



BULLETIN DE L'INSTITUT FRANÇAIS D'ARCHÉOLOGIE ORIENTALE

en ligne en ligne en ligne en ligne en ligne en ligne en ligne en ligne en ligne en ligne en ligne

BIFAO 14 (1918), p. 57-64

Dr Georgy P. G. Sobhy

Studies in coptic lexicography.

Conditions d'utilisation

L'utilisation du contenu de ce site est limitée à un usage personnel et non commercial. Toute autre utilisation du site et de son contenu est soumise à une autorisation préalable de l'éditeur (contact AT ifao.egnet.net). Le copyright est conservé par l'éditeur (Ifao).

Conditions of Use

You may use content in this website only for your personal, noncommercial use. Any further use of this website and its content is forbidden, unless you have obtained prior permission from the publisher (contact AT ifao.egnet.net). The copyright is retained by the publisher (Ifao).

Dernières publications

9782724711448	<i>Athribis XI</i>	Marcus Müller (éd.)
9782724711615	<i>Le temple de Dendara X. Les chapelles osiriennes</i>	Sylvie Cauville, Oussama Bassiouni, Matjaž Kačun, Bernard Lenthéric
9782724711707	????? ?????????? ?????????? ???? ?? ?????????	Omar Jamal Mohamed Ali, Ali al-Sayyid Abdelatif
9782724711462	<i>La tombe et le Sab?l oubliés</i>	Georges Castel, Maha Meebed-Castel, Hamza Abdelaziz Badr
9782724710588	<i>Les inscriptions rupestres du Ouadi Hammamat I</i>	Vincent Morel
9782724711523	<i>Bulletin de liaison de la céramique égyptienne 34</i>	Sylvie Marchand (éd.)
9782724711400	<i>Islam and Fraternity: Impact and Prospects of the Abu Dhabi Declaration</i>	Emmanuel Pisani (éd.), Michel Younès (éd.), Alessandro Ferrari (éd.)
9782724710922	<i>Athribis X</i>	Sandra Lippert

STUDIES IN COPTIC LEXICOGRAPHY

BY

D^r GEO. P. G. SOBHY.

If authors who edit and translate Coptic manuscripts paid a little more attention to details in the two following points, their works would be much more scientific, more trustworthy and would help students to understand much better the sense of any Coptic composition. The expression of thoughts in Coptic and by Coptic writers is something different to any other language that we know of.

The first point is about the division of words in printing. Amelineau had already discussed this question in a very ample manner in the *Journal Asiatique*, although his methods and his suggestions could not be final or acceptable in all their bearings.

The second point is that in translating difficult words it would be advisable to give as many references as possible, with regards the uses of that particular word, preferably from the Scriptures, in the same manner as von Lemm followed in his *Kleine koptische Studien*.

In this paper I shall give a few notes about a very interesting manuscript edited and translated by Dr. Budge in his volume entitled *Coptic Apocrypha in the Dialect of Upper Egypt*. This manuscript is numbered British Museum, Oriental n° 7024 and is entitled the *Instructions of Apa Pachomios the Archimandrite*.

Title p. 145. For the name Pachome, Ⲫⲓⲛⲓⲛⲓⲛⲓⲛⲓⲛⲓ, ⲡⲁϥⲟⲙ, ⲡⲁϫⲟⲙ, ⲡⲁⲗⲟⲙ, I cannot add anything to what Spiegelberg wrote in his *Aegyptische und griechische Eigennamen*, except that it is rare to find it under the form written in the MS., which is ⲡⲁⲗⲟⲙⲓⲟ. I believe that this latter form probably corresponds to Ⲫⲓⲛⲓⲛⲓⲛⲓⲛⲓⲛⲓⲛⲓ, where the final ⲟ in the Coptic form represents the ⲛⲓ in the Egyptian one, unless it be an error for ⲡⲁⲗⲟⲙⲓⲟ(ϥ),

Bulletin, t. XIV.

8

λΗ, Fol. 19 b. ΝΕ210ΟΥΕ ΓΑΡ Μ̄ΠΝΟΥΤΕ ΠΕ ΠΕΘΒΒΙΟΝ̄2ΗΤ Μ̄Ν ΟΥΜ̄ΝΤ-
 Ρ̄ΜΡΑΩ «for the ways of God are with him that is lowly of heart and with
 the humble man». This ought to be more literally : «the ways of God are
 humbleness of heart and meekness»; ΠΕ ought to be ΝΕ or at least better be
 so. I do not deny here, that the author's translation is clearer, but literal
 translation is always more preferable.

