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Anne Boud'hors, Esther Garel, Christine Ayad, Hadeer Belal, Fatma El-Gebali, Muhammady Fathy, Girgis Ibrahim, Ahmed Nakshara, Adel Rashed, Youhanna Reda, Hagar Saad Eldien, Amr El-Sharkawy

Ten Coptic ostraca at the IFAO

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Ten Coptic ostraca at the IFAO

ANNE BOUD'HORS, ESTHER GAREL
IN COLLABORATION WITH CHRISTINE AYAD,
HADEER BELAL, FATMA EL-GEBALI, MUHAMMADY FATHY,
GIRGIS IBRAHIM, AHMED NAKSHARA, ADEL RASHED,
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RÉSUMÉ

Publication de dix ostraca coptes par un groupe d'étudiants égyptiens sous la direction des auteurs. Ils comprennent trois exercices de piété, quatre lettres, deux textes juridiques et un compte. Ils proviennent, à une ou deux exceptions près, de la région thébaine.

Mots-clés : anthroponymes, Bible, copte, formules épistolaires, formules juridiques.

ABSTRACT

Publication of ten Coptic ostraca by a group of Egyptian students under the direction of the authors. They include three devotional exercises, four letters, two legal texts and one accounting document. They originate, except for one or two, from the Theban region.

Keywords: anthroponyms, Bible, Coptic language, letter-writing formulas, juridical formulas.

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INTRODUCTION

Anne Boud'hors, Esther Garel

This article is the result of an initiation workshop to the edition of Coptic ostraca that was held in January 2017 at the Ifao and aimed at training ten Egyptian students.[1] Besides theoretical lectures given in the morning, each participant received an unpublished ostracon to be studied and edited, a task which could be continued over the following months thanks to digital images. The IFAO collection was particularly suitable for this experience, as it includes, besides hundreds of unpublished ostraca (usually very fragmentary), some nice pieces identified by Chantal Heurtel during her different missions.[2] It also provides a good sample of various texts, as we will see hereafter. Since the ostraca from Baouit and Edfou have already been published,[3] it is very tempting to suppose that those remaining come from the Theban area, the primary producer of such texts. For some of them, there is no doubt as they bear a number and indications linking them to the excavations carried out by Bernard Bruyère at Deir el-Medina.[4] Others call for caution, as the circumstances that brought them to the IFAO are often unknown. Some may have been bought, but such information is rarely mentioned. Even in such cases, the Theban region remains the most probable origin, although the resemblance between ostraca from Thebes and those from Edfou can be misleading.

The group of ten ostraca published below starts with three exercises of piety, probably connected with monastic life: once again they show how Biblical wisdom books were important to the piety of the monks. Next come four letters that are most probably Theban considering their content and the formulas used therein. Actually, rather than letters, those texts are emergency messages, lacking any polite form of address. The majority are difficult to elucidate in detail and reflect the day-to-day concerns of the local inhabitants, monks, clerics and lay people to get food supplies and various items. Finally, two legal texts are presented that can be identified and partially reconstructed despite their fragmentary state, thanks to usual known formulas. The last text is a kind of account, written in a dialect (Fayyumic) that contradicts a Theban origin.

The type of pottery used for the writing also varies greatly. Sylvie Marchand, who is responsible for the ceramic studies at the IFAO, spent some time with the participants, to familiarize them with the terminology and give them information on their respective ostracon; this was a precious aid for which we would like to thank her.

Ostraca bear a main inventory number "OC"' (ostracon copte). In a previous inventory, a "C" number was also indicated. However, the receivership number figuring on numerous items is not mentioned here.[5]

1 Workshop mentored by Anne Boud'hors, Esther Garel and Chantal Heurtel, in the frame of a "specific action" financed by the IFAO.

2 Among which OC 131, 216, 256, 317 have been published in Heurtel 2017, OC 244 and 277 in Heurtel 2018.

3 *O.BawitIfao* et *O.EdfouCopte*.

4 That is the case with the limestones, see *O. Theb.Ifao*, but also with some potsherds.

5 Some information on the ostraca is available online at: http://www.ifao.egnet.net/bases/archives/ostraca/.

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1. PSALMIC CONCORDANCE FOR THE WORD "PRINCE"

Adel Rashed

Ifao, Inv. OC 181 (C 1851) [FIG. 1]
10 × 10.5 cm
Provenance unknown
8th cent.

Following a pattern well attested in Coptic ostraca (see *O. EdfouCopte* 3-6, *O. CrumST* 7 & 10, *O. Mon.Epiph.* 16)[6] this small text is a kind of concordance of the word ⲁⲣⲭⲱⲛ in the Psalms. Some mistakes or repetitions in the quotations show that it was a matter of personal practice, perhaps a way of simultaneously meditating and exercising scribal skill.

The ostracon bears only a small sample of the occurrences of the word ⲁⲣⲭⲱⲛ in the Psalms, since there are more than 20 attestations contained in 18 Psalms.[7]

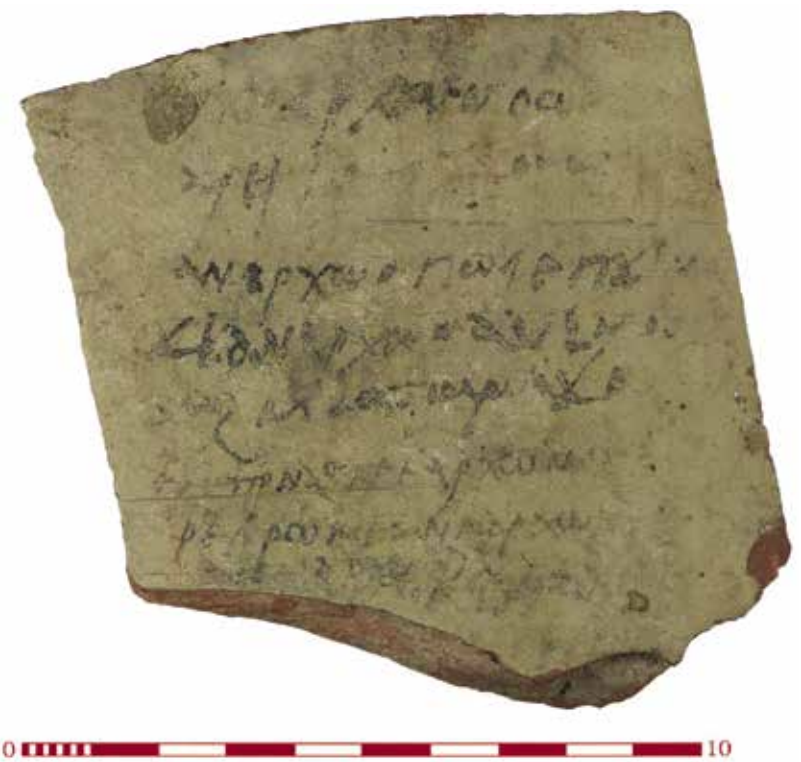


FIG. 1. Ifao, Inv. OC 181 (C 1851).

6 On Psalm quotations in ostraca see DELATTRE 2012, HEURTEL 2017 (no. 3 in her publication is another example of a concordance), and DELATTRE forthcoming.

7 Cf. BOSSON 1997, p. 278.

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The text is written on a Marl pottery, with a yellow-brown surface. The bottom part of the ostracon was probably broken. The script is globally bilinear, sloping, and rather skilled. It is thicker in the three central lines of the text, which may be due to the reed.

traces ⲁ
ⲁⲛⲁⲣⲭⲱⲛ ⲥⲱⲟ̣ⲩ̣ⲓ̣
ⲁⲩⲉⲓ ⲉⲩⲙ̣ⲁ̣ ⲛ̣ⲟⲩⲱⲧ̣
ⲁⲛⲁⲣⲭⲱⲛ ⲡⲱⲧ ⲉⲡⲭⲓⲛ-
ⲭⲏ ⲁⲛⲁⲣⲭⲱⲛ ⲁⲩⲥⲙⲟⲟⲥ
ⲁⲩⲥⲙⲟⲟⲥ ⲁⲩⲱⲁⲭⲉ
⸗ ⲙ̄ⲡⲛ̄ⲛⲁⲥⲧⲉ ⲉⲁⲣⲭⲱⲛ ⲟ̣ⲩⲁ̣ⲉ̣ [ⲉⲱϩ-]
ⲣⲉ ⲛ̄ⲣⲱⲙⲉ ⸗ ⲛ̄ⲛⲁⲣⲭⲱⲛ
ⲛ̄ⲛⲁⲣⲭⲱⲛ
[ⲁⲛⲁⲣⲭ]ⲱ̣ⲛ̣ ⲁ̣ⲩⲱⲁⲭⲉ
[---] *traces*
---

1 The ink of this line is very faded, and it is difficult to determine if it has been erased. One is tempted to read ⲁⲣⲭⲱⲛ again, but it is very uncertain.

2-3 *The rulers gathered themselves*, they came *to the same place:* Ps. 2,2 (the Coptic version does not have ⲁⲩⲉⲓ).

4-5 *The rulers persecuted (me) without a cause:* Ps.118,161 (the Coptic version gives ⲛ̄ⲥⲱⲓ̈ after ⲡⲱⲧ, see Budge 1898, p. 134).

