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THE TYRANNY OF TYPOLOGIES

Evidential reasoning in Romano-Egyptian domestic archaeology

Anna Lucille Boozer

... logical typologies are not always useful, and useful typologies are not always logical.

(Adams and Adams, 1991:8)

While excavating in an underexplored region of Egypt, my project encountered the archaeological remains of a house that did not correspond to the dominant domestic typologies for Roman Egypt. For example, our structure lacked clear archaeological evidence of a roof over a central room in the house, despite a high degree of preservation elsewhere in the structure. We found evidence of food preparation within the house, rather than in an exterior courtyard. The house also appeared to be a single story rather than two stories. We were left with a dilemma. Did the evidence—lack of evidence—signify a new house type? Or should we question our archaeological evidence because our structure differed from pre-established house typologies? These debates brought to the fore a long-standing issue in archaeology: how and when should we use, modify, and abandon typologies? And how do academic discourse impact our use of typologies and archaeological evidence?

This contribution explores these questions in order to understand how archaeologists weigh competing clues between typologies, taphonomies, and depositional episodes in our evidentiary reasoning. I begin by addressing typologies within archaeological thought, particularly focusing on architectural rather than artifact typologies. Typological analysis has been a long-standing component of the archaeological tool kit and both pragmatic and theoretical approaches to this analysis have changed over time; therefore, a review of the history of typological analysis situates the current predicament. I then draw from some recent critiques of typological analysis that are relevant to the present inquiry into the use and abuse of typologies in Roman Egypt. In the following section, I focus upon Karanis, a Romano-Egyptian village located in Egypt's Fayum region, as a case study for the tyranny of typologies (Map 6.1). Karanis has long dominated perceptions of Romano-Egyptian housing traditions, and it is necessary to re-examine both Karanis itself and its role within academic discourse to explain why this dominance is undesirable. Finally, I draw together these inquiries in order to assess a potential way forward for the use of typologies within Romano-Egyptian domestic archaeology, as well as more broadly.

The tyranny of typologies

The practice of archaeology is paradoxical: it draws from partial, complex, and ambiguous evidence, but it is also tangible and "real." This paradox entails that
major discoveries in archaeology can include both unexpected material evidence as well as reassessing theoretical assumptions within contemporary archaeological thought (Wylie 2011: 372–373). Archaeological writings often conceal this paradox by erasing the ambiguities inherent in tangible archaeological evidence (Gero 2007).

In this contribution, I focus on one way in which archaeologists conceal the evidentiary paradox—what Joan Gero calls cleaning the data—in order to make data appear homogeneous (Gero 2007: 320). One common way in which archaeologists clean their data is by classifying house forms, objects, and social practices (Costa 2007: 144–145) so that the data can be homogenized. This practice involves the use of typologies, which stabilize the assumption that there are homogeneous meanings, forms, and types across different time periods and geographic terrains. Typological analysis can be understood as the “systemic arrangement of material culture into types based on similarities of form, construction, decoration or style, content, use, or some combination of these” (Aldenderfer 1996: 727).

Typologies serve the process of archaeological concealment inasmuch as they can erase differences between uncertain evidence through classification. Despite drawbacks associated with their application, typologies are a vital and long-term component of archaeological practice (see Whallon and Brown 1982; Cowgill 1990; Adams and Adams 1991). The primary concern of this chapter is to explore how typological analyses are used and abused within archaeological thought.

Typological analysis: functionality and tyranny

It is worthwhile exploring the history of typological research more deeply in order to understand how typological analysis became entrenched within archaeology. Typologies are purpose-built. As a heuristic device, typologies can serve two different functions within various stages of archaeological research. First, in the early stages of research, typologies make it possible for archaeologists to describe messy data concisely and give it some order. This order can take shape as a chronological, as well as formal, functional and cultural, groupings. Second, in later stages of research, typologies provide a material context for new finds, and they function as a crucial medium for communication between researchers. This stage, and the communicative shorthand produced, is where the tyrannical aspect of typologies becomes most evident. This section reviews how these two major phases of typological analysis developed in archaeological thought over time.

