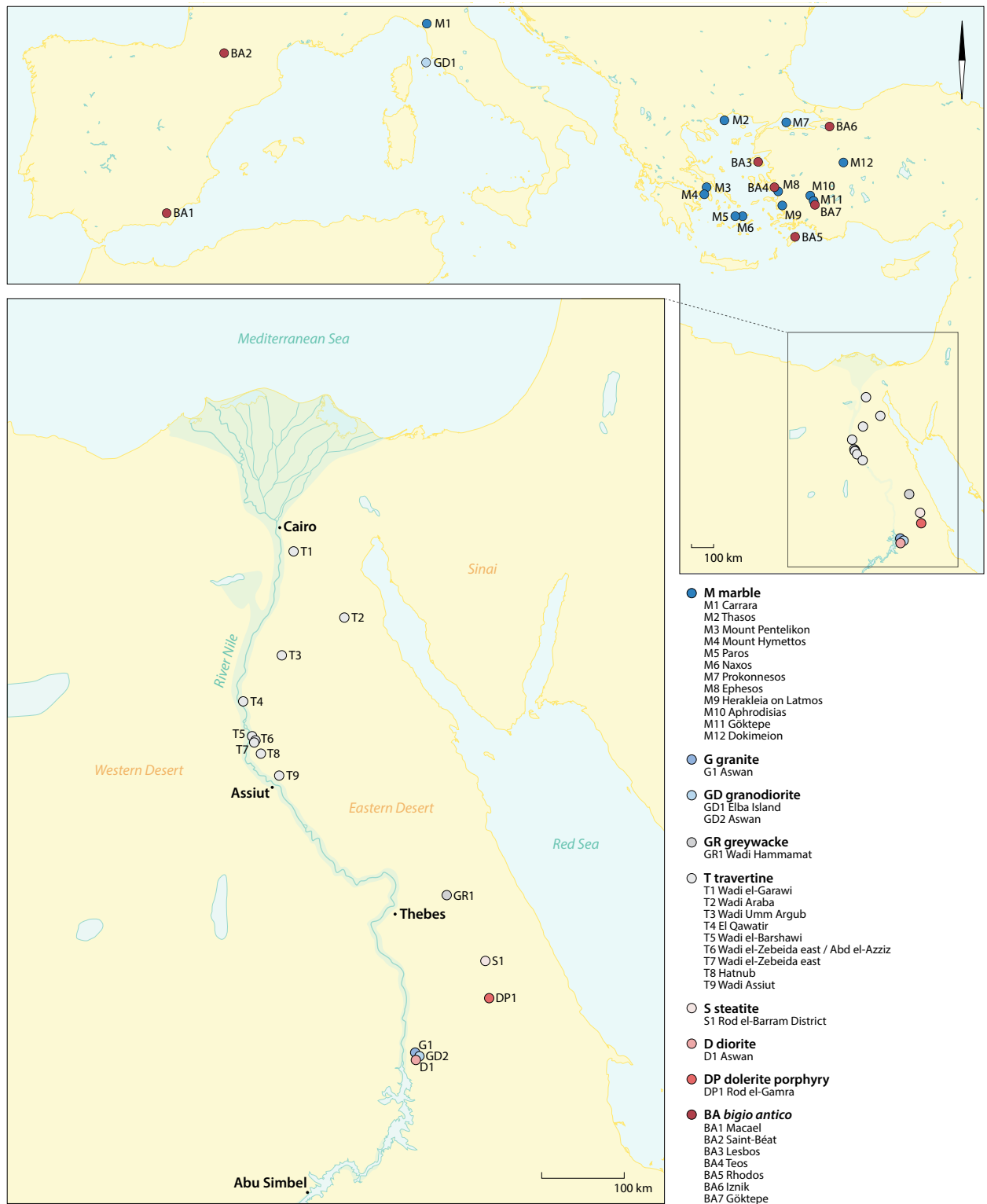


Fig. 4.1.3. Map of relevant quarrying sites in the Mediterranean world (principal sites are indicated for marble and *bigio antico*).

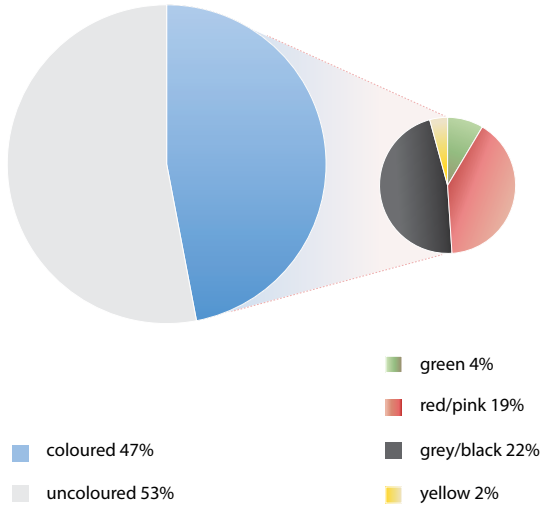


Fig. 4.1.4. Colour distribution of stone materials (n = 129).

4.1.2.³⁵³ It can be observed that all stone types, with the exception of granodiorite, come from either Egyptian or non-Egyptian sources. This indicates that granite, greywacke, travertine, steatite, diorite, and dolerite porphyry were only obtained from Egyptian sources, whereas marble and *bigio antico* were exclusive for non-Egyptian localities. Based on this, a clear division between Egyptian and non-Egyptian stone types can be observed. Furthermore, the majority of stones in our sample have non-Egyptian origins: the distribution between non-Egyptian and Egyptian stones is 74 versus 55. The predominance of non-Egyptian stones can largely be explained by the abundance of marble, which accounts for 93% of all non-Egyptian materials.

A specification of the geological sources is given in Table 4.1.1. The locations of these sites are indicated in Fig. 4.1.3. The large majority of Egyptian stones in our sample come from Aswan, namely, all granites and Egyptian granodiorites, plus the one specimen of diorite. The less frequently occurring Egyptian materials were

353. Since the geological origin of a stone only follows from its characterisation, it was not possible to formulate provenance hypotheses for the ten aforementioned undetermined stones. In addition, the source of the granite from which the obelisk fragment from Palazzo Valentini is carved is not clear (*supra*, 292-293 no. 140). In order to keep the following analyses as reliable as possible, the remaining sections focus on the 129 objects for which reliable material characterisations and geological provenance determinations could be determined.