λΘ, Fol. 20 a: I think ΓΑΒ2ΗΤ means «weakness of heart» or «cowar-
 dice». The original form of the word ΓΑΒ Boh. x.ωβ is ⲩ]Ⲁ, ⲩ]ⲩ].
 «Sloth» does not give the exact meaning. ΠΕ Π̄ΝΑ Μ̄ Π̄ΣΟΛ Μ̄Ν ΠΑ ΤΜ̄ΝΤ-
 ΣΑΝΚΟΤ̄Ā «the spirit of lying, and the works and the words which are *not*
 deceitful». Here is a glaring example of the effect of bad division of the
 words in printing. The author has taken the word ΠΑ to go with ΤΜ̄ΝΤ....
 and made up the negative construction ΠΑΤΜ̄ΝΤ, and notwithstanding the
 absurdity of the sense he went on translating «and the works and the words
 which are *not* deceitful», which is quite in contradiction to the spirit of the
 narrative. The correct translation is «the spirit of lying and *that* (ΠΑ) of cun-
 ning».

ΠΕ Π̄ΝΑ Μ̄ ΤΜ̄ΝΤ ΜΑΙ ΣΟΜ̄ΝΤ Μ̄Ν ΠΑ ΤΜ̄ΝΤΕΦΩΩΤ Μ̄Ν ΠΑ ΤΜ̄ΝΤΡΕΦ-
 ΩΡΚ Ν̄ΝΟΥΧ Μ̄Ν ΠΑΤ̄ΠΟΡΝΙΑ Μ̄Ν ΤΜ̄ΝΤΕΙΡ̄ΒΟΟΝΕ ΦΑΥΜΟΟΦΕ, etc.
 «the spirit of the love of money, and *not* trafficking, and *not* swearing false
 oaths, and works which are *not* evil and envy walk together», etc.;

ΠΕ Π̄ΝΑ Μ̄ ΤΚΕΝΟΔΟΞΙΑ Μ̄Ν ΠΑ ΤΜ̄ΝΤΛΑΒΟΙΑ2Τ ΦΑΥ, etc. «the spirit
 of vanity and non-greediness», etc.

On the absurdity of the sense in the above two sentences there is no need
 to dilate, but it is sufficient to point out that, again here, it is the bad divi-
 sion of words that is the cause of this confusion. If, instead of printing Μ̄Ν
 ΠΑΤΜ̄ΝΤΕΦΩΩΤ and ΠΑΤΜ̄ΝΤΡΕΦΩΡΚ Ν̄ΝΟΥΧ, etc. for the others, they
 were arranged thus Μ̄Ν ΠΑ ΤΜ̄ΝΤΕΦΩΩΤ, etc., the right sense would be
 quite easy to find and would run thus :

«The spirit of the love of money and *that* of trafficking and *that* of swear-
 ing of false oaths and *that* of wickedness and of doing evil walk together»,
 etc., and «the spirit of vanity and *that* of gluttony walk together». The
 word ΛΑΒΟΙΑ2Τ must be ΛΑΒΜΑ2Τ.

ⲙⲡ, Fol. 24 b. . . . ⲈϢϢⲙⲎ ⲕⲣⲟϥ Ⲉⲣⲟⲕ «and they will attribute craft to thee» should be «prepare deceit for thee».

ⲙⲐ, Fol. 25 a. ⲧⲁⲗⲓⲃⲈϢ ⲎⲎⲈⲧⲐⲐⲐⲕⲈ «the shadows of those who are martyred». The word ⲧⲐⲐⲐⲕⲈ means «to remit, to pay his debt»; see CLAUDIUS LABIV, *Dictionary*, ⲐϢⲟⲛ ⲈⲈⲈⲧⲐⲃ ⲎⲐⲐⲐⲟϥ ⲎⲧⲐⲟϥⲁⲎⲐⲙⲓⲁ ⲎⲈⲙ Ⲏⲟϥ ⲎⲈⲧⲁⲟϥ (Ps. LXVIII, 5).