5-6 *The rulers they sat. They sat (and) spoke:* cf. Ps. 118,23 (ⲁⲛⲁⲣⲭⲱⲛ ϩⲙⲟⲟⲥ ⲁⲩⲱⲁⲭⲉ ⲉⲣⲟⲓ̈). There was enough space to write ⲉⲣⲟⲓ̈, but no trace can be seen.

7-8 *Trust not in rulers nor in the children of men:* Ps. 145,3. This quotation is isolated by the use of ⸗ at the beginning and at the end.

8-9 The reason for the repetition of ⲛⲛⲁⲣⲭⲱⲛ here is not clear.

10 *The rulers, they spoke.*

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2. PSALMIC PRAYER

Girgis Ibrahim

Ifao, Inv. OC 91 (C 1907) [FIG. 2]
13.5 ×13 cm
Provenance unknown
7th-8th cent.

The text seems to be composed of short quotations from the Psalms.[8] Even though some sentences could not be identified as coming from the Psalms, their meaning is consistent with the general theme of the text, that is to say, salvation from sin. It may be interpreted as a personal prayer. Such compositions are well attested in the Theban region, as well as in Edfu (see *O. EdfouCopte* 3-6). Given the non-typical nature of the pottery, it is difficult to propose a provenance.

Fragment of an African "bag-shaped" amphora (Upper-Egyptian production), with three horizontal broad incisions and decoration at the upper part. Upper and right margins are preserved. The script is majuscule and slightly sloping; ⲏ has a minuscule form, as well as one of the ⲙ (l. 6); ⲃ is big; ⲣ has a kind of serif at the bottom part. The end of line 3 is filled with vertical strokes.



FIG. 2. Ifao, Inv. OC 91 (C 1907).

8 On the so-called "Psalmic compositions", see DELATTRE 2012; DELATTRE forthcoming.

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[---]ϫ̣οειc . . ⲛ̄τοκ πε πaβοηθοc
[---] . . ⲛ̄ca πaωϣ ⲙ̄πρτρaμοϒ
[---] . ⲙa · ////////////////////////////////
[---] aⲛϩ acθενηc ⲙ̄πρκaaτ ⲛcωκ ϫε
5 [--- ⲙaτaaϭo] ⲛ̣τaψγχη ϫε aiⲯ̄ ⲛoⲃε epoκ
[--- ⲙπε]ⲕ̣ⲙ̄το εⲃoλ aγω ⲙ̄ⲛ κεⲙa ⲙ̄
[---]ϫ̣ọειc πϫοειc ⲛaϩⲙετ
[---] . oγoⲛ̣

1 βοηθός || 4 ἀσθενής || 5 ψυχή

[…] Lord, ??, *You are my strength* (Ps. 39,18 [Budge 39,17], ou Ps. 70,7)
[…] to my cry, don't let me die!
[…] …
[…] *I am weak* (Ps. 6,3 [Budge 6,2], *don't abandon me because* (Ps. 70,9-10)
5 [… *Heal*] *my soul for I sinned against You!* (Ps. 40,5 [Budge 40,4])
[…] *before you* (*passim* in the Ps.) and there is no other place of
[…] Lord. *Lord, save me!* (Ps. 139,2 [Budge 139,1])
[…] …

7-8 Between these two lines, traces of two letters written one above the other can be seen but not interpreted.

3. EXERCISE WITH BIBLICAL CITATIONS

Youhanna Reda Elia Matta

Ifao, Inv. OC 99 (= C 2014) [FIGS. 3-4]
11 × 8.2 cm
Provenance unknown
Imported amphora
7th-8th cent.

Potsherds served many uses in daily life, serving as a cheap writing material when a more expensive one (papyrus) was not needed. In the case of this ostracon, it seems that we are dealing with a draft, possibly written by a monk, as is suggested by the three unrelated texts that it contains. The main text, on the recto, is a citation from the canonical Book of Proverbs of Solomon (27,5-6).[9] We can easily assume that the scribe was reciting the biblical verses from memory, not copying them from a book in his hands, as we can observe some orthographic variations not attested in any published version of the canonical Book.

9 Which have been already published in many publications in different attested versions (see CIASCA 1889, p. 187; WORRELL 1931, p. 93)

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It is impossible to be sure why this particular verse was chosen: was the scribe of this ostracon experiencing a similar experience of dishonesty or betrayal from someone who showed him kindness, and consoling himself with the biblical verses? Or simply reciting the biblical verses as a mean of retaining them in his heart and mind?[10]

After this quotation, the scribe started writing a sentence that sounds like an introduction of himself, "I am the miserable…", but he stopped without giving his name. Then, after a space, two lines are written in a smaller script at the bottom of the ostracon. It is the beginning of an epistolary formula, where the name of the sender is Souai. If the script is the same as in the main part (see below), Souai may be the name of the scribe. Finally, the same scribe probably used the verso of the ostracon to start writing a Psalm verse, again interrupted. All these texts show that the scribe of the ostracon was simply using it as a draft or a personal notebook where he could freely express what was on his mind.

The ostracon bears writing on both sides. There are traces of water damage on the recto. The script is globally bilinear, even though some letters are bigger (ⲃ, ⲉ); ⲏ has the shape of a "h"; there are some ligatures (ⲗⲉ in l. 8). The use of superlinear strokes is not consistent (note the two long strokes on recto l. 5 and verso l. 1: maybe an "essai de plume"?). Even though the script of the last two lines on the recto and of the verso looks different from the main script, it could well be the same hand (ⲁ, ⲩ and ⲉ have the same shape).

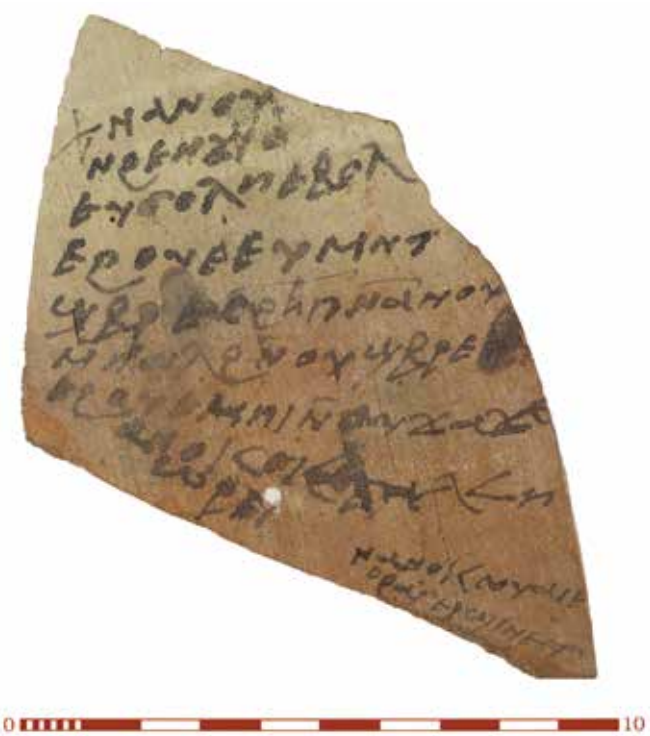


Fig. 3. Ifao, Inv. OC 99 (= C 2014) recto.

10 As the simple expression of keeping the Lord's commandment in Deuteronomy 11, 18–20: "You shall take these words of mine to heart and keep them in mind… Write them up on the door-posts of your houses and on your gates."

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Recto (outside)

+ ⲛⲁⲛⲟⲩ
{ⲛ}ⲍⲉⲛⲭ\ⲛ̣/ⲓⲟ
ⲉⲩⲥⲟⲗⲡ ⲉⲃⲟⲗ
ⲉⲍⲟⲩⲉ ⲉⲩⲙⲛⲧ-
ⲱⲃⲣ ⲉⲥⲍⲏⲡ ⲛⲁⲛⲟⲩ
ⲙ̄ⲡⲱⲗⲍ ⲛ̄ⲟⲩⲱⲃⲣⲉ
ⲉⲍⲟⲩⲉ ⲙⲡⲓ ⲛ̄ⲟⲩⲭⲁⲭⲉ
ⲁⲛⲟⲕ ⲡⲉⲧⲁⲗⲉⲡ-
ⲱⲣⲉⲓ

{ⲛ}ⲁⲛⲟⲕ ⲥⲟⲩⲁⲓ ⲉ<ⲓ>
ⲥⲍⲁⲓ̈ ⲉⲓⲱⲓⲛⲉ ⲉⲧ̣*exit*



Fig. 4. Ifao, Inv. OC 99 (= C 2014) verso.

Verso (inside)

+ ⲛⲛⲟⲩⲧⲉ ⲁⲩⲱ ⲡⲭⲟⲉⲓ̈ⲥ
ⲁⲫⲙⲟⲩⲧⲉ ⲉ̄ⲡ<ⲕ>ⲁⲍ ⲉⲃⲟⲗ
ⲍⲛ̄ⲛⲙ *exit*

5 ⲱⲃⲣ: ⲱⲃⲏⲣ Worrell || 6 ⲛⲟⲩⲱⲃⲣⲉ: ⲛⲟⲩⲱⲃⲏⲣ Worrell || 8-9 ταλαίπωρος

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(Recto) + *Better is the open rebuke than a secret* (5) *friendship. Better are the wounds of a friend than the kiss of an enemy* (Prov. 27, 5-6).
I am the humble one…
(10)*I Souai, I write and greet…*

(Verso) + *God and the Lord called the earth from the…*

Recto

2 {ⲛ}ϩⲉⲛⲭⲡⲓⲟ: ϩⲉⲛⲭⲡⲓⲟ Worrell 1931, p. 93; Ciasca 1889, p. 187; Greek ἔλεγχοι (without article).