Functionality: early stages of research and present-day uses

Classificatory phases usually occur fairly early in the history of every discipline. There comes a point at which the haphazard accumulation of raw data demands a major effort at systematization before any further progress can be made (Adams and Adams 1991: 260). The primary function of archaeological classification in the early days (e. 1880-1920 for North America) was to predict dating and interpret “culture” (Adams and Adams 1991: 310–311). These typologies helped archaeologists to identify patterns and diachronic changes, as well as make the most of partial datasets. As such, typological analysis was an essential component of archaeological research before the advent of absolute dating techniques and was employed globally in archaeology by prescient pioneers such as Oscar Montelius, Flinders Petrie, Nels Nelson, and A. V. Kidder.

It is worth highlighting V. Gordon Childe’s publications of the 1920s and 1930s. Childe was an early proponent of culture-historical archaeology and Marxist archaeology. In particular, he was known as “the Great Synthesizer” for his efforts to synthesize regional typologies into a broader understanding of Near Eastern and European prehistory. The regional typologies that Childe developed were strongly grounded in a spatial dynamic rather than purely a temporal one (see Childe 1929). Although the old typological objectives remained, these loftier goals began to take root within archaeological thought. By the 1940s, archaeologists began to look to artifact types in order to understand belief and behavioral systems also. The so-called “Typological Debate” arose at this time because archaeologists were uncertain if previously established typologies could be adapted to new purposes, such as answering questions about social life (Adams and Adams 1991: 310–311).

The Typological Debate raged between major archaeological figures of the 1930s, 1940s, and 1950s. One of the most critical questions of this debate was whether typologies were a priori or if they were arbitrary constructs created by archaeologists to address specific contexts encountered in the archaeological record (Wylie 2002b). Spaulding, in particular, argued that typologies were inherent in the archaeological material and could be subjected to rigorous statistical analyses (Spaulding 1953). One of the most persistent critics of conventional typologies was Lewis Binford, who did not agree with such statements (e.g. Binford 1972: 195-207, 252-294). Binford’s work can be characterized as strongly anti-metaphysical and scientifically oriented. Binford’s “New Archaeology,” as espoused in An Archaeological Perspective (1972), exposes an archaeological positivist who characterized his view of archaeology as a struggle against “traditionalists” such as Robert Braidwood, James Griffin, and (notably) Albert Spaulding.

Despite this phase of archaeological anxiety about typologies, they remain a cornerstone of archaeological practice today. Most current archaeologists understand the traditional typologies to be instruments for measurement and for testing hypothesized relationships. Typologies are designed to measure what we believe are the relevant set of relationships between variables or attributes, helping archaeologists to test specific hypotheses. Typologies of this kind arise from procedural steps of logical thinking and are designed for specific purposes. In this sense, typologies are not used to define types by induction only, but instead represent one of the most important analytical steps we traverse when we evaluate the quality of our analytical process and theoretical outcomes.

Evaluation is vital for determining how well our theories account for our data, and they are also critical to theory building. Ideally, we should formulate our assertions, deduce new hypotheses, and construct new typologies to measure the
Although there are clear benefits to typological analysis, the traditional approach may not always be the most effective. Typological analysis, for instance, relies heavily on the assumption that artifact forms change in a specific, linear manner, allowing archaeologists to establish a chronological sequence. However, this approach can be limiting, as it may not account for the complexity of cultural change or the influence of external factors on artifact development.

Typological analysis is based on the idea that artifacts change in a predictable, linear fashion, allowing archaeologists to establish a chronological sequence. However, this approach can be limiting, as it may not account for the complexity of cultural change or the influence of external factors on artifact development.

Archaeologists have long used typological analysis in their studies of ancient cultures. The approach has been particularly useful in identifying changes in technology and social organization over time. Typological analysis has also been used to study the distribution of artifacts across a region, allowing archaeologists to identify areas of cultural interaction and contact.

However, the use of typological analysis has been criticized for its reliance on the assumption that artifact forms change in a specific, linear manner. This assumption can be limiting, as it may not account for the complexity of cultural change or the influence of external factors on artifact development. For example, the use of typological analysis in the study of Roman ceramics has been criticized for its reliance on the assumption that forms change in a specific, linear manner. This assumption can be limiting, as it may not account for the complexity of cultural change or the influence of external factors on artifact development.

Second, providing a comprehensive typological analysis of the El-Borka pottery from the 1970s and 1980s, we find that there are two ways of data handling. The first approach is based on the use of typological analysis, which is a useful tool for identifying patterns in the data. However, this approach can be limited in its ability to account for the complexity of cultural change or the influence of external factors on artifact development.