Ⲏⲁ, Fol. 27 b. ⲗϢⲱ Ⲏ ⲁⲕⲁⲕⲓⲣⲈⲐⲐ ⲎⲐⲈ ⲎⲎⲈⲓ ⲉⲣⲟⲟⲙⲎⲈ. — ⲎⲎⲈⲓ might be a mistake for ⲎⲎⲈ (the doves). ⲎⲈⲎⲈⲎⲈⲐ does not mean «hear curses» but «persecute».

ⲎⲈ ⲎⲐⲧ ⲎⲈⲱⲧⲎ means «to run after you».

ⲎⲈ, Fol. 28 b. ⲗⲐⲱⲧ ⲎⲈⲗ ⲎⲈⲐⲐⲟϥ ⲎⲧⲙⲎⲧⲎⲐⲟϥⲧⲈ «she ran *after* the glory of divinity» and not «she fled *from* the glory which was divine», simply because she (Eve) wanted to be become divine as the devil told her. ⲎⲐⲧ ⲎⲈⲗ means «to run after, to seek».

Ⲉⲗ, Fol. 31 a. ⲕⲁⲕⲕⲈ means «whisper in ear, persuade», and in vulgar Arabic it is often said *كاد، في*.

Ⲉⲃ, Fol. 31 b. The word *Bathsheba* does not figure in the Coptic text.

Ⲉⲗ, Fol. 32 b. ⲙⲎⲣ ⲧⲣⲈϢⲧⲐⲐⲈⲓⲧⲈ Ⲉⲣⲟⲕ ⲕⲈ Ⲉ Ⲏⲙⲗ ⲙⲎⲕⲐⲐⲐⲙⲐⲐ ⲙⲎⲐⲟϥⲃ ⲎⲧⲁⲎⲈ ⲈⲎⲁⲗⲈⲕⲈ ⲕⲱ ⲈⲧⲃⲈ ⲎⲟϥⲁⲎⲎⲎⲎⲟϥ «do not cause men to lament for thee. In the place of the world, because of men's deeds (or works) they shave the head instead of the gold of the head».

I understand it thus : «Do not cause men to lament for thee, for instead of the golden headed world : they shall shave their heads for their works».

ⲎⲐⲧ ⲎⲧⲐϥ ⲎⲈⲗ ⲧⲙⲎⲧⲕⲁⲣⲉⲎⲧ ⲎⲎⲈⲧⲐⲟϥⲗⲗⲃ «he fleeth before the patient endurance of the saints». ⲎⲧⲐϥ here is not the pronoun of the 3rd person «he»; it is the conjunction «but, therefore». It is rather astonishing how does the author change the meaning of the expression ⲎⲐⲧ ⲎⲈⲗ in different places. Sometimes he translates it «run after»; sometimes «run before, flee before, run away», which is exactly the reverse. ⲎⲐⲧ ⲎⲈⲗ means «run after» or «seek», but ⲎⲐⲧ ⲈⲃⲐⲗ means «run away», just as in English «run before» and «run after» have opposite senses. The meaning of the above sentence is «seek therefore for the endurance of the saints».

Ⲛⲉ, Fol. 33 *a*. ⲧⲀⲘⲀⲒⲒⲒ ⲛ̄ⲛ̄ⲒⲒⲒⲒⲒⲒⲒⲒⲒⲒ means here «the necessity of punishments», not «the tribulations and punishments».

ⲒⲒⲒⲒⲒⲒ means here «judgment».

Ⲛⲉ, Fol. 33 *b*. ⲧⲒⲒ ⲒⲀⲘⲀⲒⲒⲒ ⲛⲉⲓⲒⲒⲒⲒⲒ ⲧⲒⲒⲛ̄ⲛ̄ⲧ ⲉⲣⲒⲒⲒ «bestir thyself until these sufferings depart from thee». This ought to be : «bestir thyself, etc., encounter thee» (see, for ⲧⲒⲒⲛ̄ⲛ̄ⲧ, PEYRON, *Lexicon*, and CL. LABIB, *Dictionary*, etc.).