10 the ⲛ before ⲁⲛⲟⲕ maybe by confusion with the word ⲛⲁⲛⲟⲩ as it is repeated in the first two previous sentences of the biblical quotation).

Verso

Free and incomplete quotation from Ps. 49,1: ⲡⲛⲟⲩⲧⲉ ⲛⲛⲛⲟⲩⲧⲉ ⲡⲭⲟⲉⲓⲥ ⲁϥⲱⲁϫⲉ ⲁⲩⲱ ⲁϥⲙⲟⲩⲧⲉ ⲉⲡⲕⲁϩ ⲉⲃⲟⲗ ϩⲛ ⲙⲙⲁ ⲛⲱⲁ ⲙⲡⲣⲏ ⲱⲁ ⲡⲉϥⲙⲁ ⲛϩⲱⲧⲛ, *The God of gods, the Lord, has spoken, and called the earth from the rising of the sun to the going down thereof.*

4. MESSAGE REGARDING A CHURCH VESSEL

Christine Ayad

Ifao, OC 252 (C 1906) [FIG. 5]
11 × 11 cm
Western Thebes
Late Roman Amphora 7
7th cent.

The text is a letter from a certain Petros to an unknown recipient. Petros is somewhere in Western Thebes, and his "father" sent him to Ape regarding the matter of the church vessel of Apa Mena. Petros writes to settle a meeting between him and the addressee. The message is very brief (there are no greetings), and the difficult construction in line 7 makes it somewhat unclear.

The letter shows three points of interest. The first one is that the letter mentions Ape (= Louxor), which ensures the Theban provenance of the ostracon. Second, the ostracon mentions a church of Apa Mena, thus new evidence for his cult in Ape. Third, the text provides a new attestation of the word ⲕⲩⲙⲏⲗⲓⲟⲛ, which most probably means "church vessel". Another comparable letter is *P. Mon.Epiph.* 282, where the sender Ananias writes to some priests asking them to hurry regarding the pay for church vessels.

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The handwriting is a skilled sloping majuscule and could be assigned to the 7th century. The ⲙ has two shapes. Besides the usual place of the superlinear stroke, the scribe put such a stroke on the final consonant of some words.

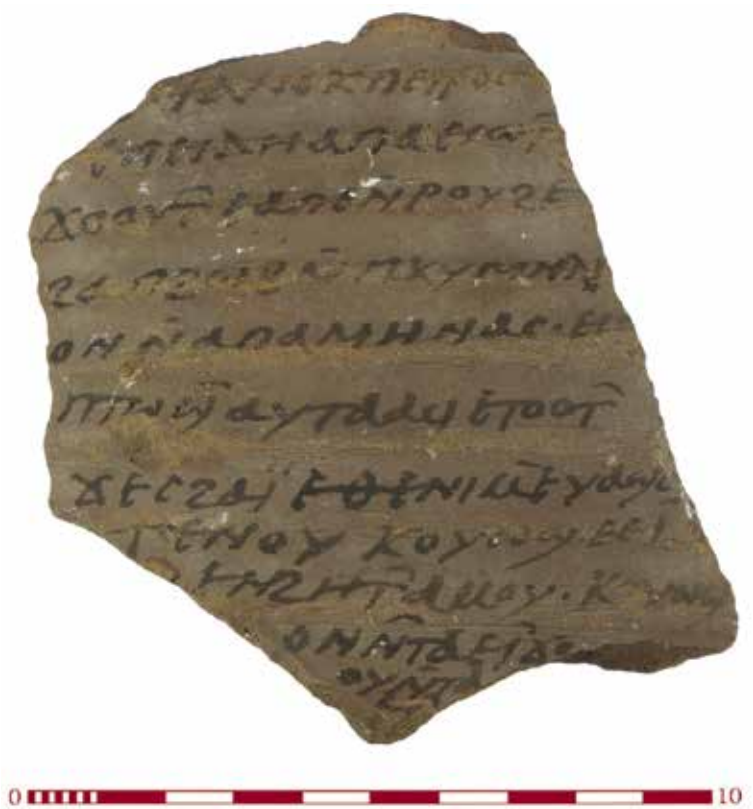


Fig. 5. Ifao, OC 252 (C 1906).

ϯ ⲁⲛⲟⲕ ⲡⲉⲧⲣⲟⲥ
ⲉⲡⲉⲓⲇⲏ ⲁⲡⲁⲉⲓⲱⲧ̄
ϫⲟⲟⲩⲧ̄ ⲉⲁⲡⲉ ⲛ̄ⲣⲟⲩϩⲉ
ϩⲁ ⲡϩⲱⲃ ⲙ̄ⲡⲕⲩⲙⲏⲗⲓ-
ⲟⲛ ⲛ̄ⲁⲡⲁ ⲙⲏⲛⲁⲥ · ⲉⲓⲥ
ⲡⲧⲱⲱ̄ ⲁⲩⲧⲁⲁϥ ⲉⲧⲟⲟⲧ̄
ϫⲉ ⲥϩⲁⲓ̈ ⲉⲑⲉ ⲛⲓⲙ̄ ⲉⲩⲁⲱⲥ
ⲧⲉⲛⲟⲩ ⲕⲟⲩⲱⲱ ⲉⲉⲓ̄
ⲉⲛϩⲏⲧ̄ ⲁⲙⲟⲩ · ⲕⲟⲩⲱⲱ
ⲟⲛ ⲛ̄ⲧⲁⲉⲓ̄ ϫⲟ-
ⲟⲩ ⲛ̄ⲧⲁ-
ⲉⲓ̄

2 ἐπειδή || 4-5 κειμήλιον || 7 l. ⲉⲩⲟⲩⲁⲱⲥ

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I am Petros. My father sent me to Ape in the evening regarding the matter of the church vessel (5) *of Apa Menas. Here is the order that was given to me: "Write whatever manner they want." Now (if) you want to come to the north, come. And (if) you prefer* (10) *me to come, send (for me) and I will come.*

3 ⲁⲡⲉ See Timm vol. 1, p. 133.

4 ⲕⲩⲙⲏⲗⲓⲟⲛ This term borrowed from the Greek κειμήλιον (also ⲕⲟⲓⲙⲏⲗⲓⲟⲛ, cf. Förster, *WB*, p. 400) designates a church vessel; see Muyser 1937.
Such objects have been preserved, for example a silver chalice that has an inscription on its head stating that it is a sacred vessel (ⲕⲩⲙⲏⲗⲓⲟⲛ) dedicated to a certain church in a Fayoum village (Louvre Inv. OA 11311; cf. Bénazeth, Rutschowscaya 2000, p. 181). An article gathering all the new attestations of this word is under preparation by A. Boud'hors.

5 ⲁⲡⲁ ⲙⲏⲛⲁⲥ The text doesn't specify the type of religious institution (church, sanctuary, monastery). A. Papaconstantinou points out Thebes in general as a cult center for Apa Mena, mentioning in particular Jeme, the mountain of Jeme and Armant, but not Ape (Papaconstantinou 2001, p. 161). Four documents from Thebes in relation to a cult of Apa Mena can be identified. *O. Crum* 45 is a letter addressed to Apa Abraham about the appointment of a deacon to the service of a church of Apa Mena. In *P. KRU* 75, a monk and priest of the *topos* of Apa Mena on the mountain of Jeme acted as a scribe for the will of Jacob and Elias, the heads of the monastery of Epiphanius. *O. Vind.Copt.* 294 is another letter from Jeme mentioning a steward (*oikonomos*) of Apa Mena. Lastly a witness of *P. CLT* 9 is priest of "saint Apa Mena" (this information was gathered from the *Cult of Saints in Late Antiquity* database).[11] Furthermore, two recently published ostraca from the mountain of Armant mention a (*topos*[2]) of Apa Mena (*O. Lips.Copt.* II 10 et 11, see Krueger 2019).

7 ⲥϩⲁⲓ̈ ⲫⲑⲉ ⲛⲓⲙ̄ ⲉⲩⲁⲱⲥ This sentence poses two difficulties. First the translation of the verb ⲥϩⲁⲓ, employed here in an absolute construction: does it simply mean "write"? Or could it mean "make the inscription", referring to an inscribed chalice like the object from the Louvre? Besides, the use of the definite article (ⲫⲑⲉ) prevents us from understanding ⲛⲓⲙ as an indefinite pronoun. One of the possibilities is to understand ⲛⲓⲙ as an interrogative, and to interpret the whole sentence, with an anacoluthon, as "write the manner: which one do they want?". However, the sentence remains too allusive to fully understand what is at stake.