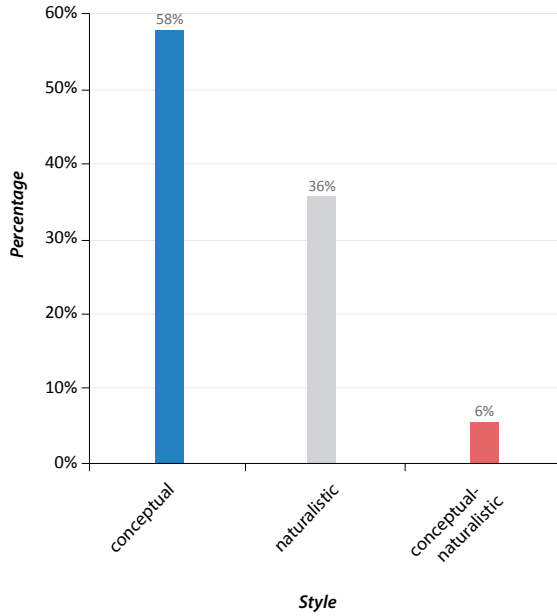


Fig. 4.1.5. General distribution of stylistic characteristics (n = 129).

mainly extracted from quarries in the southern Eastern Desert. Travertine, however, was quarried from one of the nine known ancient sites for this type of material, located in the Eastern desert plateaux between Cairo and Assiut. At least one Italian stone type is present, the so-called *granito dell'Elba*, a granodiorite from Elba Island. The white marbles and *bigio antico* originate from one of the many known sources for these stone types, which are all located outside of Egypt.³⁵⁴

1.1.3 Material characteristics: natural colouration

The materials of the studied objects have different visual characteristics and come in a variation of natural colours. An overview of the colour distribution is given in Fig. 4.1.4. Approximately half of the stones are uncoloured, whereas the other half are naturally coloured. Four different colour groups can be discerned: grey/black, red/pink, yellow, and green. Among these,

354. *Bigio antico*'s with largely comparable visual characteristics were extracted from different localities across the Mediterranean, including sites in modern Greece, Turkey, France, and Spain (but none of them in Egypt). This complicates the attribution to a particular source on the basis of visual examination; *supra*, 76 with n. 318 and 270-271 no. 129.

Table 4.1.2. Material characteristics of the studied stone materials (n = 129).

Colouration	Provenance	
	Egyptian (n = 55)	non-Egyptian (n = 74)
Coloured (n = 60)	100%	7%
Uncoloured (n = 69)	0%	93%

materials in different shades of grey to black and red to pink prevail (22% and 19% of the total sample size, respectively).

1.1.4 Conclusion: the material characteristics of so-called Aegyptiaca

A clear correlation exists between the material characteristics of the stones in the studied sample. Two major trends can be discerned. Firstly, Egyptian stones are always coloured: granite (red/pink and grey/black), granodiorite (grey/black), greywacke (grey/black and green), travertine (yellow), steatite (green), diorite (grey/black), and dolerite porphyry (green). In contrast, non-Egyptian stones are nearly always uncoloured. Marble is the only uncoloured stone type in the sample, and was exclusively extracted from non-Egyptian sources. The few naturally coloured stones from non-Egyptian sources, *bigio antico* and granodiorite from Elba Island, are grey/black. A summary of these relations is given in Table 4.1.2. It can be observed that Egyptian coloured stones and non-Egyptian uncoloured stones are the most common material configurations of so-called Aegyptiaca Romana. Artefacts made from naturally coloured stones of non-Egyptian origin are uncommon, while uncoloured stones of Egyptian origin are not present in the studied sample, at all. Because of the distinct and opposed correlation between colouration and geological provenance, these material characteristics are discussed together in the remainder of the analysis instead of separately – seeing that an individual examination of these aspects would merely result in a repetition of visible trends. For this purpose, the following material clusters are discerned: coloured Egyptian, uncoloured non-Egyptian, and coloured non-Egyptian.

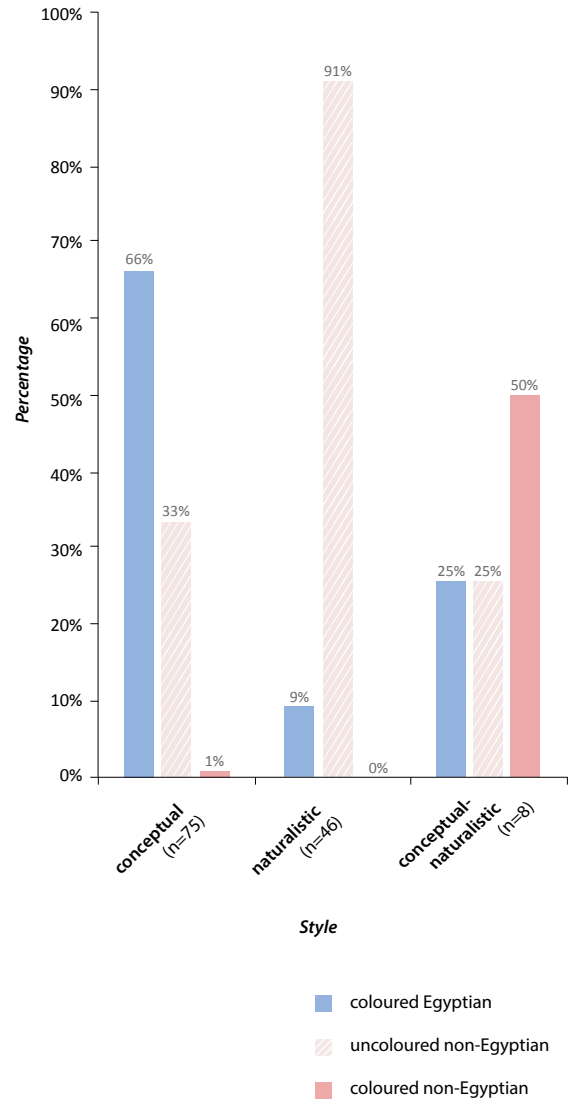


Fig. 4.1.6. Material characteristics and stylistic distribution (n = 129).

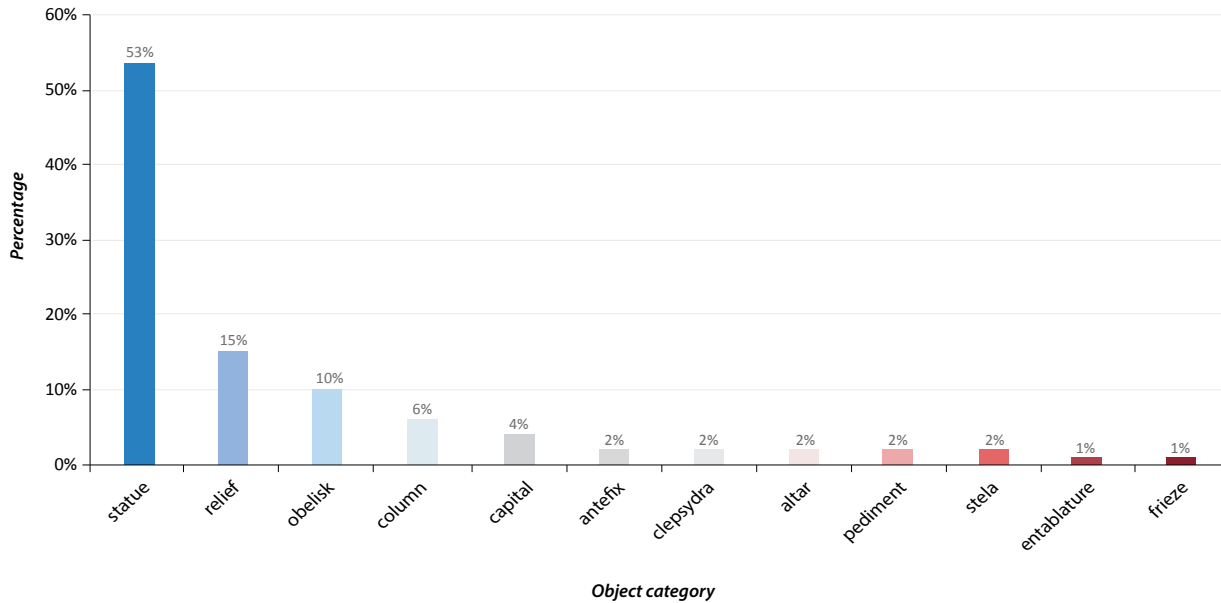


Fig. 4.1.7. General distribution of object categories (n = 129).

