

## ALEXANDRIA

### 95. Islamic funerary stela

Alexandria. Kom el-Dikka

12th century AD

H. 40 cm, W. 57 cm, gray-white marble

Kom el-Dikka, storeroom, Inv. No. 925

Upper fragment of a funerary stela ending in a pointed arch, found in one of the graves of the so-called Upper Necropolis, which extends over the area of the Late Antique theater. Only the first five verses of the epitaph have been preserved. The inscription in high relief was carved in elegant rounded Kufic script. Some of the vertical elements of the letters were additionally decorated with floral elements. The date has not been preserved; it was found most likely in the bottom part of the epitaph. Archaeological and paleographic criteria date the stela to the 12th century AD. The inscription contains a religious *basma* formula typical of funerary stelae and a fragment of the Quranic *Sura III*, 182. Stelae with similar epigraphic formulas are frequent finds accompanying Islamic-era tombs in a vast cemetery extending in the 8th-12th century virtually all over the Kom el-Dikka excavation area. This cemetery lying within the city walls, right next to the Mosque of Nabi Daniel, was one of the largest graveyards of medieval Alexandria.

G.M.

W. Kubiak, Inscriptions arabes de Kôm El Dick. II partie, *BSAA* 43 (1975), pp.133-142

W. Kubiak, Stèles funéraires arabes de Kom el-Dick, *BSAA* 42 (1967), pp. 17-26

L. Dąbrowski, Two Arab necropolises discovered at Kom el-Dikka in Alexandria, *EtTrav* I (1966), pp. 171-180