11 http://csla.history.ox.ac.uk/

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5. LETTER FROM A SICK MAN

Hagar Saad Eldien Mostafa Saad

Ifao, Inv. OC 275 (C 1917) [FIG. 6]
16 × 10 × 1.2 cm
Theban region
Late Roman Amphora 7
7th–8th century

This letter is addressed by Antonios to Petros. The lack of greetings at the beginning may indicate that the sender was irritated, or in a hurry, or simply ill, as he says on l. 6. He is asking for money (l. 5), perhaps to buy a drug. However, as is usual in this kind of text, the details of his request remain obscure. Ll. 11–12 could concern salt that had dried (and thus become useless?). Various sorts of salt were used in recipes.[12]

Even though the provenance of the ostracon is unknown, the type of pottery, as well as the form ⲙⲉⲓ- for the Negative Perfect (l. 6 and l. 10, instead of ⲙⲡⲉⲓ-),[13] point to the Theban region.

The text is almost complete, except for some letters on the left side. From l. 8 till l. 13, there are probably between two and four letters missing at the beginning. The script, a slightly sloping bilinear majuscule, looks quite skilled, although irregular and loose. There are some ligatures (ⲁⲓ, ⲉⲓ, ⲉⲣ, ⲉⲧ, ⲟⲩ), ⲩ is short. The language is standard Sahidic, except for some peculiar spellings (ⲁⲛⲇⲱⲛⲓⲟⲥ and ⲁⲛⲇⲟⲛⲓⲟⲥ for ⲁⲛⲧⲱⲛⲓⲟⲥ, ⲅⲛ- for ⲫⲛ- on l. 10 and probably 7), and Negative First Perfect ⲙⲉⲓ-.

12 See TILL 1951, p. 91 (no. 132).
13 See *O. Frangé*, introduction, p. 31; BOUD'HORS 2018a, pp. 294–295. For another new attestation of this form, see text 7 in this article.

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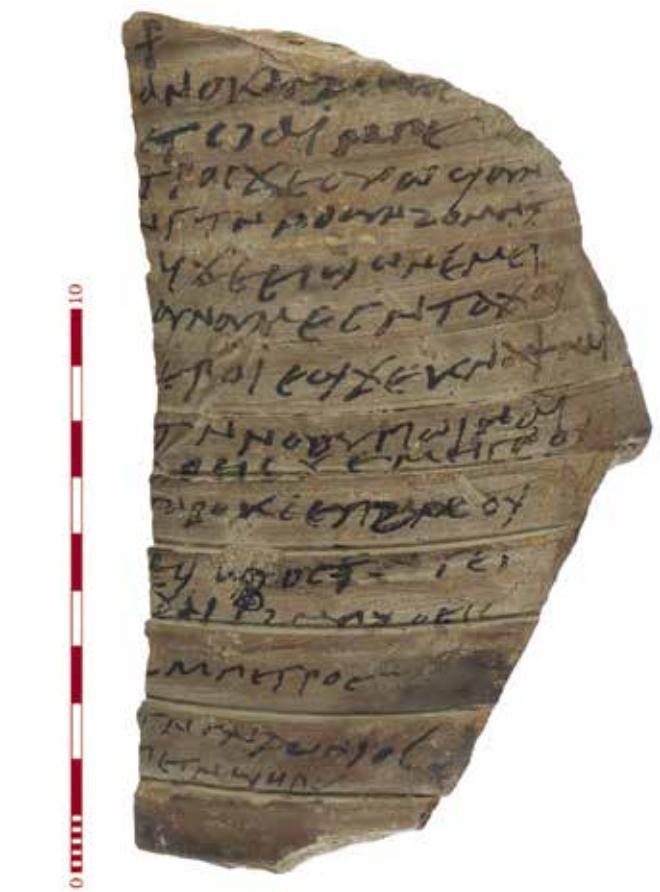


Fig. 6. Ifao, Inv. OC 275 (C 1917).

ϯ
ⲁⲛⲟⲕ ⲁⲛⲁⲟ̣ⲛⲓⲟⲥ
ⲉⲧⲥⲁⲓ̈ ⲙⲡⲉ-
ⲧⲣⲟⲥ ⲭⲉ ⲟⲩⲱⲱ ⲟⲩⲛ
ⲛⲓⲧⲛⲛⲟⲟⲩ ⲛⲥⲟⲙⲛ̄ⲧ
[ⲛ]ⲁ̣ⲓ ⲭⲉ ⲉⲓⲱⲱⲛⲉ ⲙⲉⲓ̈-
[ⲣⲛ] ⲟⲩⲛⲟⲩⲙⲉⲥ ⲛⲧⲁⲭⲟ̣ⲩ
[2+?] ⲉⲣⲟⲓ̈ ⲉⲱⲭⲉ ⲕⲛⲁϯ ⲛⲁⲓ̈
[2+?] ⲧⲛⲛⲟⲟⲩ ⲡⲱⲓ̈ ⲛⲁⲓ̈
[2+?]ⲭⲟⲉⲓⲥ ⲭⲉ ⲙⲉⲓⲣⲛ ⲟⲩ-
[1+? ⲛ]ⲧⲁⲃⲟⲕⲥ̄ ⲉⲡⲥ̣ⲙ̣ⲟⲩ
[2+?] ⲉⲫⲃⲟⲥⲧ̄ ⲛ̣ⲧⲉⲓ-
[ⲥⲉ ⲟⲩ]ⲭⲁⲓ̈ ⲥⲙ ⲡⲭⲟⲉⲓⲥ
[ⲧⲁⲁ]ⲥ̣ ⲙⲡⲉⲧⲣⲟⲥ
[ⲥⲓ]ⲧⲛ ⲁⲛⲁⲱⲛⲓⲟⲥ
ⲡⲉⲧⲛⲱⲏⲣⲉ

4 οὖν || 7 νοῦμμος || 9 ⲧⲛⲛⲟⲟⲩ corr. ex ⲧⲛⲛⲟⲩ || 11 ⲉⲡⲥⲙⲟⲩ corr. ex ⲉⲡⲙ ⲟⲩ? || 12 ⲃⲟⲥⲧ corr. ex ⲱⲟⲟⲩⲉ

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It is me Antonios who is writing to Petros. Please, then, (5) *send me the money, for I am sick and I did not find a* nummus *to spend for me. Since you are going to give me […], send me mine* (10) *[… my] lord, for I did not find […] to add to the salt […] it is dried out in this [way]. Hail in the Lord! To give to Petros* (15) *from Antonios your son.*

7 ⲛⲟⲩⲙⲉⲥ νοῦμμος generally refers to a coin of small value. Till 1946, relying on a passage of Chassinat 1921, no. 93, proposed that the word could have the meaning of "tablet", perhaps by analogy with the round form of a coin. As we are in a context of illness, this meaning should perhaps be considered here. Nevertheless, since copper coins are mentioned on line 5, money remains plausible.

8 [ⲉⲃⲟⲗ] ⲉⲣⲟⲓ̈ is a plausible reconstruction for the beginning of the line.

8-9 If ⲧⲛⲛⲟⲟⲩ is an Imperative with an apodotic function, a negation ⲁⲛ may be required in the lacuna: "since/if you are not going to give me [?], send me mine", but what does "mine" refer to?

10 ⲡⲁ]ϫⲟⲉⲓⲥ can be proposed for the beginning; but it remains uncertain whether or not there was something else.

11 A feminine word is expected in the lacuna, because of the feminine suffix in ⲃⲟⲕⲥ, unless this suffix has a neutral function here: perhaps only ⲟⲛ, as the end of ⲟⲩ|[ⲟⲛ?

12 Why did the scribe correct ⲱⲟⲟⲩⲉ into ⲃⲟⲥⲧ̄? The former is indeed frequent, and occurs, among many other contexts, in several recipes (drying out was part of the process); ⲃⲟⲥⲧ̄ is much rarer, but is attested in a Theban collection of recipes for preparing parchment (Crum 1905); these two leaves of papyrus are part of *P.Bodmer* 58, which has been recognized as a Theban manuscript: see Boud'hors 2018b): in this case, as in our text, it may be a more technical or pejorative word to indicate that something (parchment, salt or salt-composed product) is so dry that it cannot be used.

6. LETTER REQUESTING LENTILS

Ahmed Nakshara

Ifao, Inv. OC 104 (C 1916) [FIG. 7]
10 × 9.5 cm
Theban region
7th cent.

The letter is addressed by a certain Psmoei to a deacon. First announcing the repayment of a due *tremissis*, Psmoei then asks his correspondent to send him a measure of lentils. No other clue is given in order to identify the correspondents or their locations. All that is known about the origin of the ostracon is that Bernard Bruyère either found it during his excavations on the western bank of Thebes or bought it from an Egyptian dealer between 1922 and 1951.

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There are, however, indications of a 7th century Theban origin. The mention of a certain Psmou, who is involved in a matter of money –one *tremissis*– in *P. Mon.Epiph.* 288,[14] in addition to the regular mentioning of *Psmou* in the correspondence of apa Pisentius[15] concerning the marriage of Psmou's daughter. Another issue that reinforces this hypothesis is the use of the mere title (deacon) to refer to the addressee. This usage raises the question about the possibility of the existence of just one deacon in the sender's zone that makes him famous enough to be addressed only by his title.