Ⲓ, Fol. 35 *b*. Ⲓⲓ Ⲓⲓ ⲒⲒⲉⲓⲒⲒ. Could ⲒⲒⲉⲓⲒⲒ be ⲒⲒⲒⲒⲒ «steel» with the elimination of Ⲓⲓ which is certainly redundant?

ⲒⲀ, Fol. 36 *a*. ⲘⲒⲒⲒⲒⲒⲒⲒ ⲒⲒⲒ ⲒⲒⲒⲒ ⲛ̄ⲒⲒⲒⲒⲒⲒ «attach not thyself closely to any man» : ⲒⲒⲒⲒⲒ ⲒⲒⲒ meaning «attach closely» does not give any sense here particularly when the context is taken into consideration. It really means «quarrel».

ⲒⲒⲒⲒⲒⲒ Ⲓⲉ ⲧⲉⲛⲒⲒⲒ Ⲓⲉ ⲒⲒⲒ ⲒⲉⲧⲒⲒ ⲛ̄ⲛⲒⲒⲒ ⲉⲧⲒⲒⲒⲒⲒⲒ ⲒⲒⲒⲒⲒⲒ ⲧⲉ ⲉⲧⲒⲉ ⲒⲒⲒⲒⲒⲒ ⲒⲒⲒⲒⲒⲒ Ⲓⲉⲣⲉ ⲒⲉⲣⲒ ⲒⲒⲒⲒⲒ «now thou knowest that there is no state of peace greater than that every man love his brother». The literal translation would be as follows : «Now thou knowest that there is nothing greater than peace, so that every one should love his brother».

ⲒⲒ, Fol. 38 *a*. ⲒⲒⲒⲒⲒⲒⲒⲒ means something like «cancer» (see PEYRON, *Lexicon*, and CL. LABIB, *Dictionary*, p. 374).

ⲒⲒ, ⲘⲒⲒⲒⲒ ⲘⲒⲒⲒⲒⲒⲒ ⲒⲉⲒⲒⲒⲉ ⲧⲒⲒⲒⲒⲒⲒ ⲒⲒⲒⲒⲒⲒ ⲒⲒⲒⲒⲒⲒⲒⲒ «let us therefore afflict ourselves for sorrow bringeth low impurity». ⲒⲒⲒⲒⲒⲒ means «punish, chastise». «For sorrow chastiseth impurity».

ⲒⲒ, Fol. 39 *b*. ⲉⲧⲒⲒⲒⲒⲒⲒⲒ must be changed to ⲉⲧⲒⲒⲒⲒⲒⲒⲒ.

ⲒⲒ, Fol. 42 *a*. ⲒⲒⲒⲒⲒⲒ = corn-stalk??

ⲒⲒ, Fol. 42 *b*, p. 169. ⲒⲒⲒⲒⲒⲒ ⲒⲉⲧⲒⲒⲒⲒⲒⲒⲒ «soberness is beneficial»; ⲒⲒⲒⲒⲒⲒⲒ does mean sometimes «contenance, mortification» (see CL. LABIB, *Dictionary*, under ⲒⲒⲒⲒⲒ).

ⲒⲒ, Fol. 43 *a*. ⲒⲒⲒⲒⲒⲒⲒ ⲛ̄ⲒⲒⲒ ⲧⲒⲒⲒⲒⲒⲒⲒ ⲒⲒⲒⲒⲒⲒⲒⲒⲒⲒⲒⲒ «fornication reigneth through the drinking of the body». What does the translator mean

by «the drinking of the body»? I should translate πceī by «satisfaction, gratification».

πz, Fol. 44 a. In the quotation from Rev. II, 17, the Coptic version reads πμanna εθηπ «the manna which is hidden»; whereas Dr. Budge copies the R. V. «the manna which is his». It is most important to give the literal translation of the Coptic version wherever we may find them.

P. 377. εωχε ανερητ μ̄n π̄noyτε n̄oyμ̄n̄t̄monoxoc z̄n oyagaph «since we are vowed unto God (we must lead) the life of the monk in love». This again is a faulty translation. I should put it thus : «Since we have taken a vow — with God — of monasticism in love.