The second approach is based on the use of a more sophisticated analytical technique, such as multivariate analysis. This approach allows archaeologists to identify patterns in the data that may not be apparent through the use of typological analysis alone. However, this approach can be complex and requires a high level of statistical knowledge.

In conclusion, typological analysis has been a useful tool for archaeologists in the study of ancient cultures. However, it is important to remember that this approach has limitations and should be used in conjunction with other analytical techniques to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the past.
Egypt and frequently employ Karian evidence in order to fill in knowledge gaps. Unfortunately, there are two major problems with this approach, which are relevant to the generalities surrounding typological debates: (1) the way in which scholars use the data is often unexamined; and (2) the data itself is less secure than many scholars may realize. Despite these concerns, archaeologists today must rigorously demonstrate differences between their discoveries and Karian for differences to be believed.

Karian within academic discourse

Typologies make it possible to build up "conjectures" because they are a repository of interpretive insight (at their best), and the basis for producing an entire domain of second-order data, such as facts about the relationships between types of material and their distribution, comparisons, and patterning in the archaeological record (see Taylor 1983 [1948], on conjunctive archaeology). Unfortunately, the initial description and systematization phase of data can itself be problematic. This initial phase can be partial, impressionistic, heavily biased and even empirically false. Problems with an initial description can have palpable downstream effects on archaeological thought.

The Romano-Egyptian town site, Karanis, serves as an excellent illustration of the ways in which ill-conceived and empirically inadequate typologies can undermine future work. Karanis appears in academic literature as the Romano-Egyptian domestic type site, both implicitly and explicitly. These issues relating to the dominance of Karanis are separate but linked and dependent upon the way in which scholars employ Karanis in their arguments.

First, some authors implicitly exploit Karanis as a type site. This implicit use of Karanis is particularly common among scholars making an argument that primarily employs papyrological and historical evidence rather than material evidence. In this respect, Karanis serves as an illustrative device, rather than an examined example or case study. Images, plans and brief references to the site often accompany arguments asymptotic to the materiality of the site itself.

This implicit use of Karanis provides visual focus because it involves the redundant use of visual templates as visual displays (see Gero 2007: 321–322). Visual attention returns to Karanis in an almost subconscious manner that reduces the ambiguity of outlying or competing interpretations and images. Specific images from Karanis are often employed as illustrative devices (e.g. Malouta 2012: 295). For example, the same photograph of a passageway in front of Karanis house C123 was employed in the two most significant summative accounts of Roman Egypt (Bagnall 1993: cover photo; Bowman 1986: Figure 92). Likewise, the same image of a courtyard with milling equipment from House C113 is reproduced in two significant Roman Egypt volumes (Bowman 1986: Figure 60; Rowlandson 1998: Figure 23B). Wilfong recently published a small selection of the numerous unpublished images of Karanis and argues that these images give us a more complex and somewhat different perspective on Karanis than the common assumptions, which are based on the frequently published corpus of images (Wilfong 2012). Wilfong's publication underscores the need to re-examine extant images of these early excavations in order to create fresh insights into Karanis.

Second, authors employ Karanis explicitly as a typological example. These studies often use Karanis as "filler" when desirable archaeological evidence is lacking. This scenario is particularly common among archaeologists and scholars discussing archaeological data. The case of Hermopolis Magna, which was destroyed by digging of various types, serves as a good example of this practice:

No private house of the Roman period has been recorded archaeologically at Hermopolis Magna, although hundreds must have been cleared away by sebakh diggers, papyros hunters and excavators. We must imagine them to be like those excavated at Karanis, several with many stories, the lower rooms often falling out of use with rising road level. (Bailey 2012: 195)

The suggestion that Hermopolis Magna once bore similarities to Karanis was not based upon material evidence, but upon the dominance of Karanis as a domestic type site. Statements such as the above entrench Hermopolis Magna in arguments that the house type forms were pervasive across Roman Egypt. Gero would consider this second issue with the use of Karanis to be stretching the data, that is, finding the general in the specific, or making sweeping claims and conclusions on the basis of particular cases and sites (Gero 2007: 321). This stretching of data entails that scholars "demonstrate" a wide pattern of a particular typology without proper data scaffolding to support such a demonstration.