Fragment of a red Pseudo-Aswanese Late Roman Amphora. The letter is written on the recto only. The script is a skilled sloping majuscule, the size of the letters being somewhat irregular; note the ligature ⲁⲕ in ⲛⲁⲕ (l. 5, l. 7).

Non-standard Sahidic forms are ⲁⲓⲡⲉ (for ⲟⲓⲡⲉ), typical for Southern texts, ⲕⲱ, ⲕⲛ- instead of ⲅⲱ, ⲅⲛ- (see Crum, Winlock 1926, p. 243), and the doubling of ⲛ in ⲛⲛⲉⲣⲱⲓⲛ.

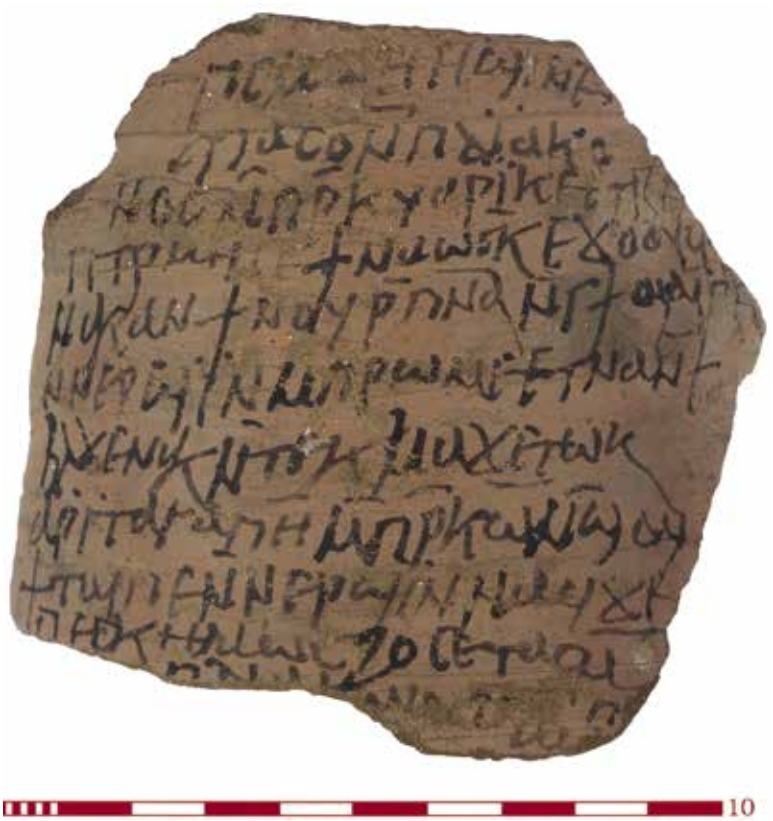


Fig. 7. Ifao, Inv. OC 104 (C 1916).

14 *"I went to the dwelling of Psmou, that I might receive the money. He brought me unto a man and said, 'He hath (?) not paid thee money.' If thou wouldst have the gold tremis and that I take it from […] and bring it unto […] will (?) bring the remainder of the money. I have not leisure […] Farewell in the Lord"* (transl. W.E. Crum).

15 *P. Pisentius* 15.1; 16.1,2,3,4; 35.1,2.

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ⲡⲥⲙⲱⲉⲓ ⲉⲓ̈ⲱⲓⲛⲉ
ⲉⲡⲁⲥⲟⲛ̄ ⲡⲇⲓ̈ⲁⲕⲟ-
ⲛⲟⲥ ⲙ̄ⲡ̄ⲣⲕⲛ̣ ⲁⲣ̈ⲓⲕⲉ ⲉⲧⲃⲉ
ⲡⲧⲣⲙⲏⲥⲉ̣ ⲧⲛⲁⲱⲥⲕ̄ ⲉⲭⲟⲟⲩϥ
ⲛⲁⲕ ⲁⲛ ⲧⲛⲟⲩ ⲣ̄ ⲡⲛ̄ⲁ̄ ⲛⲓⲧ ⲟⲩⲁⲓ̈ⲛⲉ
ⲛⲛⲉⲣⲱⲓ̈ⲛ ⲙⲡⲣⲱⲙⲉ ⲉⲧⲛⲁⲛ̄ ⲧ-
ⲃⲁⲭⲉ ⲛⲁⲕ ⲛ̄ⲧⲉⲕⲙⲁⲭⲉ ⲧⲱⲕ
ⲁⲣⲓ̈ ⲧⲁⲅⲁⲡⲏ ⲙ̄ⲡ̄ⲣⲕⲱ̄ ⲛ̄ⲱⲟⲩ
ⲧ ⲧⲁⲓ̈ⲛⲉ ⲛ̄ⲛⲉⲣⲱⲓ̈ⲛ ⲛⲁϥ ⲭⲉ
ⲡⲉⲥⲕⲏⲁⲙ̣ⲱⲥ ϩⲟⲥⲉ ⲧⲁ<ⲁ>ⲥ ⲙ̄
ⲡⲁⲓⲁⲕⲟⲛⲟⲥ ϩⲓⲧⲛ̄ ⲡⲥ̣[ⲙ-]
ⲱⲉ̣[ⲓ]

2-3 διάκονος ‖ 4 τριμήσιον ‖ 8 ἀγάπη ‖ 10 σκυλμός || 11 διάκονος

(1) *Psmoei, I am greeting my brother the deacon. Do not blame (me) for the tremissis, I will not delay sending it* (5) *to you. Now, please give the measure (*oipe*) of lentils to the man who will bring you this ostracon, according to your own measure (*maje*). Be so kind, do not abstain from giving the measure (*oipe*) of lentils to him, because* (10) *the travel is difficult. Give it to the deacon from Psmoei.*

1 ⲡⲥⲙⲱⲉⲓ ⲉⲓ̈ⲱⲓⲛⲉ This introductory formula is problematic in two respects: first, the lack of a cross at the beginning, second the construction <name + ⲉⲓⲱⲓⲛⲉ> (one expects <name + ⲉⲧⲱⲓⲛⲉ> or <ⲁⲛⲟⲕ + name + ⲉⲓⲱⲓⲛⲉ>). It might be reasonable to assume that the first line, with ☩ ⲁⲛⲟⲕ, has disappeared. Another issue is the form of the name ⲡⲥⲙⲱⲉⲓ, not otherwise attested. ⲡⲥⲙⲱ/ⲯⲥⲙⲱ is a variant of ⲡⲥⲙⲟⲩ, and one could be tempted to think that the scribe has simply repeated the syllable ⲉⲓ before ⲉⲓⲱⲓⲛⲉ. However, the very end of the ostracon could well be reconstructed as ⲡⲥ̣[ⲙ]|ⲱⲉ̣[ⲓ], although ⲡⲥ̣[ⲙ]|ⲱ ⲧis not to be excluded. It is therefore difficult to decide. If the name of the sender is ⲡⲥⲙⲱⲉⲓ, is this another variant of ⲡⲥⲙⲟⲩ?

5-7 ⲟⲩⲁⲓⲛⲉ ⲛⲛⲉⲣⲱⲓ̈ⲛ *oipe* is a measure of grain smaller than the *artab* (ⲣⲧⲟⲃ: cf. Crum, *Dict.* 256a). Obviously, this measure was subject to local variations. This is probably why the sender asks the recipient to use his "own measure" (ⲙⲁⲭⲉ), which probably means that people had not completely standardized measurements for goods such as corn, lentils, etc.

8 ⲙ̄ⲡ̄ⲣⲕⲱ̄ ⲛ̄ⲱⲟⲩ For this typically Theban expression, see Crum, *Dict.* 601a.

10 ⲡⲉⲥⲕⲏⲁⲙ̣ⲱⲥ ϩⲟⲥⲉ Usually the Greek word σκυλμός is used in Coptic texts (mostly Theban) preceded by an auxiliary verb such as ⲣ, ⲃⲱⲕ, ⲛⲉⲭ, ⲥⲱⲕ, ☩, in expressions often translated by "Take the trouble (of coming and/or doing something)…". However, here, the word is used alone, and it seems to have its original meaning, "travel", as in *O. Frangé* 647. This is a way to urge the recipient, as travels were always considered difficult and dangerous in this region.

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7. LETTER ABOUT SENDING VARIOUS GOODS

Amr el-Sharkawy

Ifao, Inv. OC 270 (C 1879) [FIG. 8]
17 × 11 cm
Thebes?
Pseudo-Aswanese pottery
7th–8th cent.

The letter published here concerns the exchange of various commodities (crops, vegetables, dates, a type of leguminous plant called *arax*, oil). At least four individuals (sender, addressee, Elias, David) are involved in these exchanges. This text reflects the complexity of sending and receiving goods, a process which regularly takes the form of barter.

The letter bears no opening formulae or greetings, nor the names of either the sender or addressee. This indicates that the sender is either upset or in a hurry.

The word "ACHAT" can be read at the bottom of the sherd, indicating that it was bought on the antiquity market. However the text could be attributed to the Theban region on internal criteria (subject, phraseology), when compared to ostraca from other dossiers (*P. Mon.Epiph., O. Frangé*).

The sherd is complete. The writing is bilinear and upright, resembling a bookhand, which is confirmed by the use of diacritical signs (coma, semicolon). The text is written in standard Sahidic. Note the form of negative perfect ⲙⲉⲫⲧⲁⲁⲩ (see text 5).