1.2 MATERIAL CHARACTERISTICS AND OTHER OBJECT PARAMETERS

1.2.1 Style

The stylistic distribution of the studied objects is presented in Fig. 4.1.5. More than half of the artefacts are rendered in conceptual styles, and approximately a third of the total sample size exhibits a naturalistic style, while a minority of objects shows stylistic characteristics in accordance with both aforementioned traditions.

1.2.2 Material characteristics and style

The next step is to analyse the relations between the stylistic and material characteristics of the studied objects. As can be seen in Fig. 4.1.6, objects in conceptual styles are carved from coloured Egyptian, coloured non-Egyptian, and uncoloured non-Egyptian materials. Conceptual styles occur more frequently in combination with coloured Egyptian than with uncoloured non-Egyptian stones: the distribution of conceptual styles between these two material clusters is 66% versus 33%. Subsequently, conceptual-naturalistic styles occur in combination with all three material clusters and without

any evident differences in distribution. However, a clear correlation is noticeable between the naturalistic style and material characteristics. The vast majority of objects with naturalistic styles are carved from uncoloured non-Egyptian stones. A small minority of objects with naturalistic styles is made from coloured Egyptian materials, whereas the combination of naturalistic styles with coloured non-Egyptian stones is altogether absent. Therefore, while no clear preferences can be derived from so-called Aegyptiaca in conceptual and conceptual-naturalistic styles or the properties of the materials from which these are made, a strong correlation seems to exist between the naturalistic style and uncoloured stone materials of non-Egyptian origin.

1.2.3 Object category

Twelve different object types are present (Fig. 4.1.7). Of these, statues clearly prevail: they constitute approximately half of the entire sample size. Apart from statues, other frequently attested object types include reliefs and obelisks. Capitals, antefixes, clepsydras, altars, pediments, stelae, entablatures, and friezes occur markedly less frequent. This general overview demonstrates that, while the category of so-called Aegyptiaca comprises a relatively large number of

Table 4.1.3. Correlation between material characteristics and object categories (n = 129).

Object category	Material characteristics			Total
	coloured Egyptian	uncoloured non-Egyptian	coloured non-Egyptian	
statue	36	32	1	69
relief	2	18	0	20
obelisk	13	0	0	13
column	0	4	4	8
capital	0	6	0	6
antefix	0	3	0	3
clepsydra	2	0	0	2
altar	0	2	0	2
pediment	0	2	0	2
stela	2	0	0	2
entablature	0	1	0	1
frieze	0	1	0	1

different object types, some types are more frequently attested than others.

1.2.4 Material characteristics and object category

Distinct patterns emerge when we analyse object categories in relation to material characteristics. As Table 4.1.3 shows, only statues and reliefs are carved from both Egyptian and non-Egyptian stones. Objects of the ten other types are exclusively made from either coloured Egyptian or (un-)coloured non-Egyptian stones. This indicates that there is an overall strong correlation between the object types of the studied artefacts and their material properties. Certain materials seem to be exclusively used for particular types of objects. Accordingly, obelisks, clepsydras, and stelae are invariably made from coloured Egyptian materials, although their numbers are relatively small. In contrast, columns, capitals, antefixes, altars, pediments, plus the entablature and frieze are consistently carved from non-Egyptian and nearly always uncoloured stones. Albeit not exclusively, a large majority of reliefs in our sample is made from uncoloured non-Egyptian materials: 90% versus 10% in coloured Egyptian materials, whereas coloured non-Egyptian materials are absent. It is noteworthy that architectural elements have very consistent material properties: 95% of all architectural

elements in the sample – including reliefs, columns, capitals, antefixes, pediments, the entablature and frieze (41 objects, i.e. 32% of the total sample) – are made from non-Egyptian stones, mostly white marble. The distribution of the material characteristics of statues, finally, is less distinct: the ratio between Egyptian and non-Egyptian materials is approximately 1:1. With the exception of one object, all statues categorised as made of stones of non-Egyptian origin are marble statues.

1.2.5 Material and stylistic characteristics in relation to object category

The question that follows from the above observation concerns the material and stylistic characteristics of the studied objects in relation to their object categories. In order to increase the sample size and hence the visibility of possible patterns, all architectural elements, as defined in the previous section, will from now on be grouped together. The stylistic and material characteristics of different object categories are presented in Table 4.1.4 below.

While no particular correlation could be observed between the material properties of statues, two clear and opposing trends become visible when we add the stylistic parameter of these objects. Statues with conceptual

Table 4.1.4. Material and stylistic characteristics in relation to object categories (n = 129).

Object category	Material characteristics	Style			Total
		conceptual	conceptual-naturalistic	naturalistic	
statue	coloured Egyptian	31	1	4	69
	uncoloured non-Egyptian	0	1	31	
	coloured non-Egyptian	1	0	0	
architecture	coloured Egyptian	2	0	0	41
	uncoloured non-Egyptian	25	1	9	
	coloured non-Egyptian	0	4	0	
obelisk	coloured Egyptian	12	1	0	13
	uncoloured non-Egyptian	0	0	0	
	coloured non-Egyptian	0	0	0	
clepsydra	coloured Egyptian	2	0	0	2
	uncoloured non-Egyptian	0	0	0	
	coloured non-Egyptian	0	0	0	
stela	coloured Egyptian	2	0	0	2
	uncoloured non-Egyptian	0	0	0	
	coloured non-Egyptian	0	0	0	
altar	coloured Egyptian	0	0	0	2
	uncoloured non-Egyptian	0	0	2	
	coloured non-Egyptian	0	0	0	

styles are nearly always made from naturally coloured Egyptian stones; the statue of a baboon made from *bigio antico* is the only exception in the studied sample. In contrast, a markedly different pattern emerges for statues with naturalistic styles, which are nearly always carved from marble. A different trend can be observed with regard to the stylistic and material characteristics of architectural elements. The previous section has shown that the large majority of architectural objects are carved from white marble. Adding the stylistic component to the analysis demonstrates that the majority of these artefacts is rendered in conceptual styles: 25 of 35 marble architectural objects, i.e. 71%. Therefore, unlike statues with conceptual styles, which are never carved from white marble, a clear correlation seems to exist between these specific material and stylistic characteristics and architectural elements. Indeed, all objects in our sample that are made of marble and executed in conceptual styles are architectural elements. The observation that particular correlations exist

between stylistic and material properties in relation to object type is reinforced by the other four object types, namely, obelisks, clepsydras, stelae, and altars. The first three object types, obelisks, clepsydras, and stelae, are all made from coloured Egyptian materials and nearly always rendered in conceptual styles, whereas the two altars in our sample are both carved from uncoloured stones of non-Egyptian origin and in naturalistic styles. Based on this, two inferences can be made. First of all, an overall clear correlation can be observed between the stylistic and material characteristics of the studied objects, on the one hand, and their object categories, on the other. Secondly, different object categories of so-called Aegyptiaca ‘behave’ in different material and stylistic terms. In order to assess the question if and how these correlations are associated with the subject matters of the objects in question, we need to involve this parameter in our analysis, as presented in the next section.