πh, Fol. 44 b. εωχε κουωω εχπō νακ n̄ zenxrhma naī etō mmoole n̄toīme m̄pkwz̄t̄ z̄n oyμ̄n̄t̄ maītō n̄zoγo h̄ z̄n oyμ̄n̄t̄εφωωt̄ h̄ z̄n oyxīn̄coñc̄ h̄ z̄n oyειp̄ βοone h̄ z̄n oyzωb̄ n̄ci.x̄ εqoω̄ em̄k̄ c̄p̄c̄ εφ̄m̄φē m̄πnoyτε « If thou wishest to gain for thyself these things (or possessions) which are transient, and can be destroyed by fire, by great avariciousness or by trafficking, or by violence, or by evil design, or by excessive manual labour, thou art not free to serve God», etc. Dr. Budge thinks that the text may be corrupt, but he does not give any suggestion as to what the correct reading might be. I think this translation is quite passable.

πθ, Fol. 45 a. After οyπpocγλητοc̄ ε̄τρ̄q̄-θ̄oεικ̄ ναq̄ z̄ī z̄bc̄ω̄ does not figure in the English translation and must be rendered thus : «He will give him bread and clothing».

ε̄τβε̄ τ̄m̄n̄t̄c̄ab̄z̄ht̄ x̄ē on̄ ε̄toȳ-†̄ n̄m̄man̄ ε̄t̄b̄h̄ht̄c̄ x̄ē c̄woȳz̄ ε̄-zoȳn̄ ε̄t̄βε̄ oȳnam̄ noȳxp̄iā «concerning moreover the slothfulness by means of which fighting is carried on against us (and) concerning the right hand of need». What does this mean? I should translate it like this : «As for cowardice, for which they always oppose us, that we gather in for the use of whom?».

oȳnam̄ therefore must be oȳ nim̄ noȳxp̄iā.

q̄, Fol. 45 b. πoȳoειn̄ εθηπ̄ n̄t̄ē n̄ē π̄nā. The word εθηπ̄ «hidden» is not translated.

τ̄m̄n̄t̄φ̄oει.x̄ does not mean «the skill in contending» but simply «courage».

ΝΣΕΤ̄ΜΣΕ ΕΕΙΛΩΛΟΝ Σ̄Ν ΤΕΚΠΟΛΙΣ «so that thou mayst not fall headlong before the image (or phantom) in thy city». This is not literal. «So that they may not throw an image in thy city» would be more correct.

ϣ̄λ, Fol. 46 a. ΕΦΝΕΧΤΑΠ ΕΒΟΛ Σ̄Ι ΕΙΣ «that driveth away the sheep with horns». This again is faulty and the confusion is due to bad division of words. It means «that cuts a corn, or a hoof». I believe this sentence exists in *Pistis Sophia* and had been badly translated by the late Amelineau and corrected to him by the late Karl Piehl in his *Sphinx (Compte rendu sur la traduction de Pistis Sophia* by M. Amelineau).

ΜΠΕΡΤΑΚ ΟΥΣΟΟΥ ΝΟΥΩΤ Σ̄Μ ΠΕΚΑΣΕ «do not destroy (or waste) the first day (of the week) in thy field». This is a ludicrous translation. The word λσε does not mean here «field» at all. It is the word ⲙⲟⲩⲟⲩ, λσε, λσι «life, age»; and the phrase simply means «do not waste one day of thy life».

Ν̄ΚΡΙΝΕ Μ̄ΠΕΚΛΟΓΙΣΜΟΣ ΕΙΤΕ ΕΚΑΝΑΧΩΡΕΙ ΕΙΤΕ ΕΚ Σ̄Ν ΤΜΗΗΤΕ «try thyself judicially according to thy reason; and whether thou art away by thyself on a journey or whether thou art among a crowd, etc.». This is again erroneous. «Judge thyself whether thou art in *solitude* or in *company*».

ϣ̄β, Fol. 46 b. λ̄ΥΡ Μ̄Ν̄ΤΡΕ ΣΛΛΩΤ does not mean «it must be remembered in respect of Lot» but simply «they have, or (it was) borne witness about Lot».

The above few criticisms do not exhaust all, but I give them as a sample of the small mistakes, one is apt to make, unless attention is paid to all details. But whatever I may have found and corrected does not in the least minimize the wonderful efforts and the prodigiousness of the works of the right-learned savant. I do not consider myself except as a simple amateur.

Dr GEO. P. G. SOBHY.