These two approaches to Karanis domestic architecture illustrate the ways in which the site has become enmeshed within current Romano-Egyptian domestic understandings. As a result of Karanis exemplifying the "norm," we are left with a long history of academic research that replicates problems with the site (cf. Allison 1999). Indeed, the site itself is not without problems of its own, which makes it unstable ground upon which to erect arguments.

Karanis background

The University of Michigan excavated two of the most famous Fayum sites in the early twentieth century: Karanis (Kom Aushim) (1924–1934) and Soknopaiou Nesos (Dimê) (1931–1932). Karanis has become the type site of Romano-Egyptian domestic architecture, due to its high degree of preservation and the care with which it was excavated compared to previous work on Romano-Egyptian houses. Since the 1930s, Karanis has appeared in numerous publications as a representative Romano-Egyptian settlement. By contrast, Soknopaiou Nesos is less familiar to the Romano-Egyptian community of scholars. Additional houses from other Romano-Egyptian sites are virtually unknown to many scholars of Roman Egypt.

Generally, it seems that buildings at Karanis were aligned into blocks of habitation (see Figure 6.1; see also Husselman 1979: 10, Maps 4–5). Although hundreds
of buildings were excavated, only a few were described and drawn. These houses were made predominately of mud brick with only small amounts of wood used (Husselman 1979: 34). Flat roofs were common, except in cellars, which were vaulted. Most houses were elongated and had multiple stories, with cooking taking place in courtyards that were either private or shared. Often, the walls were plastered and covered with a thin lime wash. A black wash was most common, with white accents painted horizontally across the mud brick courses. Decorations were minimal and were usually found in niches; they often represented religious scenes, and were typically painted in maroon and black (Husselman 1979: 35-36, plates 18, 19a, 21b, 22a, 24a, 24b, 25, 102a).

The University of Michigan also excavated houses at Soknopaiou Nesos, but the results of this mission were not fully published. Only the coins, papyri, and specific architectural elements received attention in the single, slim, published excavation report (Boak et al. 1935). The houses appear to have been built contiguous, and each had a courtyard to support domestic cooking needs. These structures were built directly onto bedrock. The largest house excavated had an internal courtyard (aithron). All of the structures had a central pillared stairway leading to the upper floor(s), and often also to cellars. Poor-quality wall paintings were found in some of the structures (Boak et al. 1935: 9–10, Figures 4, 6, 7).

There are three major caveats that must be kept in mind when employing Karanis houses as comparanda. First, one of the primary reasons why the University of Michigan archaeologists began excavations at Soknopaiou Nesos is that they were confused by the stratigraphy at Karanis (Boak et al. 1935: v). As a result, the Michigan archaeologists excavated more carefully at Soknopaiou Nesos than they had in the eight years prior at Karanis. They hoped to improve their understanding of the geology and stratigraphy in the Fayum through more careful excavations at Soknopaiou Nesos. The Michigan team only returned to Karanis for two seasons after refining their methodologies at Soknopaiou Nesos. Sadly, stratigraphic issues at Karanis were never resolved, and to this day it is uncertain how the phasing of the site should be understood (Wifong 2012: 228).

Second, the Karanis houses have never been published fully. General reports on the stratigraphy, topography, and architecture were published in the 1930s, but these lacked full analyses of each structure and did not attempt to interpret the findings (cf. Boak and Peterson 1931; Boak 1933). A subsequent report attempted to fill in the gaps left by these prior publications (Husselman 1979) but it did not provide contextual explorations of the material, and the accompanying maps and illustrations are difficult to connect to particular structures and occupational phases.

Third, the publications that do exist for Karanis houses analyzed material categories rather than contexts (e.g. individual houses). Many of the objects from the excavations went to the Kelsey Museum at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor. Over the years, specialist publications on exhibitions and particular categories of material have appeared (e.g. Gazda and Hessenbruch 1978; Thomas 2001; Haavardt and Peterson 1964; Harden 1936; Higashi 1990; Husselman 1952, 1953, 1971; Johnson 1981; Shier 1978; Yeivin 1934; Youtie and Pearl 1939, 1944). Unfortunately, we still do not have a full publication on the architectural layout of most of the Karanis houses. Moreover, only the largest and best-preserved houses were singled out for publication (see Husselman 1979: 67–73). This practice makes it difficult to discern the range of house types once present at Karanis and obscures the most common houses occupied by typical households at Karanis.