1.2.6 Subject matter

Subject matter is crucial for current understandings of the objects that we call Aegyptiaca, as it is often used as main heuristic device to define artefacts as Aegyptiaca.³⁵⁵ The range of subject matters that has been understood to evoke an association with Egypt is quite wide and, consequently, the diversity of the category of so-called Aegyptiaca becomes fully visible especially in terms of this parameter. Moreover, the identification of an artefact's subject matter is not always clear; its current state of preservation and the presence of inscriptions play an important role in this.³⁵⁶ Taking the wide variety of subject matters into account, the following overviews present the subject matters for each object category separately in order to structure the data. Similarities in typological characteristics are specified for the same reason. While the grouping of the studied objects' subject matters in the overviews below may occasionally change depending on interpretation, I do not believe that these will fundamentally alter the image presented here.

The two (fragments of) *clepsydras* are decorated with relief scenes that depict a king officiating in front of deities. These divinities are so-called month gods, in whose honour a festival would have originally been held on the first day of each month. As such, the relief scenes underline the function of *clepsydras* as time-measuring devices.³⁵⁷ One fragment preserves an image of the anthropomorphic month god Min (no. 112), while the more completely preserved specimen (no. 110) shows Ptolemy II, who is accompanied by various deities (Tehit, Ipet-Hemetes, and Horus), officiating in front of the month gods Ptah, Re-Harakhti, and Khonsu, respectively. These gods are depicted in their anthropomorphic form, either with animal heads or without. One of the two *stelae* belongs to the well-known type of 'Horus on the crocodiles' and shows,

among other iconographical elements, the young god Horus standing on top of two crocodiles, his head surmounted by a frontal image of the god Bes (no. 126). The other stela is too fragmentarily preserved to identify the subject matter with certainty. It depicts the remains of an anthropomorphic figure, presumably either Qadesh or Nefertem, standing on two lions (no. 119). Figurative representations on *altars* emphasise the cultic domain to which these objects belonged. The front panel of one of the two altars in the sample shows the anthropomorphic figure of an Isis priestess, with images of a *cista mystica* covering its side panels (no. 068). The other specimen is decorated on all sides (no. 069): the front panel depicts a *cista mystica*, while ritual tools are shown on the back side (*urceus*, *patera*, *culter*), and images of the deities Harpocrates (anthropomorphic) and Anubis (anthropomorphic with animal head) cover the left and right side panels, respectively. The majority of *obelisks* are inscribed with hieroglyphs. In six cases the inscriptions are accompanied by figurative scenes (on the pyramidion, near the apex of the shaft, or on the obelisks's lower section). These scenes usually depict the king officiating in front of Egyptian deities (no. 082, 085, 087, 090-091), while obelisk no. 089 shows the king receiving gifts from the accompanying Egyptian gods and goddesses. Depicted deities include e-Harakhti, Amun(-Re), Atum, Isis, Thoth, Horus, and perhaps Uto. Three obelisks do not bear any hieroglyphic inscription or figurative decoration. Two of these are completely undecorated; the third has a small dedicatory inscription in Latin (no. 092-093 and 088, respectively).

The subject matters of *statues* are presented in Table 4.1.5. Anthropomorphic statuary clearly prevails over statues with zoomorphic forms and those that combine both formal aspects. Deities occur besides human beings. Four different types of human beings can be identified, namely, dedicants, priests and priestesses, royal figures, and young boys with Horus-locks. Generally speaking, interpretations become fragmented if these types are further specified, and this fragmentation is accompanied by increasing levels of uncertainty in the literature. Sculptures in zoomorphic form are restricted to seven specimens. These portray deities and animals, represented in the current sample by three statues each. Another seven statues integrate both anthropomorphic and zoomorphic formal aspects; among these are six sphinxes. One statue features separate zoomorphic and

355. See also *supra*, section I.2.

356. Forty objects are inscribed (31% of the total sample). Hieroglyphs, including the occasional signs that are considered as so-called 'pseudo-hieroglyphs' (e.g., *supra*, 128-129 no. 046-047), occur on 33 objects. Another six artefacts bear Latin inscriptions, while the statue of a baboon (*supra*, 270-271 no. 129) carries a bilingual inscription in both Latin and Greek.

357. On *clepsydras* and other instruments for measuring time in ancient Egypt see Clagett (1995); cf. Borchardt (1920), Pogo (1925), and Sloley (1939). For month gods see Long (1987) 147-151.

Table 4.1.5. Subject matter of statues (n = 69). * name of dedicant; ** god(s) depicted; *** integration of anthropomorphic and zoomorphic aspects in a single statue; **** separate anthropomorphic and zoomorphic figures combined in a single statue. Uncertainties are indicated by question marks.

Typology			Specification		Count	
anthropomorphic (52)	deity (18)		Bes		2	
			Isis		5	
			Isis-Fortuna		1	
			Nile		1	
			Sarapis		9	
	not deity (26)	dedicant (8)	*Neshor	**Khnum, Anuket, Satet	1	
			Hor-nes	-	1	
			-	Amon, Mut, Khonsu, Osiris	1	
			-	Horus	1	
			Unspecified		4	
		priest(-ess) (4)	Isis cult		3	
			Unspecified		1	
		royal figure (10)	Arsinoe II		1	
			Ptolemy II		1	
			Ramesses II		2	
			Tuya		1	
			Ceasarion / Nero / Caracalla?		1	
			Pharaoh / Ramesses II?		1	
			Ptolemaic queen / Arsinoe II / Drusilla?		1	
			Unspecified		2	
			boy with Horus-lock (2)	Unspecified		2
		contested (2)	Egyptian priest / youth?		1	
			Isis priest(-ess) / Sabina Augusta?		1	
		contested (8)		Cleopatra / (Drusilla-)Isis-Aphrodite / Venus?		1
				Egyptian idol / woman / pharaoh?		1
	Harpocrates?			1		
	Harpocrates / Eros / musician / child?			1		
	Isis / Isis priestess?			1		
	Isis / Egyptian queen?			2		
	Isis / Isis priestess / Egyptian queen?			1		

Table 4.1.5. *continued.*

Typology		Specification	Count
zoomorphic (7)	deity (3)	Apis	1
		Thoth	2
	not deity (3)	Baboon	1
		Crocodile	1
		Lion	1
	contested (1)	Horus / falcon?	1
integration*** (7)	deity (1)	Horus	1
	sphinx (6)	Amasis	1
		Domitian?	1
		Hatshepsut / concubine Thutmose III?	1
		Unspecified	3
composition**** (1)	anthropomorphic royal figure & zoomorphic deity (1)	Hathor & pharaoh	1
contested (2)		Pharaoh / sphinx?	1
		Lion / sphinx?	1

anthropomorphic figures. Table 4.1.6 shows the subject matters of *architectural objects*. A certain overlap can be observed with the formal characteristics of statuary. Hence, anthropomorphic and zoomorphic forms occur, and both can be further subdivided into representations of deities and non-deities. However, this group also contains compositions with one or more subject matters or elements that have secured their current interpretation as Aegyptiaca. These compositions differ in character and include, among other things, Nilotic scenes, processual scenes, and offering and votive scenes that depict a diversity of Egyptian deities and demons. Lastly, architectural objects feature isolated iconographical motifs, such as papyrus plants and winged sun-discs.