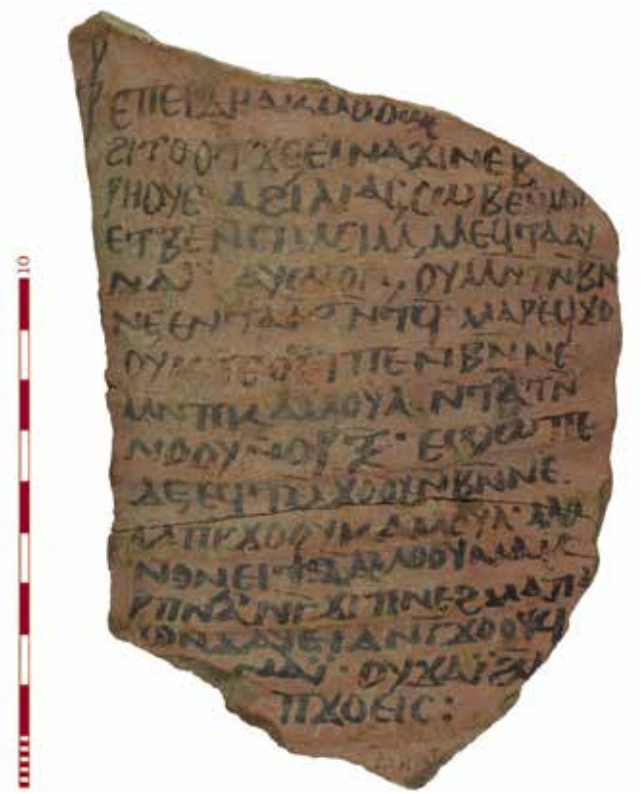


FIG. 8. Ifao, Inv. OC 270 (C 1879).

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ⲯ ⲉⲡⲉⲓⲇⲏ ⲁⲕⲙⲟⲟⲱⲉ
ⲥⲓⲧⲟⲟⲧ ⲭⲉ, ⲉⲓⲛⲁⲭⲓ ⲛⲉⲃ-
ⲣⲏⲟⲩⲉ ⲁⲥⲓⲗⲓⲁⲥ, ⲥⲱⲃⲉ ⲙ̄ⲙⲟⲓ
ⲉⲧⲃⲉ ⲛ̄ⲥⲓⲙⲥⲓⲙ, ⲙⲉⲫⲧⲁⲁⲩ
ⲛⲁⲓ̈ · ⲁⲩⲱ ⲟⲛ, ⲟⲩⲙⲛ̄ⲧ ⲛ̄ⲃⲛ̄-
ⲛⲉ, ⲉⲛⲧⲁⲓ̈ⲥⲛ̄ⲧⲫ̄ · ⲙⲁⲣⲉⲫⲭⲟ-
ⲟⲩ ⲛ̣ⲧⲉⲟⲉⲓⲡⲉ ⲛ̄ⲃⲛ̄ⲛⲉ
ⲙⲛ̄ ⲡⲕⲁⲙⲟⲩⲗ · ⲛ̄ⲧⲁⲧⲛ̄-
ⲛⲟⲟⲩ ⲛ̄ⲟⲣ̄ϩ̄ · ⲉⲱⲱⲡⲉ
ⲇⲉ, ⲉⲫⲧⲙ̄ⲭⲟⲟⲩ ⲛ̄ⲃⲛ̄ⲛⲉ.
ⲙ̄ⲡⲣ̄ⲭⲟⲟⲩ ⲕⲁⲙⲟⲩⲗ · ⲙⲟ-
ⲛⲟⲛ, ⲉⲓ☩ ⲙ̄ⲙⲟⲟⲩ ⲛⲁⲕ
ⲣ̄ ⲡⲛⲁ ⲛⲓ̄ⲭⲓ ⲡⲛⲉϩ ⲙⲁ ⲡⲁ-
ⲥⲟⲛ ⲇⲁⲩⲉⲓⲇ ⲛⲓ̄ⲭⲟⲟⲩⲫ
ⲛⲁⲓ̈ · ⲟⲩⲭⲁⲓ̈ ϩⲙ̄
ⲡⲭⲟⲉⲓⲥ:

1 ἐπειδή || 2 δέ || 7 ⲟⲉⲓⲡⲉ ⲉⲓ corr. ex ⲟⲓ̈ || 8 ⲛ̄ⲧⲁ corr ex ⲛ̄ⲧⲛ? || 9 ἄρακος || 10 δέ || 12 μόνον

+ *Since you left me, (saying) "I shall take the crops", Elias laughed at me concerning the vegetables, he did not give them* (5) *to me. And as for a measure of dates that I found, may he send the measure of dates with the camel, in order that I may send the arax. And if* (10) *he does not send the dates, do not send a camel. Only when I give them to you, be so kind and take the oil at my brother David's place and send it* (15) *to me. Hail in the Lord!*

8. AGREEMENT

Hadeer Belal

Ifao, Inv. OC 248 (C 1875) [FIG. 9]
9 × 5 cm
Deir el-Medina

This ostracon provides the end of a legal deed, involving an agreement (l. 6 ⲥⲩⲙⲫⲱⲛⲟⲛ). This term most often designates a work contract, especially in texts from the Fayyum and Middle Egypt. Here the nature of the deed is not easily identified, since the document is designated through different words that don't specify the type of transaction (ll. 1–2 ⲉⲅⲅⲣⲁⲫⲱⲛ, l. 10, 12 ⲭⲁⲣⲧⲏⲥ). Furthermore, the fact that ⲛⲓⲥⲩⲙⲫⲱⲛⲟⲛ is a plural form seems to indicate that it doesn't refer to the type of document, but rather to agreements that led to its drawing up.

On the back of the ostracon, the indication "N. E. T. 46" (= north east of the temple) shows that it comes from Bernard Bruyère's excavations of the temple of Hathor at Deir el-Medina.

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The text is written on a fragment of an imported African amphora (undetermined family), with a yellowish surface. The text is written on the recto, the upper and the right parts are missing. It is difficult to evaluate the loss in the first lines since the ostracon could have had an irregular shape. The script is majuscule, regular, slightly sloping, and very similar to well-known Theban hands from the 7th century, such as hand D;[16] ⲏ has a minuscule shape.

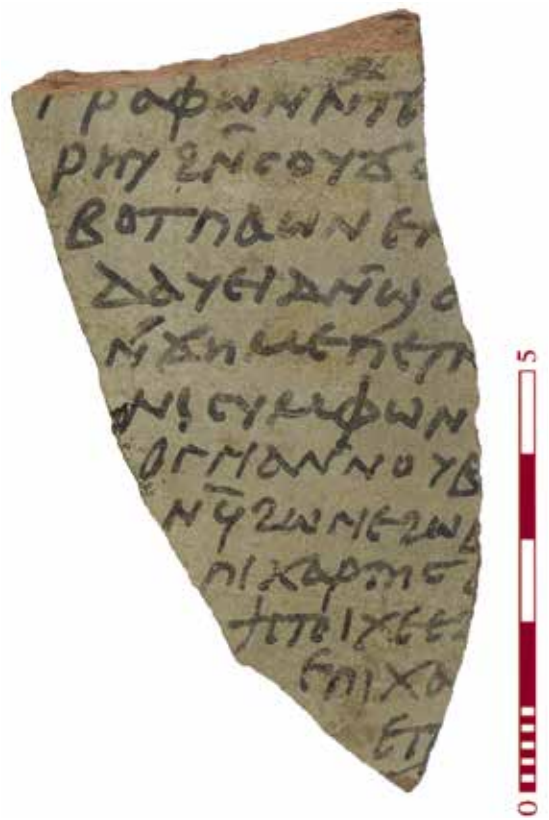


Fig. 9. Ifao, Inv. OC 248 (C 1875).

[6-7]..[--- ⲉⲣ-]
ⲅⲣⲁⲫⲱⲛ ⲛ̄ⲧⲉ̣[--- ⲉ-]
ⲣⲏⲩ ϩⲛ̄ ⲥⲟⲩ ⲭⲟ[ⲩ--- ⲙⲡⲉ-]
ⲃⲟⲧ ⲡⲁⲱⲛⲉ ⲛ[---]
ⲇⲁⲩⲉⲓⲇ ⲛ̄ⲱϫ̣[---]
ⲛ̄ⲭⲏⲙⲉ ⲡⲉⲧⲛ[ⲁ ---]
ⲛⲓⲥⲩⲙⲫⲱⲛ[ⲟⲛ ---]
ⲟⲣⲣⲓⲁ ⲛ̄ⲛⲟⲩⲃ [ⲙⲡⲣⲟⲥⲧⲓⲙⲟⲛ]
ⲛⲩϩⲱⲛ ⲉϩⲱⲃ [ⲛⲓⲙ ⲉⲩⲥⲏϩ ⲉ-]

16 See *O. Crum,* p. xv; Garel forthcoming.

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10 ⲡⲓⲭⲁⲣⲧⲏⲥ ⲁ̣[ⲛⲟⲕ ± 7]
⳨ⲥⲧⲟⲓⲭⲉ ⲉ̣ⲣ̣[ⲱⲃ ⲛⲓⲙ ⲉⲩⲥⲏⲣ]
ⲉⲡⲓⲭⲁ[ⲣⲧⲏⲥ ---]
Ἐγρ(άφη)[---]