Twenty years ago, Peter van Minnen, a papyrologist, urged archaeologists to explore Karanis domestic material by context rather than by material category (van Minnen 1994). Unfortunately, this type of analysis has not yet been accomplished for more than a tiny portion of this site. To date, it is impossible to connect artifacts

to the houses from which they came, except by consultation of the excavation records held in the Kelsey Museum. It is difficult to determine which types of objects, texts, and architectural features co-occurred with one another and what the distribution of house types, objects, and texts looked like across the site.  

This brief overview of the methodological, phasing, classification, and interpretation issues for Karanis indicates that the site is an unstable foundation upon which to erect arguments about domestic life in Roman Egypt. Although the data from Karanis are still useful, caution is essential when employing it as a type site for comparison with new, modern excavations.

The tyranny of typologies for excavators

Returning to excavations of the present era, the problem of Karanis persists. When we encountered House B2 at Trimitris (Roman Amheida) (see Map 6.1 and Figures 6.2 and 6.3), it was clear that the preserved remains did not correspond to the published house types from Karanis. Even so, the dominance of the Karanis house type entails a heavy burden of demonstration to allow for a different house form.

In order to situate our excavations at B2, it is worthwhile reviewing a bit about the broader site context (for a recent overview of Trimitris, see Boozer 2013). Trimitris is generally very well preserved, with mud brick walls clearly visible for one to two stories above the site surface. Early excavations at House B1 suggested great depths of preservation, up to approximately 4 meters above floor level (see Boozer 2010). House B2 was preserved to only 1.82 meters above floor level, in contrast to House B1. Within the world of Egyptology and Trimitris itself, the preserved depth of House B2 suggested that it was preserved poorly.

Despite the deflation of the House B2 walls, we recovered a wealth of artifacts and ecofacts, including soft organics, which are preserved poorly in the location of House B1. This depositional evidence suggested to me that the taphonomy of the B2 structure could be attributed to wind erosion as well as other wear against the mud brick (e.g. the rough edges of the many pot sherds in the area). The preserved anthropogenic layers appeared to be little damaged by wetness and disturbance by rodents or illicit digging. Preservation cannot be based upon depth alone and it appeared that B2 might be better preserved than its depth suggested.

Our excavations revealed the clear plan of a house that generally fit a group of houses from nearby Kellis: B2 had barrel vaults over its small rooms and a bread oven; it lacked any evidence of roofing material over its large central room. Given that bread ovens are invariably placed in open areas (Depraetere 2002), and that there was no evidence of any type of roof over room 7, it seemed logical to interpret this room as an atrium (an internal courtyard). It should be noted that the domestic comparanda from Kellis were excavated to a modern standard and are well published in preliminary reports (e.g. Hope 2005, 2007; Hope and Kaper 1992; Hope et al. 1993). Even so, the known houses from Kellis overshadowed and negated the Kellis comparanda for some individuals on our excavation team.

Debates about a proposed reconstruction for B2 ensued both on site and in subsequent presentations of the material. Some of the excavation participants wanted to revise interpretations of the localized taphonomy, although the new arguments for water seepage did not correspond to wet meter readings or the preservation of other soft organics in B2. Other data, such as Depraetere’s study of bread ovens across Egypt (Depraetere 2002), were discounted because they suggested that B2 might be a house type different from the well-known examples at Kellis. The dominance of Karanis led to the suggestion from some individuals that we discount the depositional, taphonomic, and localized comparanda in published accounts of the site. Instead, it was argued that we should publish B2 as a multi-story, fully rooted structure following the Karanis model.
Discussion

Having explored the theoretical and practical concerns involved in the use of typologies, as well as the particular example of Karanis and how this use impacts active excavation today, we can tease out several different ways in which ill-conceived and empirically inadequate typologies can undermine future work. The second goal of this discussion is to explore how we might try to retain typologies while recognizing uncertainties and ambiguities in the archaeological record.

First, the Karanis/Trimithis case study demonstrates the ways in which the initial phase of systematization can itself be problematic. The initial phase of research on Roman-Egyptian houses at Karanis was partial and impressionistic, which meant that it was simply empirically false. These early impressions of houses had palpable downstream effects because subsequent researchers have employed the Karanis domestic archive without significant consideration to its time and method of creation. The negative impact upon archaeological reasoning can be summed up as follows:

1 Negating the value of archaeological research: the interpretation of archaeological sites ought to be strongly grounded in the archaeological data itself. If we revise our archaeological data based upon typologies alone, what is the purpose of further archaeological excavations? This approach will simply reproduce what has already been excavated and published in the past.