The overview demonstrates that some subject matters occur relatively frequently. This is particularly valid for Sarapis and Isis. Sarapis is mostly depicted by statues (n = 9), and occurs moreover on three reliefs. Isis (including particular aspects of this goddess) is depicted by at least six statues and seven architectural objects, as well as one obelisk. However, other than these, no obvious groups of specific themes can be distinguished. The majority of subject matters are attested only once. The many uncertainties over the identification of subject matters further increase the

inability to see distinct patterns. It appears that, if there are trends, these relate to general typological characteristics rather than to specific subject matters. Hence, statues of royal figures, dedicants, and sphinxes occur relatively frequently. Nevertheless, the overall picture with regard to the subject matters of the studied objects is diverse and fragmented.

This complicates the assessment of the relations between this parameter, object category, and material and stylistic characteristics. However, it is nonetheless possible to observe some trends. We have seen above that different types of so-called Aegyptiaca behave in different material and stylistic terms. With regard to statuary, we observed that sculptures with conceptual and conceptual-naturalistic styles are nearly always carved from coloured Egyptian stones, while those rendered in naturalistic styles are almost exclusively made from white marble. When we look at the subject matter of statues, it can be observed that the groups with similar typological characteristics largely correspond to either one of these two material and stylistic clusters. Hence, anthropomorphic statues of deities, in particular Sarapis and Isis, priests and priestesses of the Isis cult, and boys with Horus-locks are nearly always made from white marble and rendered in naturalistic

Table 4.1.6. Subject matter of architectural objects (n = 41). * integration of anthropomorphic and zoomorphic aspects in a single object; ** scenes that combine more than one subject matters and/or iconographical elements. Uncertainties are indicated by question marks.

Typology			Specification	Count
anthropomorphic (7)	deity (3)		Geb	1
			Isis <i>pelagia</i> ?	1
			Jupiter-Ammon	1
	not deity (4)	priest(-ess) (1)	Isis cult	1
		royal figure (1)	Unspecified	1
		contested (2)	Pharaoh?	2
zoomorphic (6)	not deity (5)		Winged scarab	1
			Cobra	4
	contested (1)	Horus / falcon?	1	
integration* (3)	deity (3)		Hathor	3
composition** (18)	Nilotic scene (2)		Egyptian deities (Isis 1x), animals, sphinxes, Egyptian priests	2
	religious procession/ ceremony (4)		Egyptian priests with ceremonial and sacred objects	4
	offering scene (3)		Anedjti, Horus, Osiris	1
			Apis/Hathor?, Isis, Egyptian temple	1
			King officiating in front of demons	1
	votive scene (2)		Isis, Sarapis, non-Egyptian deities	2
	unspecified (7)		Apis, Horus, Isis	1
			Apis?, deity (undefined)?, scepter	1
			Egyptian crowns	1
			Egyptian deities (undefined)	1
			Hand with sceptre (and <i>ankh</i>)	2
			Sarapis, Harpocrates, Isis-Demeter, Isis-Persephone, priest	1
other (6)			Papyrus	3
			Palm?	1
			Winged sun-disc	2
contested (1)			Isis / winged sun-disc?	1

styles.³⁵⁸ By contrast, sculptures of dedicants, royal figures, zoomorphic statues, and those that integrate anthropomorphic and zoomorphic formal aspects

are usually made from coloured Egyptian materials and executed in conceptual or conceptual-naturalistic styles. This indicates that certain subject-groups or types of statues tend to be executed in particular materials and styles. Moreover, a stylistic distinction can be proposed for the execution of certain subject matters of the studied architectural objects. While most architectural elements are rendered in conceptual styles,

358. Notable exceptions are two small Sarapis statues in Egyptian travertine (but in naturalistic style): no. 123-124, and a small statuette that may represent Isis in a conceptual style and Egyptian steatite (no. 125).

as shown above, it appears that they often portray Isis when they are executed in naturalistic styles, whether or not accompanied by Sarapis. Accordingly, of the nine architectural artefacts with naturalistic styles in our sample – which constitute a minority, as 78% of architectural elements are in conceptual or conceptual-naturalistic styles – six portray Isis, who is accompanied by Sarapis in three of these cases.³⁵⁹

The analysis of subject matter and its relations to other object parameters suggests a correlation between certain subject matters and object types. Despite the small number of clepsydras and altars in our sample, the representations on these objects are in keeping with their respective functions. A similar correlation may be suggested for obelisks. The hieroglyphic inscriptions on most obelisks and figurative (offering) scenes occasionally correspond with the character and function of these objects as royal dedications to Re-Harakhti or other Egyptian deities. Additionally, while the themes of statues and architectural elements are more varied, it appears that the previously noted material and stylistic clusters within these respective object types of so-called Aegyptiaca are largely associated with particular subject matters or typological groups. In order to study whether and to what extent the various correlations between the material and stylistic characteristics, object types, and subject matters that we have charted thus far are associated with or dependent on their dating and provenance, the next section focuses on these aspects.

1.2.7 Dating

The objects in the studied sample cover a period from the Egyptian New Kingdom (ca. 1550-1077 BC) until the Roman Imperial period (30 BC – 395 AD).³⁶⁰ The chronological distribution of these objects is graphically represented in Fig. 4.1.8. It is noteworthy that artefacts dating from the Roman Imperial age greatly outnumber those from earlier periods, as also noted by Roullet.³⁶¹ In this sample, the ratio is approximately 3:1. The

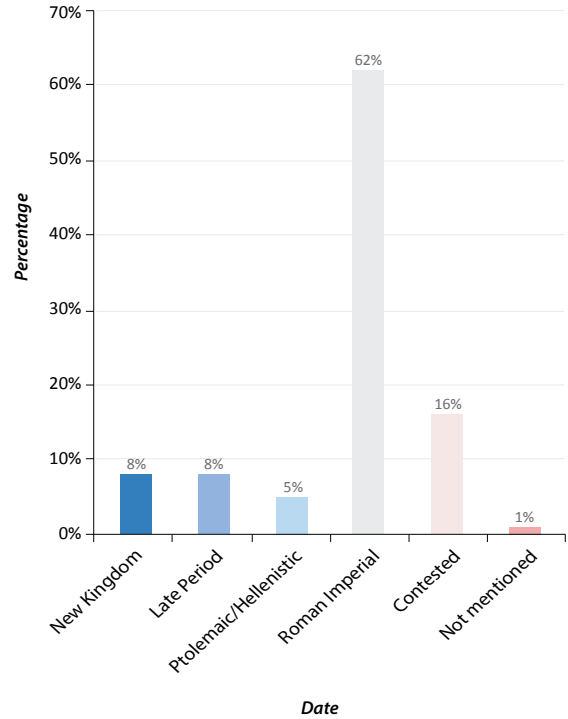


Fig. 4.1.8. Chronological distribution (n = 129).

dating of 21 objects is contested (Table 4.1.7).³⁶² This relatively high number reflects the difficulties of attaining a precise dating of the objects that we call Aegyptiaca. There are various reasons for this; one is the fact that different opinions on the stylistic and typological periodisation of these objects still prevail.³⁶³ Other reasons, often in combination with stylistic and typological considerations, include the identification of subject matter, the exact dating of the phenomenon of ‘empty cartouches’, the specific reading of a king’s name in hieroglyphs, and the determination of an incorrect terminus ante quem on the basis of a (likewise incorrect) identification of the material used.³⁶⁴

359. Isis is once depicted in a conceptual style, on relief fragment no. 043.

360. The oldest object in the sample, the statuette of Sebekhotep (no. 130), dates from the Middle Kingdom but is not taken into account in the present analysis since its material characteristics could not be determined.