2 ἔγγραφον || 7 σύμφωνον || 8 οὐγκία, πρόστιμον || 10 χάρτης || 11 στοιχεῖν || 12 χάρτης || εγρ ostr

[…] deed […] on the tewenty-[?] day [of the] month Paone […] (5) *David, the [...] of Jeme. Whoever will […] these agreements […] ounce of gold [as a fine], and he shall recognize [all] the things [written in]* (10) *this document […] I, […], I agree with everything written in this document. Written […].*

1-3 ⲉⲅ]|ⲅⲣⲁⲫⲱⲛ ⲛ̄ⲧⲉ̣[--- ⲉ]|ⲣⲏⲩ
ⲛ̄ⲧⲁ̣[---] should be expected here, but is difficult to read ; in that case, we could supply ⲛ̄ⲧⲁ̣[ⲛⲡⲓⲑⲉ ⲙⲛ̄ ⲛⲉⲛⲉ]ⲣⲏⲩ / ⲛ̄ⲧⲁ̣[ⲩⲡⲓⲑⲉ ⲙⲛ̄ ⲛⲉⲩⲉ]ⲣⲏⲩ, understanding the verb as temporal perfect, or ⲛ̄ⲧⲁ̣[ⲛⲥⲙⲛⲧϥ ⲙⲛ̄ ⲛⲉⲛⲉ]ⲣⲏⲩ / ⲛ̄ⲧⲁ̣[ⲩⲥⲙⲛⲧϥ ⲙⲛ̄ ⲛⲉⲩⲉ]ⲣⲏⲩ. Both solutions seem a little long for the size of the lacuna.

4-6 ⲛ[---] | ⲁⲁⲩⲉⲓⲁ ⲛ̄ⲱⲁ̣[---] | ⲛ̄ⲭⲏⲙⲉ
We could have here the mention of two officials from Jeme, David and somebody else in the presence of whom (l. 4-5 ⲛ[ⲁⲣⲣⲛ + 1st name] ⲙⲛ̄ | ⲁⲁⲩⲉⲓⲁ) the contract was drawn up. However no known official titles begin with ⲱⲁ[.

6-8 ⲡⲉⲧⲛ[ⲁ ---] | ⲛⲓⲥⲩⲙⲫⲱⲛ[ⲟⲛ ---] | ⲟⲩⲧⲓⲁ ⲛⲛⲟⲩⲃ [ⲙⲡⲣⲟⲥⲧⲓⲙⲟⲛ] The penal clause, without having any exact parallels can be reconstructed as such on the base of similar documents :
ⲡⲉⲧⲛ[ⲁⲡⲁⲣⲁⲃⲁ ⲛ-] or ⲡⲉⲧⲛ[ⲁⲉⲓ ⲉⲃⲟⲗ ⲉ-] (see Richter 2008, pp. 196–197)
ⲛⲓⲥⲩⲙⲫⲱⲛ[ⲟⲛ ⲛϥ†/ⲉϥⲛⲁⲧⲓ ⲛⲟⲩ-] (or another amount)
ⲟⲩⲧⲓⲁ ⲛⲛⲟⲩⲃ [ⲙⲡⲣⲟⲥⲧⲓⲙⲟⲛ] (see *P. KRU* 21,70; 74,92).

8-9 ⲛϥⲥⲱⲛ ⲉⲥⲱⲃ [ⲛⲓⲙ ⲉⲩⲥⲏⲣ ⲉ]|ⲡⲓⲭⲁⲣⲧⲏⲥ
For a parallel, see *P. KRU* 105, 13. On the verb ⲥⲱⲛ, see Richter 2008, pp. 335–336.
The word ⲭⲁⲣⲧⲏⲥ, "papyrus", is used, although the text is written on a potsherd, which could indicate that it is a copy or a summary of a document written on papyrus. The same phenomenon is known from the archive of Abraham, bishop of Hermonthis (see Fournet 2018, p. 200).

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9. END OF A SETTLEMENT OF DISPUTE (?)

Muhammady Fathy Muhammed

Ifao, Inv. OC 329 (C 827) [FIG. 10]
16 × 16.5 cm
Theban region?
7th–8th cent.

The text preserved here is the end of a legal deed whose nature is not completely clear. However, the presence of certain words such as ⲁⲙⲁϩⲧⲉ, "possess" (l. 7), ⲣ ⲭⲟⲉⲓⲥ, "own" (ll. 11-12) suggest that the transaction involves a transfer of property. Furthermore, the use of the reciprocal pronoun ⲛⲉⲩⲉⲣⲉ̣ⲟⲩ (l. 3) and the distributive ⲡⲟⲩⲁ ⲡⲟⲩⲁ (l. 4, l. 8?), as well as the use of an expression such as "according to what God/justice inspired to our heart" (ll. 8-9), are strong clues that we deal here with a settlement of a dispute concerning a property.

The document is written on a red ribbed pottery sherd (Pseudo-Aswanese type). The text is broken in its upper, left and right part; only the last three lines are complete, indicating that the upper part of the sherd must have been much broader. The script is bilinear and slightly sloping, without any ligatures. Supralinear strokes regularly take the form of a slanting stroke (cf. l. 6, l. 7, l. 12). The scribe spells ⲁⲟⲩⲉⲧ̣[ⲓ], ⲁⲉⲓⲥϩⲁ̈ⲓ̈ instead of the usual ⲁⲩⲁⲓⲧⲉⲓ and ⲁⲓⲥϩⲁ̈ⲓ̈. Note that the spelling peculiarity and mistakes are more numerous in the scribe's signature.

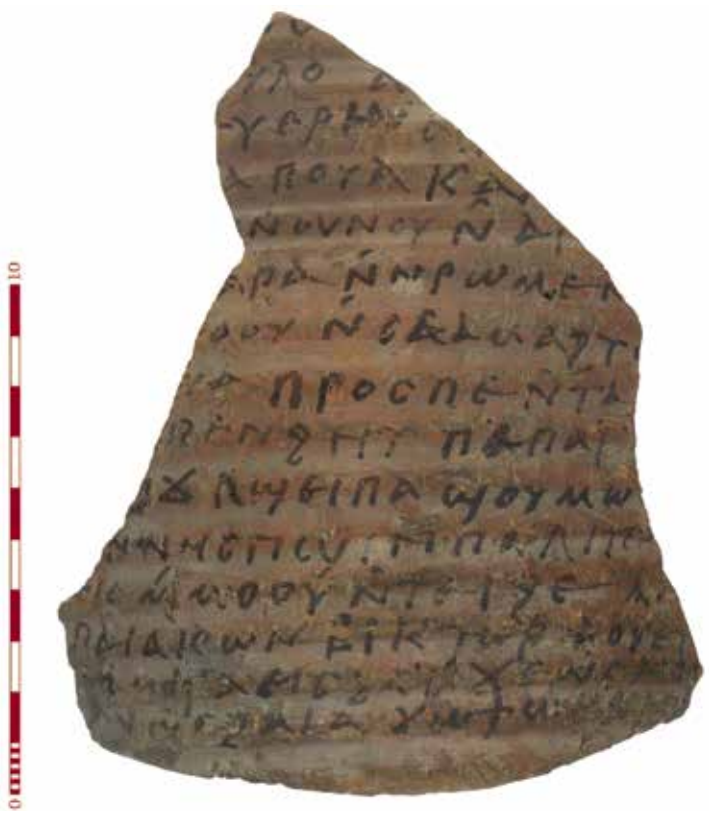


FIG. 10. Ifao, Inv. OC 329 (C 827).

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[---] . . [---]
[---]ⲩⲗⲟ vac. ⲁ̣[---]
[--- ⲛ]ⲉ̣ⲩⲉⲣⲉ̣ⲟⲩ ⲉ . . [---]
[--- ⲡⲟⲩ]ⲁ ⲡⲟⲩⲁ ⲕⲁⲧ[ⲁ ---]
[---] . ⲛⲟⲩⲛⲟⲩ ⲛ̄ⲁ̣ⲓ[---]
[--- ⲡ]ⲁ̣ⲣⲁ ⲛ̄ⲛⲣⲱⲙⲉ ⲛ[---]
[---] . ⲟⲟⲩ ⲛ̄ⲥⲉⲁⲙⲁⲥⲧⲉ̣ [---]
[ⲡⲟⲩⲁ ⲡⲟ]ⲩⲁ ⲡⲣⲟⲥ ⲡⲉⲛ̄ⲧⲁ[---]
[---]ⲡⲉⲛⲥⲏⲧ ⲡⲉ ⲡⲁⲓ̈ [---]
[---] . ⲭ ⲡⲱⲉⲓ ⲡⲁⲱⲟⲩⲙⲱ [ⲙⲛ]
[ⲓⲱ(ⲥ)]ⲁ̣ⲛⲛⲏⲥ ⲡⲱⲓⲛ ⲡⲁⲗⲓⲧⲉ [ⲣ ⲭⲟ-]
ⲉⲓⲥ ⲙ̄ⲙⲟⲟⲩ ⲛ̄ⲧⲉⲓⲥⲉ ⲁⲛ̣[ⲟⲕ]
ⲡⲁⲓⲁⲕⲱⲛ ⲃⲓⲕⲧⲱⲣ ⲁⲟⲩⲉⲧ̣[ⲓ]
ⲙ̄ⲙⲟⲓ̈ ⲁⲉⲓⲥⲥⲁⲓ̈ ⲭⲉ ⲛ̄ⲥⲉⲛⲟⲓ̣
ⲁⲛ ⲉ{ⲓ}ⲥⲥⲁⲓ ⲁⲩ{ⲭ}ⲱ ϯⲱ ⲙⲙⲛⲧ̣ⲣ[ⲉ]

4 κατά || 6 παρά || 7 ⲛ̄ⲥⲉ corr ex ⲛ̄ⲥⲁ || 8 πρός || 9 ⲡⲉ corr ex ⲡⲁ? || 13 διάκονος αἰτεῖν || 14 νοεῖν

[…] they stopped and they […] with each other […] each of them according to […] at the hour of […] against/except the men […] and they will possess […] each of them according to what […] our heart […] son of Pashoumo and Ioannes son of Palite own them in this way. I, the deacon Victor, they asked me and I wrote because they don't know how to write, and I am witness.