2 Undermining recent typologies: attempts to undermine recent typologies in favor of entrenched concepts impede the development of archaeology as a discipline. In the Karanis/Trimithis example, Depraetere’s recent study of bread ovens from Roman Egypt generated typologies based upon contemporary, well-grounded, and internally coherent archaeological research. It was a struggle to ensure that Depraetere’s research be heeded by archaeologists devoted to old typologies.

3 Cleaning the data: publishing revised archaeological data without showing the relevant analytical scaffolding has dangerous implications for future research. Data cleaning entrenches erroneous typologies deeper within the discipline. Moreover, it is a falsification of data, disguised within what has become acceptable archaeological publication practice.

The Karanis/Trimithis case study has illuminated three broad issues associated with typological tyranny and it is likely that additional extrapolations can be gleaned from further exploration upon this topic.

Second, how might we retain typologies within archaeological research while preserving ambiguities within the archaeological record? The feminist practice of archaeology has advocated for an archaeology that interrogates the past and preserves ambiguity within archaeological evidence instead of advancing homogenized interpretations of the past (Conkey and Gero 1991; Gero 1993; Kus 2006; Meskell 2000; Wylie 2006). This agenda has become mainstream in much archaeological thought, although the feminist roots are still an integral component of the drive to maintain ambiguity rather than smooth it over. It is only by openly acknowledging the ambiguity inherent in messy data sets that we can build a richer understanding of the past.

What would an archaeology that honors ambiguity look like? An archaeology less restricted by typologies would include a range of interpretations that could follow from the “same” data. Data could also be made accessible to other scholars by providing the database out of which summative monographs were generated. This fluidity would promote more original interpretation rather than privileging the single view of the author or archaeological director. Enabling and even promoting ambiguity, heterogeneity, and complexity in archaeological interpretations has real advantages for understanding the past and it also enables us to work more proactively with typologies.

My own decision for the House B2 publication was to compare House B2 to a wider range of Roman-Egyptian houses than just Karanis (see Boozer forthcoming). I suggested that archaeologists should expect that a spectrum of house options once existed and try to report variability among finds more clearly. I also provided full depositional, taphonomic, and typological evidence for my proposed reconstruction (Figure 6.3). The project database will be fully available to the public.

FIGURE 6.3 House B2, reconstruction, Trimithis (Roman period Amheida). (Graphic: N. Warner; copyright: author.)
so that researchers can explore the data on their own terms and come to their own conclusions about the reconstruction (www.anheida.org). It should be noted that this procedure was followed successfully for a volume published on the ostraca from Trinithis (Bagnall and Ruffini 2012). I hope that this open-access policy will encourage additional interpretations of House B2, which would be most welcome to myself and other scholars of Roman–Egyptian domestic contexts. Moreover, it would be desirable to increase open-access data in archaeology more broadly to enable new and altogether different interpretations of sites among scholars and the public alike.

Ultimately, it is neither practical nor desirable to dispense with typologies. Despite their indispensability, typologies must be employed with caution so that archaeologists can organize and communicate their findings. Exploring a spectrum of options and being open to new discoveries is essential for archaeological understanding to move forward. We also must be open to revising our past interpretations and what we think we know about sites. If archaeological data does not fit easily into "known" typologies, it is perhaps best to try something new. As the opening Adams and Adams quote states, "...logical typologies are not always useful, and useful typologies are not always logical" (Adams and Adams 1991: f).

Notes
1 On the development of nineteenth-century Scandinavian typological analysis and archaeology more broadly, see Gershun 2008 [1987].
2 For a comprehensive review and analysis of the Typological Debate, see Dunell 1986.
3 This is also noteworthy that Bailey cites Huysman (1979), a monograph, and provides no guiding page numbers (Bailey 2012).
4 Bailey's overview of this excavation as well as other archaeological research at Soknopaios Nesis, see Drovetti (1998: 39–71).
5 Drovetti summarizes the work at Karanis, as well as some of the issues with the University of Michigan methodologies and publication practices (Drovetti 1998).
6 Still, many scholars consider the data from Karanis to be very clear (e.g. Bowman 1985: 148).

References
The tyranny of typologies: Romano-Egyptian domestic archaeology