361. Roullet (1972) 18.

362. This means that the previously proposed datings fall into more than one of the timeframes used here. Note that the number of objects with disputed dating increases if these periods are broken down into specific dynasties or years. For example, the fragment of a kneeling statue (no. 120) has been variably dated to the 26th and 29th Dynasties, but because these dynasties both belong to the Late Period (Dynasties 25-31) this discrepancy is not visible in the graph.

363. Object numbers 026, 041-042, 044, 072, 078-079, 088, 101, 106, 109, 121, 126, 128.

364. Subject matter: no. 080, 095, 119, 125; empty cartouches: no. 112;

Table 4.1.7. Specification of objects with contested dating (n = 21). NK: New Kingdom; IP3: 3rd Intermediate period; LP: Late Period.

Dating	Material characteristics	Style	Object type	Cat. no.
NK / IP3	coloured Egyptian	conceptual	statue	075
NK / LP	coloured Egyptian	conceptual	stela	119
LP / Ptolemaic	coloured Egyptian	conceptual	statue	072
	coloured Egyptian	naturalistic	statue	101
	coloured Egyptian	conceptual	statue	106
	coloured Egyptian	conceptual	clepsydra	112
	coloured Egyptian	conceptual	stela	126
Ptolemaic / Roman	uncoloured non-Egyptian	naturalistic	statue	026
	uncoloured non-Egyptian	naturalistic	architecture	041
	uncoloured non-Egyptian	naturalistic	architecture	042
	uncoloured non-Egyptian	naturalistic	architecture	044
	coloured Egyptian	naturalistic	statue	079
	coloured Egyptian	conceptual-naturalistic	statue	080
	coloured Egyptian	conceptual	statue	095
LP / Ptolemaic / Roman	coloured Egyptian	conceptual	statue	128
	coloured Egyptian	conceptual	statue	125
	coloured Egyptian	conceptual	statue	078
	coloured Egyptian	conceptual	statue	102
LP / Roman	coloured Egyptian	conceptual	statue	109
	coloured Egyptian	conceptual	statue	121
	coloured Egyptian	conceptual	obelisk	088

1.2.8 Material and stylistic characteristics in relation to dating

The next step is to study the relations between dating and other object parameters. Table 4.1.8 presents the chronological distribution of material and stylistic characteristics in relation to dating. The data demonstrate that an overall clear correlation exists between these parameters.

Nearly all objects that date from pre-Roman Imperial periods (henceforth: pre-Roman) are made from coloured Egyptian stones and executed in conceptual styles. This particular material and stylistic configuration applies to 25 of 26 pre-Roman

artefacts, or 96%. This indicates a distinct association between, on the one hand, coloured Egyptian stones and conceptual styles and, on the other hand, a pre-Roman date of manufacture. Different chronological trends emerge for the objects in our sample of Roman Imperial age. While coloured Egyptian stones and conceptual styles are attested for objects from this period, it constitutes only one among several other material and stylistic configurations and, moreover, it occurs relatively infrequently. This applies to 8 of 80, or 10%, of all Roman Imperial objects studied here. Relative to artefacts from earlier periods, Roman Imperial objects are therefore characterised by a larger material and stylistic variation. The most prominent material and stylistic settings in this period are combinations between white marble and either conceptual or naturalistic styles (31% and 46%, respectively), but other configurations

reading of hieroglyphs: no. 075; material identification: no. 102.

Table 4.1.8. Material and stylistic characteristics in relation to dating (n = 129).

Dating	Material characteristics	Style			Total
		conceptual	conceptual-naturalistic	naturalistic	
New Kingdom	coloured Egyptian	10	0	0	10
	uncoloured non-Egyptian	0	0	0	
	coloured non-Egyptian	0	0	0	
Late Period	coloured Egyptian	10	0	0	10
	uncoloured non-Egyptian	0	0	0	
	coloured non-Egyptian	0	0	0	
Ptolemaic	coloured Egyptian	5	0	0	6
	uncoloured non-Egyptian	0	0	1	
	coloured non-Egyptian	0	0	0	
Roman Imperial	coloured Egyptian	8	1	2	80
	uncoloured non-Egyptian	25	2	37	
	coloured non-Egyptian	1	4	0	
contested	coloured Egyptian	14	1	2	21
	uncoloured non-Egyptian	0	0	4	
	coloured non-Egyptian	0	0	0	
not mentioned	coloured Egyptian	2	0	0	2
	uncoloured non-Egyptian	0	0	0	
	coloured non-Egyptian	0	0	0	

occur as well. In addition, in our sample the use of coloured stones of non-Egyptian origin is restricted to the Roman Imperial period.³⁶⁵

This indicates an overall chronological differentiation between pre-Roman and Roman Imperial objects in material and stylistic terms. It was shown above that different object categories behave in different material and stylistic terms, and that these differences, in turn, are largely associated with subject matter. Taken together, these findings may suggest that certain types of so-called Aegyptiaca with particular

subject matters have specific material and stylistic configurations that are characteristic for certain time periods. In order to study this, we will now involve object category and subject matter into our analysis.

1.2.9 Material, style, and subject matter of object categories in relation to dating

The relations between chronology and object categories show a diverse picture (Table 4.1.9). A distinct chronological differentiation can be suggested for some object types, but it is less clear for others. Despite the small number, clepsydras and stelae date from pre-Roman periods, while both altars in our sample are of Roman Imperial age. The large majority of architectural elements date from the Roman Imperial period.³⁶⁶ A

365. The material and stylistic characteristics of objects with disputed dating are consistent with the above observations (Table 4.1.7). All seven objects that pre-date the Imperial Roman period (IP3/NK, NK/LP, LP/Ptolemaic) are made from coloured Egyptian materials and predominantly executed in conceptual styles, whereas a larger material and stylistic variety is noticeable for the fourteen objects that may date from the Roman Imperial period (Ptolemaic/Roman, NK/Ptolemaic/Roman, LP/Ptolemaic/Roman, LP/Roman).

366. The three architectural elements with contested dating have been

Table 4.1.9. Chronological distribution of object categories (n = 129).

Dating	Object category					
	statue	architecture	obelisk	clepsydra	stela	altar
New Kingdom	6	0	4	0	0	0
Late Period	6	2	2	0	0	0
Ptolemaic	5	0	0	1	0	0
Roman Imperial	36	36	6	0	0	2
contested	14	3	1	1	2	0
not mentioned	2	0	0	0	0	0

Table 4.1.10. Material and stylistic characteristics of statues in relation to dating (n = 69).