2 [---]ⲩⲗⲟ *vac.* ⲁ̣[---]
A form of the verb ⲗⲟ, "to cease" (or "to be healed"), should be supplied here, probably ⲁⲩⲗⲟ, followed by another form of First Perfect after the short *vacat*.

5 [---] . ⲛⲟⲩⲛⲟⲩ ⲛ̄ⲁ̣ⲓ[---]
A word of the family of ⲇⲓⲕⲁⲓⲟⲛ could be reconstructed after the break.

8-9 ⲡⲣⲟⲥ ⲡⲉⲛ̄ⲧⲁ[---] | [---]ⲡⲉⲛⲥⲏⲧ ⲡⲉ ⲡⲁⲓ̈ [---]
We expect an expression such as "according to what God/justice inspired to our heart". For a parallel see Heurtel 2013, p. 82; ⲡⲉ ⲡⲁⲓ̈ [---] could be a mistake for the expression ⲉⲧⲉ ⲡⲁⲓ̈ ⲡⲉ which is rather expected here. See, however, another formulation in *CPR* IV 50,12 (Fayyumic): ⲡⲉⲧⲉⲁ[ⲩⲧ]ⲓ ⲉⲡⲉⲛⲥⲏⲧ ⲡⲉⲓ ⲡⲉ.

10-11 ⲡⲱⲉⲓ ⲡⲁⲱⲟⲩⲙⲱ [ⲙⲛ] | [ⲓⲱ(ⲥ)]ⲁ̣ⲛⲛⲏⲥ ⲡⲱⲓⲛ ⲡⲁⲗⲓⲧⲉ
The division of words between the two lines is not clear, given the irregular shape of the ostracon. Another solution would be ⲡⲱⲉⲓ ⲡⲁⲱⲟⲩⲙⲱ [ⲙⲛ ⲓⲱ-] | [ⲥ]ⲁ̣ⲛⲛⲏⲥ ⲡⲱⲓⲛ ⲡⲁⲗⲓⲧⲉ.
It is the first attestation of the name ⲡⲁⲱⲟⲩⲙⲱ, which should be identified as a new form of the name Pachom. The name ⲡⲁⲗⲓⲧⲉ occurs in a funerary stela (*SBKopt.* I 748,5) without known provenance.

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10. ACCOUNT

Fatma el-Gebali

Ifao, Inv. OC 192 (C 1897) [FIG. 11]
15 × 9,5 cm
Fayyum ?
7th–8th cent.

Given the layout of the text, which contains anthroponyms sometimes associated with numbers, it probably can be identified as an account, or a fiscal list, especially if the word ⲗⲟⲅⲟⲥ can be read on line 1 (see commentary). Names are generally followed by their patronyms. Some of them are familiar, others are not, but almost all have a Fayyumic colour, either from their spelling or because they are especially attested in the Fayyum. Moreover the mention of ⲡⲓⲁⲕⲟⲩ on line 11, be it a title ("deacon") or, more likely, a proper name,[17] definitely points to the Fayyumic dialect. This text is puzzling, since ostraca in Fayyumic are rare.[18] There is no information about the provenance of the ostracon. However, the pottery itself is peculiar and does not resemble what is usually found in Thebes. It is thus tempting to suppose that the ostracon comes from the Fayyum (perhaps brought by Jouguet during his excavations at Medinet Ghoran?).[19]

Fragment of an Aswanese red pot (*sigillata*, group 0), of a type in use from the Byzantine period onwards. Part of the basis is preserved, with a rib. The text is almost complete, except for some loss on the left side. The script is a small and upright majuscule; the upper part of ⲁ is sometimes open; the last line is written with bigger letters, but the hand could well be the same.

17 See GAREL 2018.
18 Cf. *O. Crum* 500-510.
19 See JOUGUET 1901.

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Fig. 11. Ifao, Inv. OC 192 (C 1897).

	ϯ ⲡⲗ$_{o}$ⲛⲟⲩ ⲁⲕ ⲛ̣	
	ⲡⲁⲗⲉⲟⲩ ⲃⲉⲗⲉ ϩⲏⲟⲩ	ⲁ
	ⲡⲁϩⲓⲗⲟⲩ	ⲁ
	ⲙⲁⲕⲁⲣⲓ ⲡⲁⲗⲉⲟⲩ	ⲁ
5	ⲛ̣ⲁϩⲣⲁⲟⲩ ⲁⲡⲓⲟⲩ	ⲁ
	[.]ⲱⲣⲓⲱ ⲡⲣⲁⲟⲩ	
	[?]ⲉⲣⲉⲙ̈ⲓⲁⲥ	
	[ⲙ]ⲁⲕⲁⲣⲓ ⲛⲛⲁ̣ⲥ .	
	ⲓⲱⲥⲛϕ ⲟⲩⲉⲛⲁϥⲣⲓ	
10	⳨ⲁⲗⲁϯ ⲡ̣ⲁⲡⲛⲟⲩϯ	
	[.?]ⲁ̣ⲕⲱϥ ⲡⲓⲁⲕⲟⲩ	

\+ *???*

Paleou Bele Heou	*1*
Pahilou	*1*
Makari Paleou	*1*
Nahraou Apiou	*1*
Horion? Praou	
Eremias	

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Makari Pnas
Ioseph Ouenafri
Kalati Papnouti
[.]akouf Piakou

1 ϯ ⲡⲗ$_{ο}$ⲛⲟⲩ ⲁⲕⲁⲙ Perhaps read ⲡⲗⲟ(ⲅⲟⲥ) ⲛ with a small ⲟ under ⲗ: "account of", followed by the name of a village or an individual?

2 ⲡⲁⲗⲉⲟⲩ ⲃⲉⲗⲉ ϩⲛⲟⲩ
ⲃⲉⲗⲉ: Greek Βελε is attested in Upper Egypt (TM 26935), but it could also be a variant form of ⲡⲃⲗⲗⲉ, "the blind" (TM 27411). This is the only occasion in the text of somebody having three names: is it related to the fact that the following line has only one name? ⲁ ("1") is written on the base rib.

3 ⲡⲁϩⲓⲗⲟⲩ
This name is not otherwise attested.

5 ⲛ̣ⲁϩⲣⲁⲟⲩ ⲁⲡⲓⲟⲩ
Is ⲁⲡⲓⲟⲩ similar to the name ⲁⲡⲓⲟⲩⲛ (Ἀπίων) attested *SBKopt.* II 802, 38?

6 [.]ⲱⲣⲓⲱ .ⲡⲣⲁⲟⲩ
The first name could be reconstructed [ϩ]ⲱⲣⲓⲱⲛ̣ (see *NBKopt.* s.v.). For a name ⲡⲣⲁⲟⲩ, see *SBKopt.* II 825, 18-19.

7 [?]~~ⲉⲣⲉⲙ̣ⲓⲁⲥ~~
There is a long stroke between lines 6 and 8, on which line 7 seems to have been written. In this second part of the text numbers no longer appear. Another possibility is that line 7 was crossed out, but the stroke goes until the end of the line and looks like a mark of division.

8 [ⲙ]ⲁⲕⲁⲣⲓ ⲡⲛⲁ̣ⲥ . .
A name ⲡⲛⲁⲥ is attested in a Fayyumic document, *BKU* III 352, 2 and 11 (written ⲡⲛⲁ). Traces of one letter are visible after the name, but the letter seems to have been washed out.

10 ⲕ̣ⲁⲗⲁϯ ⲧ̣ⲁⲡⲛⲟⲩϯ
The name ⲕⲁⲗⲁϯ could not be identified elsewhere. A Greek name Καλατιος is found in *CPR* I 4, a text from the Fayyum, dated to the 1st cent. CE, corrected in the more common name Καλα<τυ>τιος.

11 [.$^{?}$]ⲁ̣ⲕⲱϥ ⲡⲓⲁⲕⲟⲩ
Is [.]ⲁ̣ⲕⲱϥ a form of ⲓⲁⲕⲱⲃ? The presence of a letter at the beginning of the line is doubtful.

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