Dating	Material characteristics	Style			Total
		conceptual	conceptual-naturalistic	naturalistic	
New Kingdom	coloured Egyptian	6	0	0	6
	uncoloured non-Egyptian	0	0	0	
	coloured non-Egyptian	0	0	0	
Late Period	coloured Egyptian	6	0	0	6
	uncoloured non-Egyptian	0	0	0	
	coloured non-Egyptian	0	0	0	
Ptolemaic	coloured Egyptian	4	0	0	5
	uncoloured non-Egyptian	0	0	1	
	coloured non-Egyptian	0	0	0	
Roman Imperial	coloured Egyptian	3	0	2	36
	uncoloured non-Egyptian	0	1	29	
	coloured non-Egyptian	1	0	0	
contested	coloured Egyptian	10	1	2	14
	uncoloured non-Egyptian	0	0	1	
	coloured non-Egyptian	0	0	0	
not mentioned	coloured Egyptian	2	0	0	2
	uncoloured non-Egyptian	0	0	0	
	coloured non-Egyptian	0	0	0	

more diverse chronological picture emerges with regard to statues and obelisks. The ratio between pre-Roman and Roman Imperial obelisks is approximately 1:1. While a majority of statues in our sample dates from the Roman Imperial period, pre-Roman statuary occurs relatively frequently as well, indicating that no clear chronological differentiation exists between Roman Imperial and pre-Roman statues.

When we analyse the chronological distribution of the stylistic and material configurations of each object category separately, different patterns can be observed. Both *clepsydras* date from pre-Roman periods, are carved from naturally coloured stones of Egyptian origin, and are executed in conceptual styles. *Stelae* have similar chronological and material/stylistic characteristics, as opposed to *altars*, which date from the Roman Imperial period and are made from white marble and executed in naturalistic styles. *Obelisks* exhibit different but nevertheless distinct chronological and material/stylistic configurations. Hence, whereas the material and stylistic properties of obelisks are clearly correlated (coloured Egyptian stones with predominantly conceptual styles), there is no chronological differentiation. In other words, the material and stylistic properties of obelisks seem to remain constant over time. No chronological differences are noticeable in terms of the decorations on obelisks, either. Specimens with hieroglyphic inscriptions and figurative scenes date from both pre-Roman and Roman Imperial periods, similar to obelisks without any decoration.

With regard to *statues*, different relations between chronology, material, style, and subject matter can be discerned. It has already been demonstrated above that clear correlations exist between the material and stylistic characteristics of statues: between conceptual/conceptual-naturalistic styles and coloured Egyptian stones, on the one hand, and between naturalistic styles and uncoloured non-Egyptian stones, on the other.

variously dated to the Hellenistic and Roman Imperial periods (cf. Table 4.1.7). It concerns three marble reliefs (no. 041-042, and 044), of which at least no. 041-042 most likely date to the Roman Imperial period, as most authors have suggested. The use of the term Hellenistic in these particular cases (rather than Ptolemaic) is interesting because it shows, so it seems, where the three reliefs in question fit in the interpretive schemes of previous authors, despite the portrayal on these reliefs of originally Egyptian gods.

Interestingly, these patterns also appear to be associated with dating. As Table 4.1.10 shows, statues dating to pre-Roman periods are nearly always carved from coloured Egyptian stones and executed in conceptual styles. Roman Imperial statuary has a totally different material and stylistic make-up: here white marble prevails, mostly rendered in naturalistic styles. Furthermore, it was shown above that the material and stylistic clusters of statues are largely associated with specific subject matters or typological characteristics. When we subsequently look at dating in relation to these object parameters, a chronological differentiation becomes evident. Most pre-Roman statues are sculptures of dedicants, royal figures, zoomorphic statues, or integrate anthropomorphic and zoomorphic formal aspects, which are nearly always made from coloured Egyptian stones and rendered in conceptual styles. By contrast, the majority of Roman Imperial sculptures are anthropomorphic statues of deities, in particular Sarapis and Isis, priests and priestesses of the Isis cult, and boys with Horus-locks. These are nearly always made from white marble and have naturalistic styles.

The previously noted associations between material, style, and chronology are also evident in relation to *architectural objects* (Table 4.1.11). The two pre-Roman architectural elements in our sample are made from coloured Egyptian stones and executed in conceptual styles. As was the case with statues, this particular material and stylistic configuration is not attested for architectural elements of Roman Imperial age. Whereas the use of coloured Egyptian stones for architectural artefacts is restricted to pre-Roman periods, however, the conceptual style clearly is not. It has already been shown that the large majority of architectural elements are carved from white marble and that most of them are rendered in conceptual styles. This particular material and stylistic configuration is clearly associated with a Roman Imperial date of manufacture, as can be seen in Table 4.1.11. Moreover, we have seen that architectural elements in uncoloured non-Egyptian stones and with naturalistic styles are associated with specific subject matters. If we analyse these object parameters in relation to dating, it emerges that the stylistic distinction that was proposed for the execution of certain themes of architectural elements seems to be unrelated to chronology. Despite the stylistic variation of architectural artefacts and its correlations to particular subject matters, it is evident that, rather than

Table 4.1.11. Material and stylistic characteristics of architectural objects in relation to dating (n = 41).

Dating	Material characteristics	Style			Total
		conceptual	conceptual-naturalistic	naturalistic	
New Kingdom	coloured Egyptian	0	0	0	0
	uncoloured non-Egyptian	0	0	0	
	coloured non-Egyptian	0	0	0	
Late Period	coloured Egyptian	2	0	0	2
	uncoloured non-Egyptian	0	0	0	
	coloured non-Egyptian	0	0	0	
Ptolemaic	coloured Egyptian	0	0	0	0
	uncoloured non-Egyptian	0	0	0	
	coloured non-Egyptian	0	0	0	
Roman Imperial	coloured Egyptian	0	0	0	36
	uncoloured non-Egyptian	25	1	6	
	coloured non-Egyptian	0	4	0	
contested	coloured Egyptian	0	0	0	3
	uncoloured non-Egyptian	0	0	3	
	coloured non-Egyptian	0	0	0	
not mentioned	coloured Egyptian	0	0	0	0
	uncoloured non-Egyptian	0	0	0	
	coloured non-Egyptian	0	0	0	

style, uncoloured stones of non-Egyptian origin are most closely associated with a Roman Imperial dating.

Four inferences can be made with regard to the dating of the studied objects in relation to other object parameters. Firstly, while a chronological differentiation is evident for some object types, it is less clear for others. Hence, clepsydras, stelae, and altars date from either pre-Roman or Roman Imperial periods, while statues, architectural elements, and obelisks from both timeframes occur. Secondly, chronology is closely associated with the material and stylistic characteristics of most types of so-called Aegyptiaca. Strong correlations exist between a pre-Roman dating and coloured Egyptian stones and conceptual styles, whereas artefacts from the Roman Imperial period are characterised by an overall larger material and stylistic variety. The findings of statues, architecture, clepsydras, stelae, and altars are in line with this general model. Obelisks, however, are a notable exception, in that they are the only type of objects that dates from the Roman Imperial period,

and that nevertheless have invariably been carved from coloured Egyptian stones and nearly always in conceptual styles. Thirdly, the correlations between chronology and the material and stylistic characteristics of statues appear to be largely associated with particular themes. And lastly, while the large majority of Roman Imperial statues and architectural elements are made from white marble, these object types demonstrate different stylistic properties. Marble statuary is almost exclusively rendered in naturalistic styles, while the majority of architecture in white marble is executed in conceptual styles. Based on these findings, chronology appears to influence the material and stylistic properties of the objects that we call Aegyptiaca, albeit in different ways and not necessarily in combination with particular object types and subject matters. With this in mind, let us turn to the so-called provenance of these objects, which is closely associated with their dating.

Table 4.1.12. Correlation between provenance and dating (n = 129).

Dating	Provenance			
	import	no import	contested	not mentioned
New Kingdom	10	0	0	0
Late Period	10	0	0	0
Ptolemaic	5	0	1	0
Roman	0	75	4	1
Contested: pre-Roman	8	0	0	0
Contested: pre-Roman or Roman	0	3	10	0
Not mentioned	0	0	0	2
Total	33	78	15	3

1.2.10 Provenance: Egyptian imports versus ‘locally crafted’ objects

Provenance is meant to distinguish between artefacts that reached Rome as finished objects through importation from Egypt (import) and those that were not brought to Rome from Egypt. As Part I has shown, previous scholarship has traditionally understood these coexisting aspects of ‘Egyptian’ artefacts in the Roman world as two essentially different phenomena and, as a result, current interpretations are largely built upon this dichotomy. Although the supposed provenance of these objects is an important heuristic device to determine their specific archaeological meaning, the attention that has been devoted to the provenance determination of so-called Aegyptiaca is altogether disproportionately and, moreover, lacks a proper theoretical background. This means that often no explicit distinction is made between, on the one hand, imports from Egypt and, on the other hand, so-called ‘locally crafted’ artefacts with styles and themes that we associate with Egypt. Moreover, even when a distinction is consciously made, the grounds on which this happens are not always clear.

In the absence of actual evidence for the transportation of ‘Aegyptiaca’ from Egypt to the Roman world, the (start of the) Roman Imperial period is usually taken as the chronological watershed to distinguish between Egyptian ‘originals’ and objects that are considered as ‘locally crafted’ emulations.³⁶⁷

367. In fact, not much can be said about the actual origin of these so-called local products, but the prevailing opinion holds that these objects are essentially non-Egyptian and therefore have been made

Hence, the basic, albeit often implicit presumption is that so-called Aegyptiaca that date from pre-Roman phases of Egyptian history were imported from Egypt to Rome in Roman Imperial times, while Roman Imperial emulations are usually considered to be locally crafted objects.³⁶⁸ Consequently, the dating of these objects closely corresponds to their (actual or presumed) provenance. This relationship is clearly demonstrated in Table 4.1.12. Thirty-three objects in the sample originate from Egypt (26%; see Table 4.1.13 for a specification of their original Egyptian context³⁶⁹). The majority, 60%, do not have an Egyptian origin. The provenance of another 15 objects in the studied sample is contested,³⁷⁰ and for the remaining three objects no data are available with regard to provenance.

outside of Egypt, more specifically in Rome; see *supra*, section I.2.

368. It should be noted that this traditional chronological division overlooks the fact that the production of artefacts with Egyptian subject matters and in conceptual styles continued in Egypt under Roman rule. Moreover, where terms like ‘Ptolemaic’ imply an Egyptian cultural and actual background, some Egyptian-themed objects (in white marble!) have been described as ‘Hellenistic’ in the previous literature, which seems to be indicative of a non-Egyptian background; cf. *infra*, n. 366.

369. For 25 of the 33 imports there is information available on the (actual or presumed) original provenance in Egypt. This information is mostly derived from inscriptions on the relevant objects; exceptions are no. 098 (presumed provenance dependent on the identification of the statue as queen Tuya), no. 128 (dependent on the identification of a specific form of Osiris), and no. 075 (relying on the attribution of the statue to Osorkon I, who ruled from Tanis). The motivation for the attribution of clepsydras no. 110 and 112 to Alexandria (for which see the respective catalogue entries above) is unknown.

370. These objects have been variously considered as Egyptian imports and local productions.

Table 4.1.13. Original Egyptian provenance (n = 25).

Egyptian provenance	Site	Total	Cat. no.
Lower Egypt	Alexandria?	1	112
	Alexandria / Nicopolis?	1	088
	Behbeit el-Hagar	1	074
	Behenet?	1	128
	Busiris / Hermopolis Parva?	2	070-071
	Heliopolis	8	073, 077, 083-085, 087, 118, 127
	Heliopolis?	1	076
	Sais	2	086, 117
	Tanis?	1	075
Upper Egypt	Akhmim?	1	120
	Elephantine	1	104
	Thebes	1	082
	Thebes?	3	098-099, 122
Contested (Lower or Upper Egypt)	Alexandria / Lycopolitan nome	1	110

Table 4.1.14. Specification of object characteristics: Egyptian imports (n = 33).

Object category	Material characteristics	Style			Total
		conceptual	conceptual-naturalistic	naturalistic	
Statue	coloured Egyptian	19	0	1	20
	uncoloured non-Egyptian	0	0	0	
	coloured non-Egyptian	0	0	0	
Architecture	coloured Egyptian	2	0	0	2
	uncoloured non-Egyptian	0	0	0	
	coloured non-Egyptian	0	0	0	
Obelisk	coloured Egyptian	7	0	0	7
	uncoloured non-Egyptian	0	0	0	
	coloured non-Egyptian	0	0	0	
Clepsydra	coloured Egyptian	2	0	0	2
	uncoloured non-Egyptian	0	0	0	
	coloured non-Egyptian	0	0	0	
Stela	coloured Egyptian	2	0	0	2
	uncoloured non-Egyptian	0	0	0	
	coloured non-Egyptian	0	0	0	
Altar	coloured Egyptian	0	0	0	0
	uncoloured non-Egyptian	0	0	0	
	coloured non-Egyptian	0	0	0	

Table 4.1.15. Specification of object characteristics: artefacts of ‘non-Egyptian’ origin (n = 78).

Object category	Material characteristics	Style			Total
		conceptual	conceptual-naturalistic	naturalistic	
Statue	coloured Egyptian	2	0	0	34
	uncoloured non-Egyptian	0	1	30	
	coloured non-Egyptian	1	0	0	
Architecture	coloured Egyptian	0	0	0	38
	uncoloured non-Egyptian	25	1	8	
	coloured non-Egyptian	0	4	0	
Obelisk	coloured Egyptian	4	0	0	4
	uncoloured non-Egyptian	0	0	0	
	coloured non-Egyptian	0	0	0	
Clepsydra	coloured Egyptian	0	0	0	0
	uncoloured non-Egyptian	0	0	0	
	coloured non-Egyptian	0	0	0	
Stela	coloured Egyptian	0	0	0	0
	uncoloured non-Egyptian	0	0	0	
	coloured non-Egyptian	0	0	0	
Altar	coloured Egyptian	0	0	0	2
	uncoloured non-Egyptian	0	0	2	
	coloured non-Egyptian	0	0	0	

To conclude, Tables 4.1.14 and 4.1.15 present a specification of the material and stylistic characteristics and object categories of Egyptian imports and non-imports. These tables show trends that are similar to those discussed above concerning the relation between dating and other object parameters. It stands out that imports from Egypt, regardless of object type, are invariably made from naturally coloured stones of

Egyptian origin. Moreover, these objects are nearly always executed in conceptual styles. Furthermore, it is noteworthy that architectural elements are rarely imported. Despite the small numbers, clepsydras and stelae are always imported, whereas altars never originate from Egypt. There appears to be no clear preference with regard to the origin of statues and obelisks in the studied sample.

